

The face of joy

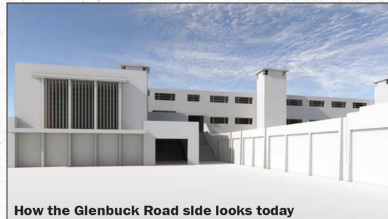
Two-year-old Jayden James wishes there could be a Surbiton Festival every weekend. He just loved it! For full report and picture spread, see **p5**



● Ain't it grand to be bloomin' well dead? This Notable Surbitonian made his name by singing just that. See **p4**



● Wetsuits were needed to recreate Surbiton's most famous painting... Ophelia **p7**



How the Glenbuck Road side looks today



Arrowed, the new staircase and bridge deck

All change at station

A carbuncle on the face of a much-loved friend, or a sympathetic addition to an architectural gem?

Network Rail aims to ease the squeeze at Surbiton station with a £6.7million addition to the Grade II listed art deco masterpiece.

Six months of work starts on Wednesday (Oct 27) to alter James Robb Scott's design to improve passenger safety and journey times.

Engineers will add an additional staircase on the London side of platforms 3 and 4 to reduce

congestion for commuters heading home from the Big Smoke.

Platforms will clear more rapidly, so the Guildford, Woking and Hampton Court-bound trains are more likely to leave on time, helping to speed up journeys.

Eight new ticket gates will be added on an extended deck, and a new staircase on the south side of the station will improve access to the public footbridge.

The work, expected to take until the end of May, is being funded by

the Department for Transport.

Andy Savage of the Railway Heritage Trust (which was consulted along with Historic England, the Design Council, The 20th Century Society and Kingston Council) said: "I think Network Rail have done a reasonable job given the demands of the safety of the travelling public and the listed building. They have made a lot of effort to make sure they've been compatible, as far as they can."

He said the new deck and staircases were "not against the style of the building", adding: "[The new part] isn't an art deco structure, but it does not detract from the art deco structure, and it does not dominate the art deco structure. I think what they have come up with is a reasonable compromise."

Safety is driving the change. "The station overloads very badly in the evening rush hour and there's not sufficient staircase capacity to get people off the platform before the next train arrives," said Andy.

Continued on **p9**

Shop goes from flat whites to pearlies

The old Starbucks, empty for nearly three years, is reopening as a dental surgery. It'll be pearly whites instead of flat whites at 68 Victoria Road, next to Wallakers, which found the buyer. Starbucks closed in February 2019. The freehold asking price? £800,000. Though on a prime site, it's an odd shape; 17ft at its widest, but 84ft long. The three, one-bed flats above were sold separately. Starbucks still has 880 UK outlets. This shop was once a cobbler.



● Is this South Western Railway's latest wheeze to squeeze more passengers on to the Surbiton to Waterloo rush-hour trains, now that carriages are starting to fill up again with morning commuters? No, it's actually part of the Outwell Village layout, one of 20 model train circuits on display at a Tolworth show next month. Full details on **p3**

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20mph? Yes please/no way... you say

The official time for objections (or exclamations of welcome) on Surbiton's blanket 20mph speed zone - including Ewell Rd and Portsmouth Rd - runs until Oct 28. www.tinyurl.com/20limit
There is a list of all roads that will change, and a map. Time's ticking to the comment deadline...

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● Frustrated at the lack of choice and quality in serving spoons, Marize Harries has set up her own niche online business. "When I grew up in South Africa, everything came from England," said Marize, 39, who lives in Chadwick Place, off Balaclava Road. Although she works full-time as a co-ordinator for a GPs' company, she now also sells serving utensils at www.marize.co.uk, sourcing most spoons from an Indian supplier. "The idea for my business began when I was looking to buy serving spoons, but couldn't find ones that I liked," she said, adding that she liked living in Surbiton because "it's got a lovely homely town feel and it's a lovely place to live".

Aldi weighs up its proposals

Discount supermarket Aldi is assessing residents' feedback over plans to site a new store on the former Guy Salmon Jaguar Land Rover showroom in Portsmouth Road. The two-storey shop, warehouse and manager's office would have parking for 51 cars (three blue badge, five parent/child bays), 18 bikes, two electric car spaces... with 50 new job opportunities.

"An Aldi food store with contemporary design that complements local architecture," said Aldi, summing up a scheme to be submitted to Elmbridge Council after the consultation results have been assessed. "This would represent a major improvement to a redundant brownfield site."

Two to three deliveries per day would be generated.
www.aldiconsultation.co.uk/thamesditton/virtual-exhibition



● The Chai@34 cafe, open for four months in Berrylands, is poised to offer lunchtime beer and wine and pre-dinner espresso martinis after applying for a drinks licence. Occupying the curved site beneath the 19 new flats at the corner of Berrylands Road and King Charles Road, it's Sarika and Rohith Mann's first venture into the world of coffee and cake, and gives the area a 45-seat meeting place after the closure of nearby Jean's Café. It's dog-friendly (Sarika says dogs saw a lot of their owners during lockdown, and now wonder where they go all day!), serves a German coffee blend and opens 7am-10pm. On the menu, toasties, panini, baguettes, smoothies, shakes...

Fiery burgers

Not satisfied with creating Surbiton's bling burger, the £125 gold leaf offering, Attaul Manan – owner of Luxxo Burgers in Tolworth Broadway – has done a month's trial of the King's Bounty II dragon burger; a black bun with chillies, hot Mexican cheese and a fiery sauce, claimed at a million on the Scoville scale, the official measure of spice heat.



All the trimmings

Squires will start its Christmas lunches on December 1. Enjoy two courses for £16.95 (£12.95 for children) or three courses for £19.95 (£15.95 for children) at the restaurant in the Long Ditton garden centre in Woodstock Lane North. Christmas lunch, with gluten free, vegetarian and vegan options, is available from noon-2.30pm every day until December 23. View the menu or book in store or online at www.squiresgardencentres.co.uk

● There are spooky goings-on at Ravens Ait. The events venue on the island off Queens Prom is staging a Halloween Film Fest (Oct 25-28 & 31) with Hocus Pocus, Coraline and Corpse Bride the family options early in the day, then Halloween 1, Halloween 2, The Conjuring and Beetlejuice later. There's a trivia quiz on Oct 29 (£1 to play with a £50 prize), and cocktails (think Witches Brew, FrankenLime and Poison Apple Punch) on Oct 30. There will also be prizes every day for the best costume. To find out more, or to book, head to the Ravens Ait Island Facebook page, phone 020 8339 6960 or email events@ravensait.co.uk (free ferry back and forward).



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The lady in the van

Laura Sheldrake's mum, Julie, ran a wedding cake firm. Now her daughter's following in her footsteps, turning original bakes into a business.

In the spring, the former ad executive became the proud owner of Olive, a 46-year-old refurbished, vintage Peugeot J7 van from which she runs Doorstep Coffee, selling home-made cakes, biscuits, teas and barista-style Chimney Fire coffees.

