

Welcome to your Almshouse News

The Origins  
of May

Films I Have  
Loved

## The Month of May

The  
Autobiography  
Group

The Lent Course

My Career

Getting To  
Know You

Wellbeing  
Sessions



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## Welcome to our New Residents:

We offer a warm welcome to our new residents who have recently joined our community: Stuart Green, Mark Morgan and Annie Rogers.

## Farewell To:

Farewell to John Richards, who has moved into a care home.

## Chapel Schedule: May 2022

<b>Sunday 1st May</b> <i>Third Sunday of Easter</i>	<b>10.30am Eucharist</b> <b>5pm Evening Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday, 8th May</b> <i>Fourth Sunday of Easter</i>	<b>10.30am Eucharist with hymns</b>
<b>Sunday, 15th May</b> <i>Fifth Sunday of Easter</i>	<b>10.30am Eucharist</b> <b>5pm Hymn Singing</b>
<b>Sunday, 22nd May</b> <i>Sixth Sunday of Easter</i>	<b>10.30am Eucharist with hymns</b>
<b>Sunday 29th May</b> <i>Ascension Sunday</i>	<b>10.30am Eucharist</b> <b>5pm Evening Service of Thanksgiving for the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II</b>

Front page image: Isabella Plantation in Richmond Park

## Credits:

**Editorial Committee:** Juliet Ames-Lewis, Lorraine Bradley, Debbie Flaherty, Chantal Richards & Mike Townsin.

**Design & Photography:** Chantal Richards & Nigel Barker.

## Contribute to our Next Issue

If you would like to contribute an article for the next issue, the deadline is:

Friday 13th May 2022

Give the article to your Scheme Manager, or email to [c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk](mailto:c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk)  
As a guide on word count, a one page article is ideally 340 words.



This magazine is recyclable.

## Letter from Juliet Ames-Lewis, Chief Executive



Dear All,

With the warmer weather on its way, we hope that everyone will soon be emerging from their almshouses to enjoy all our almshouse gardens. As you know, we are setting up our own "Almshouses in Bloom" competition this year, with a judge from Kew Gardens! If you haven't already entered your garden or pots into the competition and would like to do so, please let your Scheme Manager know as soon as possible. Judging will take place on 2nd July.

We have been asked to take part this year in the Richmond Hill Open Gardens event, and our beautiful gardens at Michel's Almshouses will be featuring in the event on 22nd May. You will find more details on page 8 about how you can get a discounted ticket for this event and enjoy visiting many gardens on Richmond Hill.

We are also hoping that we can re-start some outdoor events in our gardens shortly – Nordic Walking and Croquet and perhaps Boules as well? If you have other ideas of activities you would like to organise or take part in, please do talk with your Scheme Managers. We have had so many ideas of activities from you all in recent surveys that we have grouped them into themes and we want to hold coffee mornings/afternoon teas

with those residents interested in each themed area to find out from you what specific activities and events you would be interested in taking part in. We are going to start with our arts and crafts theme – see page 8 for information about this coffee morning. Ideas in this area include stained glass, mosaic making, painting, sketching and holding an art exhibition in the Chapel for all our artistic residents to display and possibly sell their art work – so please come along if this interests you. Other themed areas that have been suggested are drop-in technology sessions for help with ipads etc, "needlework and natter" (including knitting, crochet etc) and health and fitness – our yoga group has a committed group of regulars now but other residents have suggested other forms of exercise such as Zumba or chair exercises. Do let us know what you are interested in!

The scrabble group is popular and going well. If there is enough interest, we are also going to hold a trial games afternoon (see page 6) for those who enjoy card games and a number of other games such as Connect 4, dominoes and Jenga.

We are looking forward to our Queen's Platinum Jubilee Party on 1st June with a 1950s theme. We hope you have your 1950s outfits ready!

With my best wishes.

## Competition Winners

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Thank you to everyone who submitted competition entries for April's 1960s quiz and Spot The Difference. Picked at random, the winners this month are:

**Jill Taylor** - 1960s Quiz

**Jackie Golding** - Spot The Difference

**Congratulations!**

Answers from last month's competitions are on page 27.

## The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebration

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by Jo Davison

You will all now have received the invitation to the Queen's Platinum

Jubilee Celebration party on Wednesday 1st June. We are all really excited and would encourage you to RSVP by Friday 6th May, if you haven't done so already. The theme this year is 1950s, so we are encouraging everyone to dig out their 50s gear and there will be a prize for the best dressed. We will also have 1950s music.

Please make sure you let your Scheme Manager know of any dietary requirements as they will need to pass this on in advance to the catering company that will be providing us with a Hog Roast on the day. Also, please let your Scheme Manager know by Friday 6th May, if you haven't done so already, if you will need transport to and from the party.

*We look forward to seeing you there!!*



# Please Share Your Memories of the 1950s



by Chantal Richards

We are currently working on the upcoming bumper June issue which will celebrate the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**.

As part of the celebrations, we hope to fill the magazine with **YOUR MEMORIES** of the Queen succeeding to the Throne on 6th February 1952 and everything you remember from the 1950s.

Please do send in your memories, written or illustrated, photos or any paraphernalia.

- do you remember the televised ceremony? the day? the procession? the guests?
- do you remember where you were? did your parents recall the event to you?
- did you have a TV? a radio?
- did you have a street party?
- what were you and your parents wearing? what was the current fashion?
- what was your favourite food of the 1950s?



- what games and toys did you have in the 1950s?
- did your family have a car? where did you go on holiday?
- are there any photos of you in the 1950s? family photos? school photos?
- do you remember any media or newspapers? any advertising?
- do you remember rationing? what was your experience of that?
- can you remember any cultural differences that resonate with you from the 1950s?
- do you remember your favourite music of the 1950s: Elvis? Little Richard? Fats Domino?
- did you go to the cinema?

Please share your memories with your Scheme Manager or email to [c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk](mailto:c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk)  
Thank you.

We will need your contributions by **Friday 13 May**.

## Games Afternoon



by Linda Prendergast

It has been mentioned by some residents that they would like the chance to meet up with other like-minded residents to play various games like cards, dominoes and even chess to name but a few.