"I've always been a baker; it's what I've wanted to do, in some capacity," said Laura, catering to the hungry, thirsty mums and dads watching the kids' football at Long Ditton rec. "The original idea was a coffee shop, but a mobile van is more flexible, and more akin to how people's lives have changed since Covid," said Laura who acquired Olive from Belgium, before she was kitted out by the family. "With lockdown, people working from home, and people out and about more locally, the idea of takeaway coffee and stuff has grown a lot. People are now around more day-to-day rather than commuting."

She spotted a gap in the market for coffee, particularly in parks.

"It's nice to bring something to the community – that is what I wanted to do."

Her coffees, tea, hot chocolate, cold drinks, biscuits and cakes are big draws. "I make everything myself. The most popular are the Anzac (Australian/New Zealand) biscuits, made of oat and coconut. They are great, and not seen widely here. That's something I've tried to do with all bakes... make things that are different; things you don't routinely see, to add variety to what you might be able to get elsewhere."

Carrot cake is a good example. Hers is made from carrot, maple and pecan loaf. Another is marble loaf, a favourite as a child. Her chocolate, orange, cheesecake brownies, are also popular as is her banana bread.

Doorstep Coffee's schedule – check for updates – is posted on Sunday on Instagram and Facebook.

As well as regular slots at Long Ditton rec by the pavilion off Windmill Lane, The George Evelyn pub in Ditton Hill Road, Giggs Hill Green, and St Andrew's church, Oxshott, she also caters for private events. Email hello@doorstep-coffee.com or phone 07967 688795.

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the good life

Editor: Tim
Harrison

Set up in 2012, the community paper for Surbiton, Tolworth, Berrylands and Long Ditton appears six times a year between March and November. We deliver to

12,000 homes and the issue is also available to download on our website. We're always delighted to hear from you, whether it's about editorial or advertising, or joining our band of local volunteers who help us deliver. The email address is: thegoodlifesurbiton@gmail.com

Between issues, news appears on Instagram and Facebook (@thegoodlifesurbiton) and on our website, where fresh stories are posted most days, and where back issues are archived.

www.thegoodlifesurbiton.co.uk

This paper is also available at Michael's shoe repairs, Shoes At Last, Jennings, the cornerHOUSE, Community Motors & Stear greengrocers.

Bus is diverted

The K1 bus is on diversion from Monday (Oct 25) for five days; water works will seal off Thornhill Road from Hook Road to Malvern Road.

Bazaar at school

The parent teacher group at Our Lady Immaculate school, Tolworth, holds its Christmas bazaar on Sat Nov 27, noon-3pm, with magic shows, tombolas, games and barbecue. £1, children free.

Brass for brass

Surbiton Youth Marching Band has been awarded £2,250 by the neighbourhood committee to fund a once-a-week tutor for the brass section, instructing younger members. At the moment the work is done by self-taught older members. The band, with 44 members, is based at the Royal British Legion in Hollyfield Road.

It's market time

Local arts, crafts and food feature at the First in Tolworth market on Sun, Nov 7, 11am-3pm, in the slip road opposite Our Lady Immaculate church.

Traders take note

Shopkeepers are being warned to be on their guard for a man in a yellow hard hat, claiming to be a local builder, passing convincing – but forged – £50 notes. He struck in Tolworth Broadway.

Granting grants

You could qualify for a grant from Surbiton neighbourhood committee, if you are a not-for-profit, voluntary, community or faith group. Email grants@kingston.gov.uk or for more info visit www.kingston.gov.uk/communitygrants

London's secrets

After a spellbinding talk by Matthew Bowman on Col Blood and the Crown Jewels theft, the speaker at the Surbiton & District Historical Society on Tue Nov 2, at 7.30pm is Trevor Strong, revealing Secret London. Doors open 7pm, cornerHOUSE, 116 Douglas Rd.

Let Geach know

If you have any bright ideas for making Surbiton better, email neighbourhood manager James Geach. He and his team are looking to enhance open spaces, promote art and culture and work with communities to reinvigorate the high street. Email neighbourhood_management@kingston.gov.uk

Mayoral quizzing

Surbiton solicitor and councillor Sushila Abraham, this year's mayor, is staging a quiz night to benefit her chosen mental health charities on Fri Nov 26, 7pm, Guildhall. The £15 tickets include fish & chips. 020 8547 5030.

Food box approval

The Voices of Hope charity has been awarded a £2,916 grant to provide meal kits during term time to 10 families whose children attend Knollmead, Tolworth. Each box contains ingredients and a recipe to help families enjoy balanced meals – a total of 360 boxes – with the aim of tackling child food hunger and encouraging families to cook together.

SURBITON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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surbitonhistoricalsociety.org

SURBITON LIFE

by David Cox



Another one of his back-to-the-office nightmares

The new IT generation

He originally thought of taking on a gym franchise, but saw how hooked his boys – aged 11 and nine – were on gaming, drones and robots... and went in a different direction. James Miller now runs Surbiton's Code Ninjas, creating learning adventures for youngsters aged seven to 14.

He launches next week, behind the high street at the back of the former post office, in a former children's nursery. From taster sessions to game-building, the idea is to introduce children to the possibilities that computer coding can create.

James, 45, of Grove Road, had a stall at the Surbiton Festival, sparking numerous conversations with intrigued local computer programmers.

"They were fascinated," said James. "A lot said they wish they'd had something like it when they were nine or 10. That was very encouraging." He knows his own sons will be interested, but he's managed to keep his project under wraps... until they pick up their Good Life.

"I can't wait to see the looks on their faces," he said. "I've spent most of my career working in finance which, like most sectors over the course of the last decade, is underpinned by the value of technology. But the digital revolution hasn't just impacted the corporate world – it's intrinsic to our daily lives. It's clear that our kids' lives will be hugely enriched by understanding how coding works. The future is exciting, but our children need to be ready."

It's an American concept, with students' progress charted by different coloured wristbands (like belts in martial arts).

"There has been interest from adults too, though we're not doing adult courses at present," said James. "The USA is five years ahead – they have multiple sites across America and Canada."

Children attend on days that suit, and there are holiday camps too. "It's about how to change them from consumers of the technology to creators of it," said James, whose sessions include building mini robots as a way of learning coding. James came to the area in 1995 to study music at Kingston Uni, and stayed. www.codeninjas.co.uk/surbiton-sry-uk

Tim Harrison



James Miller at Code Ninja HQ, just behind Megan's eatery

A chance to drive your own loco

Young enthusiasts can steer trains around large model railway layouts as more than 20 working sets will be on display in this year's Tolworth Showtrain event, returning to Tolworth Recreation Centre, Fullers Way North, after last year's Covid cancellation.

The show takes place across three halls of the centre on November 13 and 14 as clubs and societies from across the UK gather, while stalls sell everything from tiny pieces of scenery to grand steam engines.

The layouts represent town and country scenes from the UK, Ireland, Germany, America and China, plus the Edwards Junction and Thomas End layouts, which can be operated by young visitors and which were made by the show's organisers, the Hampton Court Model Railway Society.

Tickets £7 (£3 children). Special deals on Sunday. Free bus from Surbiton station to the show (timetable at www.tolworthshowtrain.co.uk). Free parking.