We thought that before arranging anything we would canvas the view of residents first.

Would a games afternoon be something that you would be interested in? It could be weekly, fortnightly or even monthly depending on how often you would like it.

If you are interested, please let your Scheme Manager know and if there are enough residents who want to join in we will organise it.

*Watch this space!*



## Quiet Space in the Chapel



by Stuart Lee

A number of residents have asked if the chapel could be open to take some quiet time during the week. For this to be possible we would need a few volunteers to be responsible for opening up, staying in the building while it is open and locking up again. If we had five volunteers, this should only require them offering 1-2 hours per month to offer this space to other residents.

If this is something that interests you, please contact the Chaplain directly at [s.lee@richmondcharities.org.uk](mailto:s.lee@richmondcharities.org.uk) or 07780 997528.



# Wellbeing Sessions for Everyone

by Claire Welton



Each week I guide residents through a nurturing practice of mindful movement and holistic wellbeing. It's a perfect opportunity to just pause and tune in.

Through gentle yoga inspired movement and breathing exercises we softly balance the nervous system, increase circulation and improve flexibility and joint/spinal mobility.

The nourishing meditation and relaxation techniques bring ease to our bodies and minds which help with pain management as well as replenishing energy levels, improving sleep quality and restoring harmony within.

The sessions provide us with valuable time to connect and share together as a community within a safe, inclusive and kind environment.

The classes are open to everyone no matter what your range of movement is. Everything we practice can be adapted to suit your individual needs whether it's using a chair or a mat or whether you just wish to sit and "be" within a peaceful space to observe and breathe.

You are warmly invited to join me!

Time: 10.15am - 11.15am

When: Friday mornings

Where: Hickey's Chapel

We asked some residents what attending the yoga sessions meant for them.

***"It's not mystical, its enjoyable. For me it's gentle, pleasant and uplifting. Claire allows me to do as much as I want to throughout the session, there's never any pressure and if I can do it anyone can"***

*Jemima*

***"I've done other yoga classes, but this is more relaxing. I leave feeling energized and my steps are lighter on the way home"***

*Elsbeth*

### Richmond Hill Open Gardens



by **Juliet Ames-Lewis**

On Sunday 22nd May 12 gorgeous gardens (including Michel's Almshouses) on Richmond

Hill will be open to visitors. There are 4 new gardens taking part this year and lots of changes have been made to many of the gardens that have taken part before.

Within easy reach of each other and close to Richmond town centre, the gardens are all set on the slopes of picturesque Richmond Hill.

Gardens will be open from 11am until 5pm and tea and home-made cakes will be served at St Matthias Church from 11am, completing a wonderful day out.

Proceeds from the day will go to two local charities: The Holly Lodge Centre, Richmond Park and Dose of Nature.

Tickets are usually £12.50 each but I have managed to arrange a discount for all almshouse residents with tickets costing just £5. If you would like a discounted ticket, please give £5 cash to your Scheme Manager by 12th May and we will deliver your ticket to you before the day.

For more information about the Richmond Hill Open Gardens event, please see: [www.richmondhillopengardens.org](http://www.richmondhillopengardens.org)

### Annual Summer Outing to Bognor Regis

on Tuesday 26th July

Thank you all for the suggestions you made for this year's coach trip. The most popular suggestion was Bognor Regis so that's where we're going.

As in previous years, seats will be limited so make sure you book yours as soon as possible with your Scheme Manager. If you have a carer, you can also book a seat for them at the same time. There may also be, depending on how many seats are free if any, the chance to take a friend. This is obviously on a first come first served basis and the friends name will be on a waiting list.



by **Claire Sanecka**

**When: Monday 16th May**

**Time: 11am**

**Where: The Garden Room, with tea & cake!**

Please come along and share your ideas on potential art and craft activities we could offer to all residents.

We have received lots of recommendations and suggestions, but we really need your help to make this happen!

We would like to invite all creative crafters along to our forum on Monday 16th May at 11am in the Garden Room.

We look forward to seeing you there!

## The Avenue Walking Club: Serge's Walk to the Isabella Plantation

by Serge Lourie



The weather was lovely, sunny and warm when 19 of us set off from St Luke's. We were joined by two other walkers as we went under Chiswick Bridge and made our way to Mortlake. As arranged, we met Stephen Fielding of Habitat and Heritage ([www.habitatsandheritage.org.uk](http://www.habitatsandheritage.org.uk)), the local charity that manages Sir Richard Burton's grave at St Mary Magdalene's Church. He gave us an interesting talk in the church by the Burton Window and then at the grave.



Sir Richard Burton's Grave

We then went on to Leonado's café in East Sheen, where we had a pleasant and efficiently served coffee in the delightful garden at the rear. The owner, Rosa, who had bought the lease of the café from me in 1980, was delightful and managed all our orders very efficiently. It was a really lovely interlude and we were joined by three further walkers making 24 in total.

We then headed for Richmond Park and the Isabella Plantation, which was almost at its peak. After an hour of walking and photography, it was a further half an hour to Pembroke Lodge, where we had a sandwich lunch on the terrace over-



looking the stunning view. At every point we lost walkers and in the end, seven of us set off back to Kew, which we reached having covered around 12.5K. All in all it was a lovely walk on a lovely day.

**The Avenue Walking Club:** The next walk will be on Thursday 19th May and I hope we will walk to Putney via Fulham Palace where we can visit the parish church where the famous debates took place during the Civil War.

We walk on the third Thursday of the month, except in December when we will walk on the second Thursday. (All at 9:30am for 9:45am from St Luke's in the Avenue). The dates for 2022 are: 19th May; 16th June; 21st July; 18th August; 15th September; 20th October; 17th November and 8th December.

As you know, we do not charge for these walks as we do not have a paid leader. However, we ask for a VOLUNTARY donation of £8 which may be given to me in cash or, preferably, paid directly to the Avenue Club/Kew Community Trust.

# The Lent Course



**Run by Stuart Lee**

**Written by Margaret  
Goddard, Carmela  
Hinckley and Beatrice  
Quaid.**

What do Noah, Abraham and Isaac, Joseph and Moses have in common?

They are all characters from the Old Testament. They are all depicted on the frescoes on the walls of the chapel. And they were all subjects of this year's Lent course.

What can we learn from their stories? And why were these particular characters chosen to adorn the walls of the chapel?

We already more or less knew the outlines of the stories, but Stuart's storytelling (with props) really brought them to life.

Many and varied were the thoughts offered – all different, all valid, all worth thinking about. We found many parallels between their lives and our own – human nature doesn't change much!

Noah taught us to trust God, even though we may not understand what he wants us to do. After all, why build a boat when you live inland?

So too with Abraham and Isaac: God will provide. And His promises will be fulfilled. Even if you think you are too old!

Even the jealousy and betrayal of Joseph's brothers could be turned into good, and help to fulfil God's purposes.

And even the bickering and grumbling of the people could not deter Moses from his task of leading the people of Israel through the desert to the Promised Land – even if it took 40 years to accomplish!

The themes of trusting, love, betrayal, seeking, journeying, finding – we find our own stories reflected in theirs. So would the original inhabitants of the almshouses.

The first residents would almost certainly have been illiterate. These paintings would have been their "books". To read, learn and inwardly digest.

The stories stayed with us long after the sessions finished, Thank you, Stuart, for such a stimulating and thought-provoking course.



## Out and about group

by Michael Hobbs & Bee Nightingale

### Out and About in March

#### Our Waterloo / Baptism of Fire Trip

What turned out to be a beautiful day's outing began when we took the fast train to Waterloo.

We emerged from Waterloo Station and turned right. After a few minutes, we found ourselves at the Firehouse Restaurant at 150 Waterloo Road.

It's a large modern gastro pub in a 1910 building, selling European food. Some wonderful features including lighting made from Fire Hoses! Plenty of space and comfort and to our disappointment - no sliding pole. Service was a little slow, but all meals came at the same time.

This gave us plenty of time to get to know each other. The food was good and our server was very helpful.

Had it not been for our interest in the lions we might never have come across the Millennium Green Park.

It's the first of 252 such parks created in 2000. This wonderful oasis had previously been a car park and then a

wasteland. Today its lush green grass was filled with lions, office workers and locals

enjoying the early Spring sunshine.



Louga's former home



Louga

The Exhibition was lovely. The lions themselves were beautifully sculptured. My favourite was Louga who had been rescued from a European circus and now lives in South Africa at a Born Free Supported Sanctuary.

Overall, it was a wonderful day out but all good things come to an end. Time to go home. Ice cream ended a perfect day for the "Out and Abouts".



# Friends & Neighbours Outing



by Lena Warboys

On Wednesday 30th March 2022 at 11am we headed off on the Friends and Neighbours outing firstly for a lunch at Marble Hill Park then on to Turner's House in Twickenham.



Because of roadworks our driver Brian couldn't drop us off near the restaurant but as we were walking across the



grass two gentlemen who were working in the park stopped and gave Pat and I a lift in their gardening buggies; as you can see by the photograph it was a great laugh and very welcome.

After they dropped us at the restaurant they kindly arranged to give us a lift back to the mini bus when we were ready. I was very impressed. I was also very impressed with the food and service at the restaurant; it was very good; they

also catered for those with dietary needs. Back on the bus we headed to Turner's House where we were met by a very nice lady who was our guide for the house and gardens: she explained all about how Turner came to Twickenham and how his house was built (see photos of then and now).

We went into the garden first and the lady explained how Turner wanted a place of his own to relax in and how (at the time they were building on what was then fields) he was able to have the land he wanted for his house and garden. We then went into the house and went from room to room, a dining room, a drawing room and a middle room which I think would have been a work room.



Opposite the hall were steps which led down to the kitchen and a room for the cook and her staff to rest in when they could. Going back upstairs from the kitchen into the hall there was a staircase leading up to the bedrooms. I could not manage the stairs myself so whilst everyone went up I sat in the middle room and the gentleman who welcomes visitors to the house came and chatted with me all about the house.

It was a lovely afternoon and I look forward to many more outings.

*Why not come and join us?!*

# The Origins of May



by Mike Townsin

Mayday, Mayday!  
Happily, most of us have never heard this distress call except when watching movies of sinking ships and crashing planes. Now used internationally, it was invented in 1923 by a radio officer at Croydon airport who used it because it sounded like m'aider, the French for "help me". But enough of upsetting the French!



Now used internationally, it was invented in 1923 by a radio officer at Croydon airport who used it because it sounded like m'aider, the French for "help me". But enough of upsetting the French!

May entered the English language in the 1050s. It developed from the Old English Maius, borrowed from the Latin Maius, short for Maius mensis (month).



Aphrodite

The ancient Roman festival of Maiuma celebrated the gods Dionysis and Aphrodite, though the earliest known May celebrations were the Floralia, festival of Flora, goddess of flowers; such celebrations date back to pre-Roman times and, later, to the Celtic era: they relate to the rhythms of nature in which the arrival of summer was of great importance.



Flora

The Romans brought Floralia to Britain which eventually merged with the Celtic

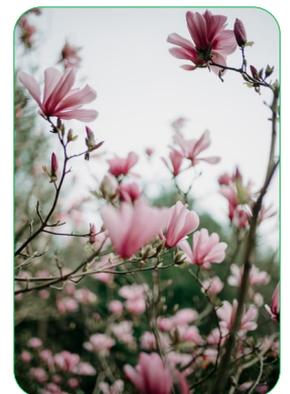
festival of Beltane; celebrated on the first day of May, Beltane symbolised the return of life (after winter) and fertility.

In England, Maypoles, May Kings and Queens and Morris dancing all date back to the 14th century; Maypole festivals were widespread across Europe but their origins are unknown, possibly going back to German paganism of the Iron Age. Symbolisms relating to trees, fertility and, even, the earth's axis have all been speculated upon. The rite lives on in some regions today.



The ladies among us who are early risers, and of an outdoor disposition, could celebrate May by practising an ancient superstition, that washing the face with dew in the morning of May 1st will beautify the skin.