'Pug-ugly' pod blocks market stall

No warning, no consultation... nothing. A green cycle storage pod was plonked in Maple Road and bolted to the road surface, not only taking up a residents' parking space, but also blocking one of the pitches used each month by Surbiton Farmers' Market. Two council workmen fitted what one neighbour described as 'this pug-ugly pod'. They shrugged when asked why it wasn't being installed just yards up the road, in an obvious vacant area of tarmac.

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MatthewJames

The songster with the wicked wit

The king of the nonsense song, Leslie Sarony, was born in Surbiton and lived in Alpha Road.

The youngest of seven children, he was born Leslie Frye on January 22 1897, joining a creatively gifted family. His great uncle, Oliver Sarony, was Queen Victoria's personal photographer.

The family lived in Alpha Road for five years until they moved to Mortlake.

Primarily, Sarony was a singer and songwriter. Hailed as the 'undisputed king of the nonsense song', he published more than 400 throughout his career, many sung and whistled in homes up and down the land in the 1930s thanks to the public's appetite for novelty numbers.

But he also dabbled in acting and comedy, earning a reputation as an all-round entertainer.

Sarony's career began at 14 when an agent saw him performing at an amateur talent competition in Shoreditch, and promptly booked him for a week-long show in Bermondsey which, in Sarony's words, was 'a jolly place; if anyone wore a collar and tie, they got mugged!'

Despite his youth, the rough nature of the available venues did not faze Sarony, and he was soon a full-time performer, doing tours of cities such as Liverpool, a far cry from his early years in Surbiton.

His career was halted by the outbreak of the First World War, when he enlisted to fight.

Despite horrific wartime experiences, including the 1917 Battle of Messines where he was one of the few survivors out of hundreds of men, he discovered his ability for creating novelty songs to try to rouse the mood in the trenches.

After the war, that skill transferred to composing songs for theatrical productions, and his career went from strength to strength, with competing offers to play roles in West End productions and musicals.

However, Sarony's real love, and most reliable source of income, came from the disreputable, but popular, music halls.

He had a reputation as a raffish entertainer, and his nonsense songs meant he was in high demand.

The peak of his career, and his most lucrative years, was due to a man called Leslie Holmes. The pair met in 1935, and created The Two

Leslies act, which topped bills for 11 years and even featured in the 1938 Royal Variety Performance.

When the duo split, Sarony pursued a solo career. With the decline of the music halls in the 1950s, he returned to the theatre, taking on roles in plays such as The Bear by Anton Chekhov.

But his true mastery was always the salacious ribaldry which ran throughout his songs, and he continued to perform these right up until his death in 1985.

People who encountered Leslie Sarony recall him as a provocative man with a 'filthy' sense of humour and an incredible ear for music, as well as having a natural ability as a lyricist.

His own son, Peter, remembered his father as a man who rarely spent time away from his little black notebook, doodling lyrics on the pages. At the time of his death, he was the oldest working actor on Equity's books, at 88. He'd even made a brief appearance in the 1983 film Monty Python's The Meaning of Life.

Leslie Sarony's contribution to Britain's entertainment scene is huge, and his legacy is a series of popular songs, among them Ain't It Grand To Be Bloomin' Well Dead, a song that actor Timothy Spall told The Guardian

in 2014 he wanted played at his funeral because of its 'blackly funny' quality.

It holds the distinction of being the first record ever banned by the BBC.

Another of his compositions, Jollity Farm, right, penned in 1929, became a regularly performed track for the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band in 1967.

Sarony married actress Anita Eaton, and they had three sons before divorcing.

Quick-witted and notoriously bad-tempered, Sarony was also a skilled golfer.



LESLEY HOLMES AND LESLIE SARONY



Picture: Voices of Variety



Library returns after long lull

Regular users were starting to get anxious. Although Surbiton and Kingston libraries reopened, Tolworth Broadway's remained closed... apart from a 'ready reads' offer which allowed members of the public to request books and collect them at a set time. But the library **WILL** reopen, with full access to all facilities, from Nov 2, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10am-5pm (closed 1-2pm for lunch).



Throng attends church heritage event

More than 160 people attended St Matthew's church heritage open day event last month. There were tours of the 90ft church tower (the spire adds another 80ft but isn't climbable!), self-guided tours, still life drawing and vegetable-printing art for children.

There was also live music, with an organ demonstration plus the Edible Enigma – a taste-bud challenge to identify the mystery vegetable in a range of delicious cakes.

The Balance Community Cafe, which runs every Wednesday at the church in St Matthew's Avenue from 10am-2pm, provided the refreshments. Rector Helen Hancock said: "It was great to welcome so many people to share in the heritage of our beautiful building and enjoy the activities, especially the delicious mystery-veggie cake eating."

"If you were disappointed not to join a trip up to the tower then why not become a Friend of St Matthew's Church (details on our website at www.stmatthewskt6.org) and you will be the first to hear about them next time!"

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● Cllr Hilary Gander has been elected vice chair of Surbiton's neighbourhood committee. Cllr Gander, who represents Surbiton Hill ward, has been part of the body which rules on planning and traffic, and awards grants, since elected in 2014. "I'm looking forward to working with Alison [Holt, chair of the committee] and getting to know more about the wide range of matters considered by the committee," said Hilary, who is also borough climate change champion, overseeing Kingston Council's climate emergency planning. She has previously been portfolio holder for environment and sustainable transport and co-chair, in the pandemic, of culture, housing and environment.

● The next Surbiton neighbourhood committee meetings are on Thu, Nov 4 and Tue, Dec 7 at 7.30pm at Kingston Guildhall. Updates: www.tinyurl.com/Surbitonmeeting

F1 jacket is the star prize

Once again the big-hearted staff at Surbiton's Nationwide branch are gearing up for a grand festive raffle to support the Surbiton Road-based charity Growbaby, supplying gifts to children who would otherwise go without.

As well as the regular raffle (prizes include hampers of produce) sealed bids are being invited for a star item – a green Aston Martin Formula 1 team jacket, here modelled by Julie Allan, a familiar face at the counter.

Laura Baldwin, manager of the building society which opened at 63 Victoria Road in September 1979, has made the fundraiser an important event in the branch's year. "It lets us donate toys to children in care, and families with limited means, so that every child gets at least one present this Christmas," she said.

Last year, despite the pandemic, the branch helped provide more than 2,000 gifts. The draw takes place at the end of November, with presents distributed in mid-December.



Fox cub rescue goes viral

A five-minute video with Phil Cooper, one of our Good Life deliverers, and a fox cub has gone viral.

The video with Phil of Ellerton Road and the Wildlife Aid Foundation's Simon Cowell rescuing the cub from the Hogsmill stream has gone viral with more than 67,000 views on YouTube.

Phil noticed the cub cowering in the stream at the back of his Ellerton Road garden. He contacted the wildlife group - which rescues, cares for and rehabilitates wild animals - for help. Simon, founder of the Leatherhead-based wildlife hospital, arrived and with the aid of a ladder, got down into the 6ft culvert and rescued the cold, wet and quivering cub.

With the aid of some useful intel from a neighbour on the other side of the stream, and once dried and warmed up, the cub was returned to a fox earth in Cotterill Road, to be reunited with its family. See www.tinyurl.com/foxcub for the video. For more about WAF visit www.wildlifeaid.org.uk



This stunning mural by We Are Sky High has appeared on the blank concrete wall behind Surbiton station, joining other recent artistic additions

Remembering loved ones

If you've lost a loved one, there's a shared chance to pause, reflect and contemplate their life in the still and tranquillity of one of Surbiton's most beautiful churches.

St Matthew's is organising a time of quiet in the church in St Matthew's Avenue on Sunday November 7 from 3pm. "Stay for as long, or as little, as you would like," said the Rev Helen Hancock, rector. The quiet time will be followed by a short optional service of remembrance and thanks at 5pm. There will be opportunities to light candles for individuals, or to mark the toll of the past year and a half. The names of those whose funeral services the church has conducted in the previous year will also be read out.

More at www.stmatthewskt6.org



Yummy! Benji Wadhams, 3, eats a fish finger bap at FishFingerFest, Claremont Gardens. Mum Ida assists

Festival fun in the town

Surbiton Festival was heaving this year as locals – staying local – came out to play in force.

David Shade, who was one of the organisers, and whose band Travistay played in St Andrew's Square, said: "I think it was the busiest I have seen it in my five years of involvement. St Andrew's Square, where I spent most of my time – we were on at 1.45pm and played to a full park – remained that busy until 5pm when it finished."

The parade, started by the mayor of Kingston, Berrylands ward councillor Sushila Abraham, featured police motorcycles, the Surbiton Royal British Legion Youth Marching Band, Royal Kingston District Beavers,



Derek Dale with Liam Moulton Black, 6, and Stella Nitsas, 7, with the first modern fire engine, a 1951 Dennis



Mooshwa Pooshwa entertain the FishFingerFest audience



Mayor of Kingston Cllr Sushila Abraham with her consort Dr Mathew Abraham and the Provincial Grand Master of Surrey Freemasons Ian Chandler with his deputy Richard Wileman

Picture: Colin Pizey



Surbiton Youth Marching Band

Picture: Colin Pizey



Left: Jayden James, 2, clutching his medals for bouncy balls and football, holds one of 900 free teddy bears which were handed out at the Surbiton Festival



Above: two doughty dames have a wheelee good time

Picture: Colin Pizey

Surbiton Girl Guiding, guiding and scouting association groups, Kingston Sea Scouts, Kingston Morris Dancers, Surrey Freemasons, St Paul's Players, Mrs Bennet's Ballroom, Masonic motorcycles, classic cars, a classic fire engine, The London Regiment (Army Reserves) and police horses.

There was live music at St Andrew's Square, Claremont Gardens and on the station forecourt, local entertainers, craft and small business stalls, fresh food, plus plenty of fun activities for children.

Chair of this year's organising committee Robert Dobbie said: "It was wonderful, after the seemingly endless months of restrictions and hardship caused by Covid, to at last see friends, neighbours and relatives all enjoying each other's company, within the safety of Surbiton's parks and town centre, which was closed to traffic for the day – a showcase of all that is good about the area with a real 'village fete' feel in the centre of a bustling and thriving town."

The event provided the filling for this year's Surbiton Food Festival fortnight, moved to September because of Covid restrictions. One of the highlights was the FishFingerFest in Claremont Gardens, which served up, yes, you've guessed it, fish finger rolls (there was a queue all day), live music and lots of arts and crafts to keep families entertained.

Jane Grove



Mrs Bennet herself, Libby Curzon (centre) was in costume alongside (left) Zsuzsanna Nagy, (right) Dorothea Reuss and, at the back, Rehan Shah... all fans of Regency dancing. Libby's programme of Jane Austen era dance classes – which continued on Zoom during lockdown – has restarted in person on Wednesday evenings at 8pm at St Mark's church hall, Church Hill Road. All welcome. £5, incl tea. Full details at www.mrsbennet.co.uk

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We will bounce back, pledges local store

To residents' dismay, Mannys in Fleece Road has closed – but convenience store owners Manoj and Minal Patel hope it's temporary. Facebook has been awash with support on the Mannys Convenience Store page for the couple who run the news, cards, food and wine shop in the Long Ditton parade.

Even St Mary's Church rector the Rev Kulan Satkunanayagam is praying for a good outcome. "Sending love and prayers from St Mary's for a swift and positive resolution," he wrote, adding two hands in prayer.

Mannys was Small Shop of the Year, 2010, with Manny and Minal given their award in parliament after a vote by the National Federation of Retail Newsagents.

The shop was nominated after pledging to bring community life back to the heart of Long Ditton. Manny appeared on ITV's Good Morning Britain in 2016 about a possible relaxation in



Sunday trading laws to allow supermarkets to open longer, threatening the profitability of his business and others like it.

Mannys has traded in the parade for 18 years, expanding into the shop next door in 2009. "Thank you for all your support and kind messages," wrote Manny and Minal to the 70 comments and 142 likes they received. "Please join us for a glass of wine when we return soon."

Jane Grove



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From left: Sadid Ahmed Khan, 18; Rakul Pratheepan, 13; Lulu Todd, 11; Ariya Pretheepan, 11; Clover Todd, 9

● Folk on the Sunray estate – young and more senior – have been getting creative. While the 11s to 18s, as part of a youth project, were hard at work creating a mural with their own devised summer theme to brighten up the railway bridge near Knollmead primary, families got to work on entries for the estate's second scarecrow festival. Both events were organised by The Sunray & Egmont Community Residents' Association.



Above: joint runner-up The Ladies that Lunch with creator Janice Carby of Knollmead. Right: Winner Ron Seal with creator Rachel Rolfe of Alpine Avenue



She didn't set out to be Surbiton's curtains, cushions and blinds queen... it's just gradually happened.

Lorraine Elizabeth, to use her professional name, was moving house 20 years ago, with husband Lance Mead and three young children, and decided to do a course to learn how to make her own Roman blinds (the kind that lift into pleats) for the new place.

"Then it just evolved," she said. "It just built up."

Key to that evolution has been having her own dedicated space within Lance's Bed Post store in Brighton Road, the established go-to bed and mattress centre, where she can display umpteen design options for customers.

It means her prices are competitive, her array of tracks and poles (all with a fitting service) broad, and her fabric sample range extensive.

People come in and chat through alternatives, and Lorraine is happy to encourage customers' design dreams, while adding her experience to the mix to achieve the best results.

Some bring dimensions scribbled on bits of paper, some have photos of windows they want to dress... but nothing beats home visits, and Lorraine does regular house calls.

Business trebled during the pandemic as more people stayed at home and thought about improving their decor.

Latest trends in Surbiton? "Motorised blinds, for lazy people like me," she laughed, pointing a remote control at a display and watching it gather itself up.

The other big seller is wave-headed curtains, typically used to soften larger rooms with bifold windows.

Visit www.lorraineelizabeth.co.uk or call in to the showroom at 43 Brighton Road.