And you poet lovers will recall Shakespeare's Sonnet 18 in which "Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May".



On a less romantic note we must, of course, not forget that May 1st is International Labour Day, but that's another story!

## Food Forever @ Kew Gardens

21st May – 18th September 2022

This summer, step into the future of food and discover how what we eat can help us transform our planet for good. Journey through Kew Gardens exploring large-scale art installations, including a fantastical cornfield labyrinth and giant wooden trolls resting in the trees. The event is included in admission ticket. Concessions £14.00. To book: [www.kew.org/kew-gardens/whats-on/food-forever](http://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/whats-on/food-forever)



## Local community railway needs more volunteers



Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway (HKWR) is holding a Be a Volunteer! recruitment day event to encourage more local volunteers to help operate and manage their heritage community railway. For more info: <https://hamptonkemptonrailway.org.uk/join-us/volunteering/>

## The Landmark Arts Centre announces summer season



Teddington's Landmark Arts Centre has announced its new summer programme of events which offers a line-up bursting with music, comedy, classes and art. The music line-up includes: Dean Friedman, Dervish, LORE, The Little Unsaid and The Chapin Sisters. For more info: [www.richmond.gov.uk/news/april\\_2022/landmark\\_arts\\_centre\\_announces\\_summer\\_season](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/news/april_2022/landmark_arts_centre_announces_summer_season)

## Local father and son break world clothes hanging record

Edward and Rowan Draper recently broke the world record for the fastest time to hang up ten items of clothing as a team of two.



## Did you know...

..that you are four times more likely to stop smoking for good if you use a local stop smoking service? For more information: [www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/find-your-local-stop-smoking-service/](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/find-your-local-stop-smoking-service/)



## Urban Tree Challenge Fund

Richmond Council has received a grant of more than £220,000 from the Urban Tree Challenge Fund



towards the planting of new trees in the borough, in line with Richmond Climate Emergency Strategy. The funding will support the planting of 410 trees over the next year in areas that have a canopy cover of under 20%, increasing the number of trees in these areas and bringing all the benefits that trees can offer.

## Richmond Food Bank



Kew Gardens Rotary is supporting the Richmond Foodbank at the Vineyard

and have secured match funding from the National Emergencies Trust. This will enable the foodbank to significantly increase the number of families it's able to support in the coming months.

Your local foodbank is:

The Vineyard Community Centre,

The Vineyard, Richmond TW10 6AQ.

email: [foodbank@vineyardcommunity.org](mailto:foodbank@vineyardcommunity.org)

call: 07516 935 655

## Silver Swimmers

Silver Swimmers are a group of local swimmers, all aged between 60 and 80 years old, who



have decided to take on a swimming challenge to support COSMIC charity. The group are hoping to encourage older residents (ages range from 60 - 80 years) that it is never too late to take on a new challenge. In preparation for the event the group have become a lot fitter and have made some very good friends.

Would you like to join in? For more info: [www.richmond.gov.uk/news/march\\_2022/silver\\_swimmers\\_to\\_take\\_on\\_english\\_channel\\_swimming\\_challenge](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/news/march_2022/silver_swimmers_to_take_on_english_channel_swimming_challenge)

## Dance with Me Richmond



Get on your salsa dancing shoes with Dance with Me Richmond. Learn all the basics with *Dance with Me*

dancing lessons. There are two classes at St John the Divine Church Hall (TW9 2NA) - on the Kew Road near Richmond Station - each Thursday, with a beginner class followed by an intermediate/advanced. £12 per class. For more info: <http://yesidance.co.uk/locations/classes/richmond>

# Outreach: Getting to Know Local Charities



Richmond Borough Mind has operated in the borough for over 60 years. We are an independent local charity, responsible for our own fundraising, with affiliations to the Mind network.

The last couple of years have been tough on all of us. COVID-19 has created a huge surge in mental health concerns but whether you are experiencing mental ill health for the first time, have long-term needs, or are supporting someone – we are here for you.

### Children and young people

1 in 3 16-19 year olds in Richmond have a mental health diagnosis.

This is a shocking statistic and we are doing all we can to reverse this trend through Mental Health Awareness workshops in schools; after-school programmes; and our Youth Zone.

### Talking Therapies

The Richmond Wellbeing Service is a free service for people with common mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, run in partnership with the NHS. We also offer affordable Psychotherapy and Counselling.

### Support when you need it

Our Journey Recovery Hubs provide out-of-hours support, seven days a week, to those of us in imminent mental health crisis:

**"You saved my life"**

*Journey Recovery Hub user*

### Caring for carers

We know supporting someone with a mental health problem can be exhausting. Our Carers team can help you - we offer support groups, social activities and one-to-one advice and training.

### Feeling lonely or isolated?

Our Peer Group Network is made up of activity groups run by volunteers who have experienced their own emotional difficulties and therefore can support those of us in a similar place. The Wellbeing Centre is for people with long-term mental health problems and features activities including creative writing, art and exercise.

If you would like a confidential chat, please get in touch on [020 3137 9590](tel:02031379590) or email: [referrals@rbmind.org](mailto:referrals@rbmind.org)

To take part in one of our fundraising events or to volunteer please contact: [info@rbmind.org](mailto:info@rbmind.org)

For more information on our work or to make a donation please visit: [www.rbmind.org](http://www.rbmind.org)

## May Awareness Days

### Make May Purple /Action On Stroke Month. 1st - 31st May

This is arranged by The Stroke Association and runs annually throughout May. The main theme of the Month is wearing purple. Some people dye their hair purple for the month in order to raise extra sponsorship, while purple parties and bake sales are held. For more info: [www.stroke.org.uk/take-action/make-may-purple](http://www.stroke.org.uk/take-action/make-may-purple)

### National Walking Month 2022

**1st - 31st May.** May is National Walking Month. The BHF physical activity specialist, Lisa Young, says walking is great for your health and a good way raise money for the British Heart Foundation. For more info: [www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/fundraise/just-walk/national-walking-month](http://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/fundraise/just-walk/national-walking-month)

### Skin Cancer Awareness Month

**1st - 31st May.** This takes place annually each May. UV exposure from the sun is one of the main causes of skin cancer. This campaign hopes to reduce instances of skin cancer and increase the likelihood of early detection through education. For more info: [www.skincancer.org/get-involved/skin-cancer-awareness-month](http://www.skincancer.org/get-involved/skin-cancer-awareness-month)

**National Walking Month throughout May**  
Arranged by walking charity, Living Streets, National Walking Month encourages people to get outside. For more info: [commsteam@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:commsteam@livingstreets.org.uk).