Tim Harrison

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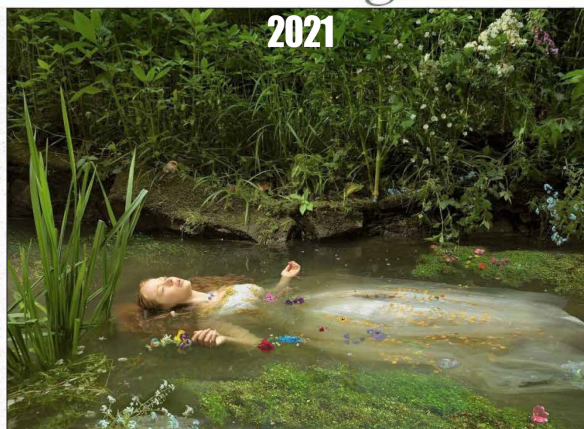
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1852



2021

● "It took a long time to produce; I had to replicate individual flowers," said photographer Julia Fullerton-Batten, who spent days meticulously recreating Surbiton's most famous painted landscape... using models wearing wetsuits under their flowing dresses!

Sir John Millais' Ophelia painting, which hangs in the Tate, was completed in 1852, inspired by Shakespeare's description of the fate of the damsel in Act IV of Hamlet. It was mainly done from life, in true Pre-Raphaelite style, on a stretch of the Hogsmill beside Six Acre Meadow at the edge of the Sunray estate in Tolworth.

For the details, Millais had 23-year-old model Lizzie Siddall lie for hours in a London bathtub. Though she didn't complain, it led to a severe bout of pneumonia.

In today's health and safety era, photographer Julia, recreating the image for a series of slightly surreal river-themed pictures, couldn't take such risks.

As well as her main model, two back-up girls took turns immersing themselves. "They wore wetsuits under their dresses," chuckled Julia, 51, describing how the girls lowered themselves into the bracing Hogsmill water. "I set up the light using another girl, so the one in the picture was only in the water for maybe two minutes at most. Everything was set and ready to go by the time

she got in. Even so, she wasn't very comfortable!"

The picture is part of a limited edition of 10 'C-type' prints entitled Ophelia After Millais, available at around £5,000 apiece from www.artsy.net

Julia, below, an enthusiastic mudlarker from Chiswick, has won awards and admirers for her fastidiously posed and planned pictures, some taking days to set up. The German-born photographer's series Old Father Thames includes recreating images of Londoners partying on the frozen river in 1812. It needed 95 people, including circus strongmen, contortionists (a favourite theme), dancers and fire-eaters in costume.

As with the



Millais re-creation, the results are like stills from an epic movie; broad canvases filled with such detail that you can get close and stare at them for ages.

The photographic project has taken three years to create, and numbers 21 images in total. Millais would have been impressed. It took him nearly two years to complete Ophelia to his satisfaction, even painting out a water vole at the last minute after a friend asked what 'the rat' was doing in the picture.

The bulk of Millais' work was done on site, when the artist (and chum Holman Hunt, also in his 20s) made regular forays to the Hogsmill, walking across fields and country paths from Ewell station.

'Johnny', as Hunt called him, sat on the west bank (the water flows right to left in the painting, to join the Thames at Kingston) for up to 11 hours at a stretch. He and Hunt also took lodgings at Worcester Park Farm, disturbed only by 'a noisy brood of rooks', according to Hunt's diaries, and aggressive Surrey biting flies.

Julia Fullerton-Batten came to prominence with her 2005 series of pictures, Teenage Stories, depicting the journey from adolescence to womanhood that spawned a book, and an admission that much of the material she drew on was autobiographical.

Tim Harrison

● Good Life editor Tim Harrison has been busy signing copies of his new local history book, **Hello Tolworth, I'm Ziggy**, at Surbiton Farmers' Market and (right) the cornerHOUSE arts centre. It costs £15 and tells the story of the Toby Jug pub and its bands... the ideal Christmas gift for the music buff in your life. It is available at Surbiton's Regency Bookshop in Victoria Road, or www.thegoodlifesurbiton.co.uk/toby-jug



● Help maintain and improve Berrylands Nature Reserve. The reserve off Raeburn Avenue is running volunteer sessions on these Wednesdays: Oct 27, Nov 10 and Nov 24, plus Sat, Nov 13. Tasks include scrub and woodland management, clearing fallen trees, opening up the areas around some of the benches, and trimming back encroaching vegetation along the stream. Meet at the Berrylands Scout Hut in Stirling Walk at 10.30am. The sessions run until 12.30pm. Please bring your own gardening gloves and drinking water.

To find out more about the sessions, or to sign up, visit the nature reserve's website at www.berrylandsnaturereserve.org/events or email berrylandsnr@gmail.com



In endearingly grumpy memory

The memory of Teddington Lock's former keeper Ken Knight has been celebrated with the unveiling of a magnificent bench where he worked.

Ken, who lived all his life in Surbiton, died in May last year... but Covid delayed the inauguration of the memorial seat, on the little island alongside the lock keeper's cottage.

His ashes were buried alongside the bench, which bears the inscription 'Ken Knight, endearingly grumpy lock keeper' - the words used in his obituary in The Good Life.

Family members from across the country gathered for the bench dedication, posed for group photographs on the new bench (which includes two engravings of pictures of Ken) then strolled across to the Lensbury Club for afternoon tea.

Ken was 82 when he died on May 7 2020. He lived in a bungalow in Greenfield Avenue, he was an active member of the Surbiton & District Historical Society, and a local authority on horse brasses, cow bells, First World War battlefields and coins.

"He found his niche when he got the job of lock keeper at Teddington," said his sister, Val. "He worked there for nearly 40 years, loving the freedom of the open air, the interaction with the boating community and taking care of the flowerbeds."

Ken learnt his horticulture skills on a year-long course at Queen Elizabeth's



Picture: Anne Purkiss



Foundation Centre for Disabled People after leaving school early after a serious bout of encephalitis.

He grew a beard because his hand was so unsteady he had difficulty shaving.

A long and faithful member of Emmanuel church, Tolworth, he was never seen out and about without his battered trademark hat.



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A musician who really delivers

● Taking a short break from his burgeoning musical career, Nathaniel Cartier joined in delivering the last issue of *The Good Life*, giving copies to the shops in Tolworth Broadway. The songwriter (and master of multiple instruments) recently released a 13-track Swiss German compilation, reflecting his roots, called *Zuger Träumer*. He's already the toast of BBC Radio 6 Music, and you can get a flavour of his skills at www.mx3.ch/nathanielcartier. A regular visitor to Surbiton, Nat says of the town: "It's such a cool place, and it's great to stroll around and deliver copies of the paper as well." If you can offer help, dishing out *The Good Life* to our eager readers six times a year, email thegoodlifesurbiton@gmail.com

Fundraiser for Xmas lights

A GoFundMe page has been set up to buy permanent Christmas lights for the village green in Long Ditton.

Vice chair of the Long Ditton Residents Association Mark Herbert said: "Local volunteers and The Long Ditton Residents' Association are working together to install lights which do not need costly repairs every year."

"The village tree becomes a focal point for the annual Christmas tree light switch-on, including the Fleece Road shops."

"For years the lights have just been wound round the tree and have been very prone to strong wind damage and vandalism."

"So rather than do patch-up repairs every year we are going to do a proper more permanent job now."

The association is looking to raise £2,900 which will pay for the durable lights, additional cabling to the smaller Christmas trees which poke out from the wall above the shops in the Fleece Road parade, as well as installing anti-vandalism measures.

If you would like to donate towards the cost, visit www.tinyurl.com/lightsontree

● This year's Long Ditton Lights Up event will take place on the village green by the Fleece Road shops at 6pm on Thursday, December 2. It's the green space by the big tree at the junction of Sudej Road and Rectory Lane.

The fun will start at 5pm. There will be burgers, hot dogs, mince pies and mulled wine.

There will also be games and a raffle which will raise money for St Mary's Church, Long Ditton Infant and Nursery schools and the local guides and brownies. Organisers also hope there will be a special visit from Santa too.

Residents are also asked to make decorations for the tree. Email longdittonfriends@outlook.com to find out more, or drop the decorations off at the church or either school.

Directly or indirectly, the pandemic has altered our lives forever, says Becky Mayhew

'New normal' is anything but

During the first lockdown I remember thinking how amazing it would be once 'it' was 'all over', and we could all run into each other's arms, dust ourselves down and say: 'Well that was horrible, let's all move on now.'

Except it's not been like that. Now, out of the seemingly everlasting fog that filled our eyes and ears with nothing but Covid, other struggles and tragedies are emerging from the dust.

I know so many people, and people who know people, who, over the last few months – months where we should have been rejoicing in freedoms and trying to reclaim normalities – have been beset by illness, bereavement, misfortune, mental health struggles; from devastating booms, to quiet murmurs of suffering.

Some of these can be tied unequivocally to Covid; others more subtly. Some not at all. But as a whole, they feel more devastating and numerous because we've all been focused on only one thing over the last 18 months, and this was now supposed to be the time when we could breathe out and have a break. Moreover, the way these struggles can be dealt with is now made more complicated, and, in some cases, more impossible.



The reality is that for all of us – some more than others – 'it' will never be 'all over'. People who have lost loved ones have lost them forever. People whose circumstances have changed may be impacted by them forever. All our lives have changed: for some, fundamentally and unmistakably; for others, slightly and insidiously.

Even without having a distinct tragedy or misfortune suddenly thunder into your life, Covid has created a persistent backdrop of danger against which anxieties can thrive. Not everyone will feel these, but plenty will, and some will battle with them daily, hourly. There are inherent risks in the joys and

mundanities of everyday life that for the vast majority were inconceivable before.

Even if you're double-jabbed, and you're not worried about having 'just a bad cold' if you do catch it, the niggles of danger remains: this is a virus that has killed people and is still killing people. Do I want to get on that train, or walk into that restaurant? Do I want to risk passing it to a parent or a grandparent for whom the vaccine may only take the edge off?

This is not the end; in fact, for many it is only the beginning.

Whether struggles definitely are or definitely aren't linked to Covid, for many people this is not the 'new normal' we expected (and what did we expect?). Whether we are suffering ourselves or watching the suffering of others, we may not be able to do anything to solve, save or cure, but we can believe that kindness remains in a world that, in so many ways, feels so different.

To those of you that I know, and to those that I don't: I'm sorry this is happening to you. I hope things get better.

● www.beckysaysthings.com



Marking her 100th, Rosina Byers and (above) the party spread Rosina gets a special card

Hearty congratulations to Rosina Byers for reaching a very special milestone.

Rosina celebrated her 100th birthday at the Hamilton nursing home in Langley Avenue, where she has been a resident for just over a decade.

Born in Portaferry, a coastal town in Co Down, Northern Ireland, Rosina spent her teenage years working in the nearby Quintin Castle... one of a handful of family-owned, Anglo-Norman castles in Ireland.

She moved to England, gaining work at the London

Hospital and, later, at the Griffin Hotel in Kingston Market Place.

A great cat lover, Rosina enjoys reading, baking and gardening.

All the residents of the nursing home enjoyed a party spread on the 'big day', with the high point being the arrival of a 100th birthday card from the Queen, which now has pride of place on a shelf in her room.

"Unfortunately we weren't able to fit 100 candles on the cake," laughed the home's admin manager Aaron Yap.



● A specialist police unit which records graffiti tags is investigating the recent outbreak of defacing to the front of Surbiton's grand old lady. The scrawl was painted out in time for Surbiton Festival's events

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● Around 300 people visited the Shinnyo-En Buddhist Centre in Long Ditton for the four-day lantern floating festival. More than 750 were launched – double the total from previous years.

Visitors created and floated lanterns dedicated with drawings, photos and written messages of hope and remembrance on the lake in the centre's grounds.

They also enjoyed picnics in the gardens and toured the 18th century manor house off Woodstock Lane North, learning about its history and Shinnyo Buddhism.

Members of the Shinnyo community performed traditional Buddhist chanting and music, which was live-streamed around the world.

Spokesman Stuart Hembrow, said: "This year, after months of social distancing and lockdown, the festival offered a place to meet and find a moment to pause, reflect and appreciate, creating a natural sense of connectedness and hope for the future."

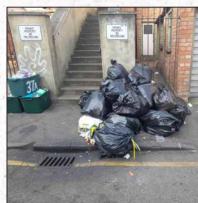
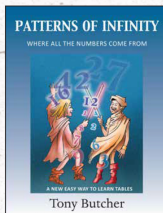
Tony is a man of the times

A Surbiton author has discovered a new and easy way to help children learn their times tables, and has collated his work in a book.

Tony Butcher, of Beresford Avenue, has written *Patterns of Infinity* – published this week – about ways of calculating sums using an ancient Japanese system. "It does away with the need to memorise, which many children dislike," he said.

How had he stumbled on these underlying patterns of mathematics? "It must be something in the Surbiton air," he said. "Both odd and even number tables have their own distinct codes... something of great interest to many modern scientists. *Patterns of Infinity* allows pupils to be table scientists themselves."

Patterns of Infinity: Where all the numbers come from, is published by Grosvenor House at £9.99. It is available at bookshops or online.



● Traders in Tolworth Broadway are battling to get into their business premises because of a build-up of black bin liners from the residents of maisonettes above the shops... rubbish the council is slow to clear.

"Week after week we can't get into our shops because there is so much rubbish," said Bryon Dunn, who runs the picture framing shop Tolworth Photographic. The piles of bin liners then attract additional fly-tipping, making Tolworth Close a filthy service road. Claudia Antunes of Fresh Graphic Solutions, said the problem had been going on for years. "I've been complaining to Kingston Council since July 2019. The council needs to provide bins for the flats. Cllr Sharron Sumner is pressing for urgent action."

"Tolworth Close is a forgotten part of our borough, and I've been working with residents and businesses to try to resolve the problems associated with refuse collection," she said. "We're asking the council to provide more bins and CCTV to alleviate the problems."



Claudia Antunes points to where the rubbish builds up

All change at Surbiton station

Continued from p1

"The modelling shows that it is going to get a lot worse. If traffic continues to grow, you could end up with people being pushed in front of trains on the fast lines.

"At the end of the day it is a station which, in normal circumstances, is grossly overloaded. There is a very real risk to passengers."