### Dementia Action Week

**16th-22nd May** Organised by the Alzheimer's Society, this week aims to help improve the lives of those affected by dementia. For more info: [enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk)

## Your Summer Garden

Photos from 2021

To keep the beauty of summer alive all year long, we have a stock of photos from many of our residents' gardens to cheer you up through the winter (and spring!) months.

These photos were taken at Terri Ekkel's garden at Bishop Duppas in July 2021.



# Sophia Membery - Organist at Hickey's Chapel



by Mike Townsin

We are all familiar with the hype of excitable press journalists and TV chat show hosts who flatter second rate celebs of modest talent with words such as "gifted", "sensational", "awesome" – so your intrepid reporter was recently delighted to meet someone who genuinely deserved such praise.

That "someone" is 15 year old Sophia Membery, engaging, articulate, and one of our two Sunday service organists; for one so young, she has a remarkable musical story.

This began at age 4, when she began playing the piano and violin; at age 9 she started learning the harp and began studying at the Junior Department of the Royal College of Music (RCMJD) in South Kensington. In her first year she won the Gordon Turner Memorial Harp Prize.

Thereafter, her work ethic and musical accomplishments have been phenomenal. She now plays piano, organ, harp, violin, viola, and is learning

composition and conducting; she also learned the trombone for three years and passed the Grade 5 examination, and had a brief flirtation with the flute. I don't doubt she would have also mastered those but for life getting in the way. As she wistfully says: "There isn't enough time to do everything!"

She has had the opportunity to conduct the London Schools' Symphony

Orchestra as well as the RCMJD Sinfonia Orchestra. Some of her compositions have also been selected for performances by ensembles such as Onyx Brass and the London Sinfonietta.

"Everything" of course includes school work: Sophia attends St. Paul's Girls' School on a music scholarship; she is presently in the middle

of exams and her favourite subjects are history, maths, geography and economics.

Since the tender age of 12, she has been principal harp at the London Schools' Symphony Orchestra: she has played in concerts at the Barbican and has toured with the orchestra in the Czech Republic.

On a musical journey that would have been remarkable for someone twice her age, she has been awarded numerous



prizes from music festivals, school competitions and, most recently, was runner up in the Barnes Young Musician of the Year Competition, 2022.

Asked how she manages all this along with school exams she admits that: "The challenge is balancing practice, services, concerts and school work, but I enjoy performing and being kept busy, even if that means playing in four concerts and two competitions over one weekend!" – as she recently did.

On which subject, apart from Hickey's, Sophia practises and performs regularly at Christ Church Chelsea – part of an organ scholarship there, at St. Luke's Chelsea and at school; she has also played the organ at Arundal Cathedral, Winchester Cathedral and St. Pancras Old Church.

Among major venues she has played at on other instruments are the Barbican, St. Johns Smith Square, Cologne Cathedral, Hampton Court Palace, and she has been on tour in Germany.

Talent is one thing, motivation another, particularly for Generation Z besieged 24/7 by novel experiences and distractions, so I asked if she had been particularly influenced by anyone. Citing Anna Lapwood, Director of Music at Pembroke College Cambridge, Sophia says "Anna has done some phenomenal work to inspire girls to take up the organ...she and I have similar musical journeys as we both play organ, piano, violin, viola and harp." Another influence is her younger sister Claudia in the

sense that they are "quite competitive" but also supportive of each other. They play similar instruments and often duet together at home and in concerts.

The need to regulate pedal changes with what the hands are doing, makes both organ and harp particularly complex instruments to master: she says "...



learning the harp before starting the organ was helpful for the co-ordination challenges of the organ, as the harp has seven pedals".

Playing solo versus in an orchestra, both of which she enjoys, presents different challenges: "Playing solo can be more exposing than playing in an orchestra, but can also give you more freedom" but "I love the collaborative side of (orchestral) music... and enjoy performing as it's a chance to share my love of music and the pieces I'm playing with an audience".

It would be natural to assume that Sophia would wish to pursue a musical career but she actually wants to be a lawyer: she thinks a career as a professional musician is a bit of a risk given that it's a crowded market in which it's hard to stand out. She enjoys her current balance between academic work and music so hopes to be able to continue this: "I imagine...working as a lawyer and keeping up with music and the organ."

I'm sure she will be as accomplished a lawyer as she is a musician!

# The Autobiography Group - run by Stuart Lee



by Stuart Lee

This round of the Autobiography group is coming to an end, with participants having explored and written about many varied aspects of their lives.

Here, Maureen Bliss, shares some of her memories from the world of work. Maureen explored the possibility of becoming a ballerina or a nun before time spent in Switzerland, France and the entertainment industry.



## My Memories

by Maureen Bliss

Secretarial work was not challenging enough for me so I decided to join two ladies who were teaching a new kind of keep fit called Slimnastics. I met Pamela Nottidge at RHACC when attending a keep fit class, loved the exercises and, when asked if I would like to demonstrate the exercises together with 3 others at the Book Bang festival in Regent's Park, I jumped at the opportunity.