Surbiton is the eighth busiest on Network Rail's Wessex route with nearly 9.5 million passengers passing through in 2019-2020.

Concerns that the public footbridge allowing access from one side of the railway tracks to the other would be closed have been allayed. However, the public will be re-routed on the passenger side of the footbridge at certain times, with staff on hand to direct and assist.

From Oct 27-Nov 14, during work

to demolish the public staircase in Glenbuck Road, everyone will use the passenger side of the footbridge.

The public side will be reopened on Mon, Nov 15 when a temporary entrance is created, linked to the passenger staircase on the south side. On the weekends of Jan 22-23 and 29-30, the public side will be closed again.

The lifts will not be affected. Alan Penlington of South Western Railway said there would be some disruption. "I'd like to thank customers for their patience."

St Mark's ward councillor Liz Green thought it was a positive project for the town. "The design is sensitive to the wonderful art deco station, relieves dangerous congestion on platforms 3 and 4 and improves passenger safety. Disruption to residents is being kept to a minimum."

Jane Grove

● On January 6, 2020, Turan Duncan took his own life. He was just 30. On October 30, his family, from Raeburn Avenue, and relatives, take part in the Lost Hours Walk for Calm (Campaign Against Living Miserably) to help those with suicidal thoughts and their families.

"We'll wear our Team Turan sweatshirts and Calm T-shirts and scarves to promote it," said mum Tanju. She, husband Peter, son Reece, four cousins and two aunts will don trainers to walk 20 miles to support the cause and remember actor Turan along the way.

"His uncle will stay behind to prepare our much-needed supper," she said.



Tanju, who expects the walk to take five hours, says Turan's other aunts, who live abroad, will also do a walk in his memory.

The Lost Hours Walk (which takes place the weekend the clocks go back) is the second Tanju and her family have done to fundraise for Calm.

"It's a way to remember Turan, but a way to raise a little bit more money and awareness," she said.

"I don't think my son knew where to go. If doing the walk stops one other person, if it means that somebody has access to something that can help them when they feel like there's no hope, that would make such a big difference to us. It wouldn't be a wasted life, it would have some impact. He would love that because he was a very caring, empathetic soul."

To help those who have lost someone to suicide or are struggling with mental health visit www.tinyurl.com/TeamTuran



As the winter season approaches us and with the 'stamp duty holiday' now over, we are still seeing high levels of motivated buyers and renters seeking their next home. Although there still seems to be low levels of new properties coming on the market, Greenfield are celebrating a record year for new sales and agreed lets. In recent months, the majority of sales and lets have been agreed within the first few days of marketing, and in many cases, with agreed prices being in excess of the asking price. With this huge demand for property, we have seen a significant increase in property prices for both sales and lettings. If you would like to know the current value of your property, then please do not hesitate to get in touch. Our friendly and experienced team are always on hand to answer any property related questions you may have. Your dream home may be a lot closer than you think! Greenfield would like to take this opportunity to thank all our clients and neighbours for their support as this busy year draws to a close.

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It's half term next week, and **AYESHA BENSON** has compiled the Good Life's top playground guide for harassed parents

The greatest play spaces

Lockdown was hard for many reasons; one being the closure of playgrounds. My insides would clench each time we walked past one, or could see one in the distance, as my son would point and plead, thinking I couldn't see it... his little face reflecting total incomprehension.

Trying to explain the concept of a pandemic, and the reason that we couldn't go in, was right up there in terms of a parenting challenge.

As soon as we could, we started pottering again. And it led to the discovery of more playgrounds than we'd realised in the wider Surbiton area.

Here they are, listed in order of suitability for toddlers and the fun factor.

1 RAF Chessington playground, by the King's Centre, Merritt Gardens

This is one of the three playgrounds (along with Athelstan and Sir Francis Barker recreation grounds) that has had a revamp over the summer, and the result is an array of adventure including a self-activated sand digger, trampoline and a choice of slides.

Everything in the main area is toddler-friendly, with a zip wire for those not faint of heart. There's ample parking, with the King's Centre nearby for refreshments. **9/10**

2 King Edward's recreation ground, Hook Road, Chessington

Balancing beams and a huge sandpit are what mark this playground out immediately. There's also a double swing (officially called a You to Me swing) for you and your little one to enjoy together, though if your toddler is anything like mine, his mother's adoring gaze does not hold nearly as much allure (been there, done that) as driving the fire engine. Parking available, but no cafe nearby. **8/10**

3 Alexandra recreation ground, Alexandra Drive, Surbiton

One of the bigger playgrounds, this one has so much on offer including a good-sized sandpit, a choice of slides of varying heights and speed, a plethora of swings, a roundabout and climbing equipment.

There's a wee cafe across the road which, even mid-lockdown in January when you're hating winter and wishing your little one's snowsuit came in adult sizes, has a queue for its popular produce. Parking is tricky here but if you find it, it's worth it. **8/10**

4 Athelstan recreation ground, Villiers Road, Kingston

This is another of the three which has had a revamp, and it's certainly a cool place to hang out if you are small. The play



The revamped Alexandra rec playground – rated highly by our assessment team

equipment is a bit different to the norm, especially the climbing options. Respect to Kingston Council! **8/10**

5 Victoria recreation ground, Balaclava Road, Surbiton

A solid bet, this one has plenty to entertain a toddler. A seesaw, two roundabouts (one seated, one standing), a trampoline and a sandpit await. There's the Tarte in the Park nearby, but it isn't open every day, and parking's hit and miss. **7/10**

6 Churchfields, off Church Lane, Chessington

This is what locals call this playground, located near the Royal British Legion and St Mary's church. Standout features are the standing xylophone and self-operated digger in

the sandpit, as well as the big slides. **7/10**

7 Long Ditton recreation ground, Ewell Road/Thorhill Road, Long Ditton

This is smaller than the others, but definitely fair game in terms of options. A strong contender in testing the unspoken playground rule of waiting one's turn. **6/10**

Further afield, if you are willing to pay, you can get a fun day out at these, which all have epic play areas. In no particular order: Hampton Court Palace (Magic garden), RHS Wisley, Kew Gardens (Children's garden), Chobham farm, Bocketts farm, Hobbledown farm, Godstone farm, Claremont Gardens (National Trust).

Uni status for college

The college where many Surbiton teenagers finish their education has had 'university centre' status conferred by the Department for Education.

Jules Pipe, London Mayor Sadiq Khan's deputy, officially launched the upgrade to Kingston College after the South Thames Colleges Group (which now encompasses Kingston, Carshalton, Merton and South Thames) hosted a ceremony in Kingston Hall Road.

Mr Pipe unveiled a plaque in the undergraduate centre. As one of the largest providers of college-based higher education in the capital, the group delivers employer-led, university-level courses in collaboration with university partners.

The ceremony was attended by representatives of the college, the Greater London Authority, students and staff. "This is a real testament to hard work and dedication," said Mr Pipe. "This university centre plays a vital role in supporting Londoners and giving students the tools they need

to develop successful careers, businesses and lives."

It's another step up for a centre many remember as Kingston College of Further Education.