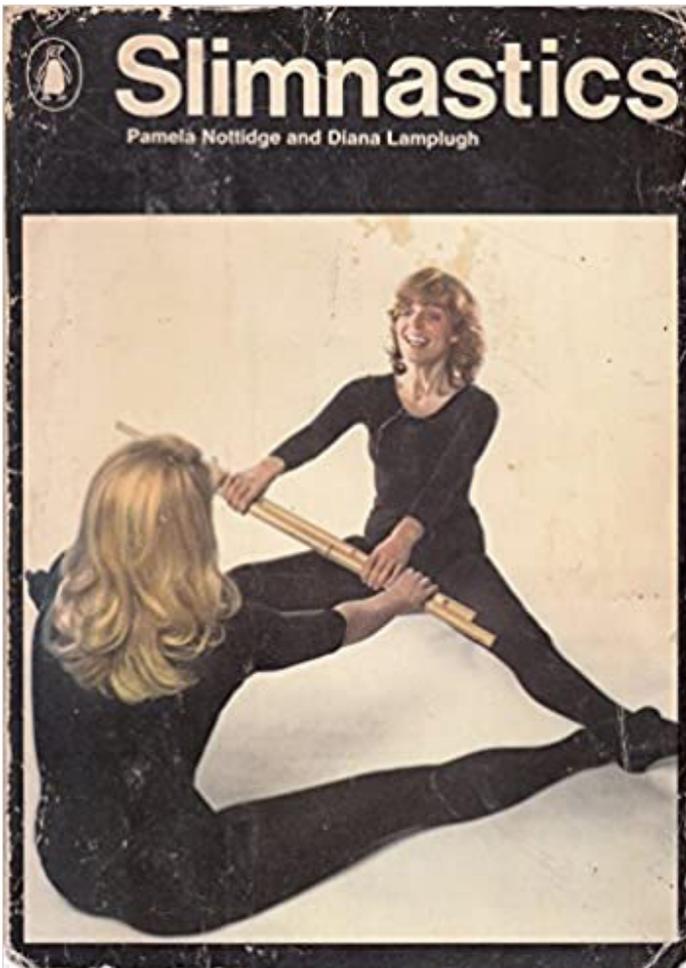
Nottidge's business partner was Diana Lamplugh and she was the lady to write the books and develop the Slimnastics mantra. We trained at her house in East Sheen, demonstrated at the book festival

and again in the window of a well-known book shop in Oxford Street and then again on Richmond Green at one of the summer festivals they held annually.

I was in my element. My figure was perfect, or so I thought (after two births), I could now go out to the wide world and teach as I was fully trained and, apart from hiring a local hall in both Richmond and Sheen for my new clients, I went out to the big companies to teach their employees after work.

My first company was Gillette and armed with my ghetto blaster, dressed in my trendy leotard I walked into a huge hall that must have had nearly 40 ladies mostly dressed in saris patiently waiting for me. Can you imagine my horror seeing all these ladies in long clothing? My mouth fell open, I was in shock as all the people I had been teaching came to class in either a leotard or jumpsuits. What could I do? Well I did the best I could with floating saris restricting stretches but Slimnastics wasn't just about exercise, it was watching what you ate.

In those days I had hardly tasted a curry and certainly didn't know what foods went into the dishes so, although I was supposed to advise them what to eat and what to avoid, I didn't have a clue. However, I somehow managed to overcome my shock and the following week sorted out the serious from the not-so-serious. Numbers dropped a little



*Slimnastics* book by Pamela Nottidge and Diana Lamplugh (1st July 1971)

when some of the ladies realised they had to change their eating habits, but those who really wanted to lose weight stuck to it and I did have some success which is very gratifying.

This experience led me on to achieve my wish and ambition to run a studio similar to The Dance Studio in Neil Street, Covent Garden and, when we decided to move out to the country to Hampshire, an opportunity arose when the possibility of buying a Victorian mill with 5 floors with its race and sluice gates (the river running along and underneath the building) became a reality; I was in my

element. This was just before Pineapple Studio had started.

On the ground floor we divided the huge room with pillars into a little shop selling leotards, a reception with a juice bar, a beautician and aromatherapist's room, a sun bed and a jacuzzi. On the second and third floor were two dance studios with mirrors and changing rooms off and the top two floors were made into our private accommodation. The rooms were vast with iron pillars supporting the building so we were able to design our rooms everywhere and anywhere.

On the opening day 500 people came and 300 joined there and then but, in reality, we probably only saw 60 people regularly. Keep fit had taken off and it was the 1980s. My problem was that I had members who were asset rich but not cash rich and, to be successful, I needed the working person to attend classes regularly to make it pay.

However, for 3 years I had the most wonderful experience managing the club called *Jumpers* and was very well known around that area. We had a wonderful wedding with one of the teachers and a male from her class as we had a good attendance of male Keep Fitters. Unfortunately, the club didn't really pay, it was an indulgence. My husband hated commuting to London, so eventually we had to call it a day and sell up. But I made a lot of friends there and still continue to see them regularly today.

### Film Review:



By **Jenny Ruff**

**From Here to Eternity**

directed by Fred  
Zinnemann, 1953

#### A blast from the past!

From Here to Eternity is an American drama/romance/war film from 1953 set on the Island of Oahu, Hawaii just before the attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941. It caused quite a stir when it was released in 1953 when it was almost banned and certainly heavily censored. Burt Lancaster and Deborah Kerr played the lead characters who fall in love and have an affair which was mirrored in their off screen personal lives which made the controversial “kissing in the sand” scene probably more sensual and provocative than mere acting.

My Favourite character has to be Maggio played by Frank Sinatra whose career at that time was at rock bottom being overshadowed by Elvis Presley and rock and roll – crooners were definitely out! Frank so wanted this role as Maggio and, if stories are true, he pulled out all the stops with his mob connections and also the love of his life Ava Gardner to secure the part, eventually winning an Oscar for best supporting actor at the Academy Awards. The film won a total of 8 Oscars.

This film never stops my attraction to watch it when it is repeated on TV and it amuses me as to how we have moved on in film and TV censorship because Deborah Kerr had to have a skirt on her swimsuit to protect her modesty – not so Burt Lancaster in his tight swim trunks!

Oh I want to watch it again – *hope it is on TV again soon.*

### Wit and Wisdom



curated by **Mike Townsin**

“He knows nothing and thinks he knows everything. That points clearly to a political career”

*George Bernard Shaw*

“We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us”

*Winston Churchill*

“Falsehood flies, and truth comes limping after it”

*Jonathan Swift*

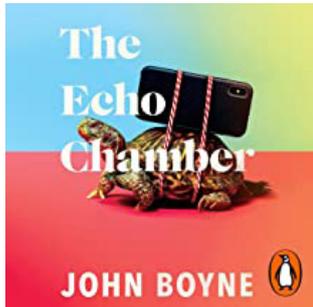
“The worst part of success is trying to find someone who is happy for you”

*Bette Midler*

“To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child”

*Cicero*

## Page Turners



***The Echo Chamber***  
by John Boyne

Review by Kate O'Brien

I've read a few John Boyne books – he is perhaps best known for his children's book *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, but he has a remarkable range of novels to his name. I especially enjoyed *A Ladder to the Sky*.

I heard an interview with him in which he said that, as a result of the pandemic, he wanted to write a book with “a joke on every page”. And so we have *The Echo Chamber*.

We are in the lives of the Cleverley family (the first joke?), headed by the father George who is a chat show host and a “national treasure”, his wife Beverley (the second joke?) and their three children.

George's reputation is threatened by an ill-advised tweet and the resulting journey down the rabbit hole of social media feels not that different from *Alice's in Wonderland* with a vast array of the weird and the wonderful.

I did laugh, and wince, a lot and it was a great page-turner – you really do

want to know how it is all going to turn out.

And if you can get through it without popping out to buy a box of After Eights, you're a better person than me!



***The Blackhouse***  
by Peter May

Review by Jeremy Williams

This book, a murder mystery, is the first in a trilogy. I polished off all three in quick succession while on holiday recently.

DI Fin Macleod is sent over from Edinburgh to help investigate a gruesome murder on the sleepy Isle of Lewis, but he also finds himself sifting through the debris of his own memories and failings from his childhood on the island. There is nobody he loved and yet hurt more than his childhood sweetheart Marsaili, who still lives there and who is now married.

The book contains numerous flashbacks to Fin's childhood and is beautifully descriptive - close your eyes and you can see and smell the moors, the villages, the beautiful beaches and the crashing waves. You become immersed in the characters almost to the exclusion of the plot, but at the end of the day this is a dark and intense crime novel with a nerve-wracking ending.

On This Day:  
1st May 1851

Queen Victoria opens the first World Fair. The first public lavatories were there with an entry fee of one penny, hence 'going to spend a penny'.

On This Day:  
6th May 1954

The British medical student, Roger Bannister, becomes the first man to run a mile in under 4 minutes.

On This Day:

11th May 1949

Siam announces it has changed its name to Thailand.

On This Day:

14th May 1900

The second meeting of the Modern Olympics opens in Paris today, allowing women to compete for the first time.

On This Day:

21st May 1945

Humphrey Bogart, forty five, marries the nineteen year old Lauren Bacall. They had met the previous year on the set of - To Have and Have Not.

## Getting to Know You



with Jean Newport

- **What is your most valuable possession?**

*A sea painting given to me on a wedding anniversary.*

- **Would you rather have endless money or endless love?**

*Endless money to help many people I know, and buy a flat for my daughter.*

- **What's your earliest memory?**

*I had a tricycle when I was 3 and went into a door and broke two front teeth!*

- **What is your greatest achievement?**

*My lovely 3 adult children, I'm so proud of them. Also, riding my bicycle from Land's End to John o'Groats.*

- **What would you choose to be for a day?**

*An Almshouse manager*

- **What do you hope this year will bring?**

*Definitely Peace, more happiness and kindness to each other. We don't have to keep fearing the future, just walk one day at a time.*

- **If you could travel back in time, where would you go?**

*I loved the 50s in swinging London and everything was great fun.*

# Wordsearch: Words of Self Empowerment

Y Q S H G M C R E A T I V E N X E F E C V X E D  
 E R U A X B M O H D A Y O Y E W N C X S F R N E  
 E X O P J O C H E E R F U L P H E O Q U O G T L  
 R T E P C L M Z N C P Q V L O N R N U O E L H I  
 F E G Y M D Z N F A I T H F U L G F I L C O U G  
 V I A O P A S S I O N A T E X O I I S E P W S H  
 E U R U J E L B A T R O F M O C Z D I V G I I T  
 C Q U D K U W E M P O W E R E D E E T R P N A F  
 P A O E V I T P E C E R T S X L D N E A R G S U  
 A R C P D N I K E L B A V O L U U T Q M O B T L  
 S M E B N I M A G I C A L T Y E H F S R U O I Y  
 H U A C R A E L C F O C U S E D Y O E L D K C R  
 O M O Z I O P T I M I S T I C P I Q U C Q J I A  
 P M M I I O D E T I C X E J O N N F D R A M Z N  
 E T A K C N U Y I C V Q Q S S B Y E E X S E I I  
 F E C G Z A G S L A K K I P Y A N S Z J U Y P D  
 U V P K N L R U R L Y T I S L E I G S C O K M R  
 L I Z O S I F G O M I R A P T L N F M R L S F O  
 C S W W W Y F W Q V E E I H I I E A A D U I G A  
 E I T K O E N I E D D L G E V Y H D N A B R L R  
 O C B J S G R U C L O I N O V P I M O X A F L T  
 S E T V N B A F F E L T L T W A R Y B Y F L A X  
 H D Y N A M I C U N N K I T N A I L L I R B U E  
 E M O S E W A R E L B T O T A P P R E C I A T E

- RESILIENT    RECEPTIVE    RADIANT    QUIET    PROUD    PRECIOUS    POWERFUL  
 POSITIVE    PLAYFUL    PEACEFUL    PASSIONATE    OPTIMISTIC    OPEN    NOBLE  
 MARVELOUS    MAGNIFICENT    MAGICAL    LOVABLE    LOVING    KIND    JOYFUL  
 JAZZED    INSPIRED    FAITHFUL    HOPEFUL    HAPPY    GRACIOUS    GLOWING  
 FUN    FRISKY    FREE    FOCUSED    FABULOUS    EXTRAORDINARY    EXQUISITE  
 EXCITED    ENTHUSIASTIC    ENLIGHTENED    ENERGIZED    EMPOWERED    EASY  
 DYNAMIC    DELIGHTFUL    DECISIVE    CREATIVE    COURAGEOUS    CONFIDENT  
 COMFORTABLE    CLEAR    CHEERFUL    CALM    BRILLIANT    BOLD    AWESOME  
 APPRECIATE    AMAZING

Your chance to win a £10 M&S Voucher! Give this whole page to your Scheme Manager, or place in the suggestion box before **FRIDAY 20 MAY 2022**. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Answers in next month's issue

## Anagrams: Road Names in Richmond Borough

1. ARYNEDIV \_\_\_\_\_
2. USEQEN \_\_\_\_\_
3. GSIKN \_\_\_\_\_
4. EATRW \_\_\_\_\_
5. WTEKNIHAMC \_\_\_\_\_
6. DQRAAUNT \_\_\_\_\_
7. EIHERDRVS \_\_\_\_\_
8. ROKY \_\_\_\_\_
9. UKDE \_\_\_\_\_
10. DROWL \_\_\_\_\_
11. DMORON \_\_\_\_\_
12. RHHUCC \_\_\_\_\_
13. EARCEITB \_\_\_\_\_
14. OOLWNS \_\_\_\_\_
15. MAUENTOG \_\_\_\_\_
16. AINNNGM \_\_\_\_\_
17. RGVOE \_\_\_\_\_
18. IPAASRED \_\_\_\_\_
19. OUOLHBN \_\_\_\_\_
20. CRRAGKI \_\_\_\_\_

## Anagrams: Words with 'may' in them

1. EBYMA \_\_\_\_\_
2. FMYLAY \_\_\_\_\_
3. SARIPOYMH \_\_\_\_\_
4. MLPEYAO \_\_\_\_\_
5. MEYAILSF \_\_\_\_\_
6. SYAIBDRM \_\_\_\_\_
7. IASNYEANMO \_\_\_\_\_
8. YDDSIEAM \_\_\_\_\_
9. HYMEAM \_\_\_\_\_
10. AAYMDY \_\_\_\_\_
11. YDEINUAMDS \_\_\_\_\_
12. NMYAA \_\_\_\_\_
13. LMYERAFOW \_\_\_\_\_
14. GAAMY \_\_\_\_\_
15. APYLPMAE \_\_\_\_\_
16. WMEAYED \_\_\_\_\_
17. AREYSMSO \_\_\_\_\_
18. OPMAYP \_\_\_\_\_
19. IYNAGM \_\_\_\_\_
20. AYAM \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Answers in next month's issue

## Natural Health Tips



by **Debbie Flaherty**

I have been looking at a Food Bible book that I have and thought it would be good to share a few tips

that help with some ailments that crop up in life. These are just tips so always take into account allergies or medication guidelines.

### For CRAMPS

**Drink:** Water – you need up to 8 glasses a day

**Eat:** Calcium-rich food such as greens, kale, broccoli, almonds, sesame seeds, sardines and natural yoghurts.

-Magnesium-rich foods such as nuts, watercress and other dark green leafy vegetables.

-Potassium-rich foods such as bananas, peaches, plums and grapes.

### Answers: Do You Remember The 1960s. April Issue.

1. 15p. 2. 1p. 3. 18p. 4. 23p. 5. £1.75. 6. Susan. 7. David. 8. Pink. 9. 1967. 10. Tony Blackburn. 11. 5 million. 12. 1960. 13. All English actresses.

### Answers: Spot The Difference. Chiswick Flower Market. April Issue.



## Chicken Stir Fry

by **Richard Yardley**

Meal for Two:

### Ingredients

Noodles cooked

2 or 3 chicken fillets cut into slices

1 tablespoon sesame oil

1 tablespoon rapeseed oil

1 red pepper sliced

Spring onions sliced

Mushrooms sliced

Piece of ginger

2 cloves of garlic

75ml chicken stock

Black bean sauce

1 tablespoon soy sauce

Cabbage sliced (optional)

### Method

1. Heat wok. Add oil and chicken, cook for a few minutes.

2. Add ginger, garlic, onions and pepper.

3. Toss for a few minutes then add cabbage and bean sauce and soy sauce.

4. Keep tossing over high heat and stir in cooked noodles.

TIP: Any meat can be used in this stir fry and other vegetables can be added.

## Poetry Corner by Nigel Davis



“The future ain't what it used to be”, according to Yogi Berra. Very true, no doubt. And perhaps the past ain't what it used to be, either. The human psyche being what it is, many of us subconsciously minimise, maximise, suppress or distort events of our past, and of childhood not least.

This once very familiar and popular poem by Thomas Hood (1799-1845) unashamedly paints the writer's childhood as a golden idyll (clearly Hood had not been brought up in grinding poverty in some industrial city). Other far greater poets have done this sort of thing in far greater poems—think of the early sections of the Prelude by Wordsworth or Dylan Thomas's sublime Fern Hill (“Oh, as I was young and easy under the apple boughs, about the lilting house and happy as the grass was green....”). On the other hand, Larkin typically did a reverse take on his own dreary and depressing childhood in Coventry, in his poem sardonically entitled “I remember, I remember” in mocking allusion to this poem by Hood. Still, sentimental though this poem of Hood may seem to be by some modern standards, it has at least achieved the trick of itself being remembered. And that must say something.

### I Remember, I Remember

By Thomas Hood

I remember, I remember  
The house where I was born,  
The little window where the sun  
Came peeping in at morn;  
He never came a wink too soon,  
Nor brought too long a day,  
But now I often wish the night  
Had borne my breath away!

I remember, I remember  
The roses red and white,  
The violets and the lily-cups,  
Those flowers made of light!  
The lilacs where the robin built,  
And where my brother set

The laburnum on his birthday—  
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember  
Where I was used to swing,  
And thought the air must rush as fresh  
To swallows on the wing;  
My spirit flew as feathers then  
That is so heavy now,  
And summer pools could hardly cool  
The fever on my brow!

I remember, I remember  
The fir trees dark and high;  
I used to think their slender tops  
Were close against the sky;  
It was a childish ignorance,  
But now 'tis little joy  
To know I'm further off from heaven  
Than when I was a boy.