Assistant principal Stella Raphael-Reeves said: "We are thrilled to have been recognised and to be able to use university centre title for South Thames Colleges Group."



Deputy London Mayor Jules Pipe with assistant principal Stella Raphael-Reeves



Follow Me, by Saman Torabi... an excellent example of a thought-provoking cartoon

Cartoon contest pulls in entries

More than 470 cartoons by 148 artists from 43 countries have been submitted to an international competition run by Tolworth's TechVertu.

The IT support company, based in Hook Rise South, decided to highlight the challenges businesses have faced over the past year and a half, especially as many needed their support to enable staff to work from home.

An IT and technology cartoon competition – the first of its kind in the UK – seemed to be a thought-provoking and humorous way to do it.

The judges (three internationally acknowledged professional cartoonists from Turkey, Italy and Iran) have been assessing the entries, and the winners will be announced at the end of this month.

"The response we have received has been overwhelming," said TechVertu's Amir Ghoreishi. "More than 140 internationally recognised artists from 43 countries have presented astonishing and thought-provoking pieces of artwork, showing how IT affects not only businesses, but also all of our lives."

You can view all the entries at www.techvertu.co.uk/blog/cartoon-contest

Surbiton WI is recruiting with a busy list of activities

Meeting once again, face to face, the Surbiton Women's Institute goes from strength to strength and is currently on a recruitment drive.

The 50-strong group gathers on the second Tuesday of every month from 2-4pm at the Royal British Legion in Hollyfield Road.

September's meeting saw Siobhan Clark give a talk on The Crown and the Cradle.

The Surbiton WI had a stall at the recent Surbiton Festival to help publicise its activities. As well as its monthly meeting, the group has a lunch club, book club, craft club and regular coffee mornings.

In December there will be outings to Wimbledon Theatre to see Dick Whittington, and a coach trip to Brick Lane with a meal and tour of the Christmas Lights.

The current chosen charity is Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness, with several fundraising events. The craft club has occasional speakers and demonstrations of bookbinding, spinning and crocheting, and produced many items which were sold on the festival stall.



Siobhan Clark, left, was guest speaker at last month's Surbiton WI, giving members a talk on The Crown and the Cradle

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Concert season launches

Surbiton's glitterati were out in force, sampling concertos and canapés in Langley's upstairs room as the new season of Thames Concerts – the borough's long-established classical series – was formally launched by mayor Cllr Sushila Abraham.

Highlighting that mental health charities would benefit from her year in office, she said that music was vital for wellbeing.

Three musicians from Kingston Grammar School provided the entertainment, accompanied by the school's director of music Mark Laffin. Trumpeter Emma Stoner played part of Thorvald Hansen's Sonata in Eb major, then sang O del mio dolce ardor from Gluck's Paride ed Elena, while Sam Kelly performed Horace Silver's Song for My Father on sax. But the loudest applause was reserved for Jemima Jordan, for the Allegro moderato from Haydn's Violin Concerto No4 in G major.

Artistic director Ben Costello said that Thames Concerts had been entertaining Surbiton for more than 60 years as well as supporting young performers, and that the sound quality and professionalism of the concert series was on a par with central London venues such as Wigmore Hall... but at a fraction of the cost and without the need to get a late train from Waterloo. On Sat, Nov 13, Ljubica Stojanovic and Ben Tarlton top the bill at St Andrew's church, Maple Road, at 7.30pm. Details: www.thamesconcerts.com



Jemima, Sam and Emma at the launch



Pic: Nick Wright

● People's Poet Roger McGough is to perform at the cornerHOUSE on Friday, November 26 at 7.30pm.

Dubbed the patron saint of poetry by former poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy, Liverpool bard McGough, who hosts Poetry Please on Radio 4, will be reading from his latest book, *Safety in Numbers*, and taking a wry and whimsical look at, among other things, a year that went missing.

He is joined on stage at the arts centre in Douglas Road, Surbiton, by chum Stewart Henderson.

Born in Liverpool and part of the second wave of Merseyside poets, Henderson is a writer of numerous poetry collections for adults and children and, like McGough, is a broadcaster and songwriter.

The poets will also be signing copies of their collections.

To find out more or to book tickets (£17.50) visit www.tinyurl.com/twopoets

Radar Man wins Zoë award

Tolworth's Zoë Mendelson, 20, has scooped the Best Editing award in the Kingston Film Festival's 2021 event.

Zoë's skills creating her film *Radar Man*, about the life of her granddad Dennis who died from Covid last year, impressed the judges at an event in the garden of the Spring Grove pub in Bloomfield Road where entries were shown.

"This is the first film I've ever entered into a festival so it's very exciting," said Zoë, whose day job is in broadcasting. "I'm so pleased; it's so motivating to know that someone else likes your film and thinks it's good, and it is so heart-warming especially in regards to the subject of the film."

Radar Man recounts the story of Dennis' life, and his work in radar technology, and is told through photographs, and conversations between Zoë, her mother and her uncle.

"It was a lockdown film which helped me through that time," said Zoë, who started making films aged 12. "It is a nice thing to remember him with. It's personal, but it's also a film about making a film."

The festival's Jelena Lützel said: "We were impressed by the range and quality of the films we received this year."

The film-maker and teacher, and her team of Kingston School of Art alumni whose first festival was online-only, received 200 submissions from all over the world from upcoming artists for short films in fiction, documentary, experimental and animation categories.

To see *Radar Man* and other shortlisted films in the festival email contact@kingstonfilmfestival.co.uk

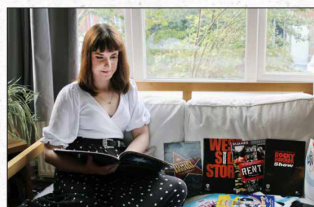


Jane Grove

● Samuel Beckett's remarkable play *Happy Days* comes to the cornerHOUSE on Nov 12 and 13. This dark comedy-drama sees Winnie (Claire Morrissey, right) buried under the weight of the world – in more ways than one. At times bleak and opaque, at others warm, funny and humane, it's about a cheery woman stuck in life, stuck in the mundane and in her relationship with hen-pecked hubby Willie (Peter Brooker), a man of few words. Constricted physically by her surroundings and mentally by what she can remember, her capacious bag carries the tired possessions which are the touchstones of her life. Tickets £10, £8 concs. 7.45pm. The centre is in Douglas Road. www.ticketsource.co.uk/the-cornerhouseevents

● Stanton Wright and Amelia Kinu Muus star as the Beast and Bella in the Rose Theatre's Covid-delayed *Beauty and The Beast*. Written by Ciaran McConville, directed by Lucy Morrell, it opens on Dec 3 for a month. But first up, from Nov 4-20, is Colin Teevan's *The Seven Pomegranate Seeds*, directed by Melly Still... the second original show in Christopher Haydon's first season as artistic director. It's a new take on women from the plays of Euripides. www.rosetheatre.org

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● After the success of her one-night show, *Miscast: Parts I'll Never Get to Play*, at the cornerHOUSE in 2018, singer Ruth Fogg returns with *Miscast... Again!*... contemporary musical theatre numbers performed cabaret-style with musicians Simon Hancock and Paul Micklethwaite, Ruth sings songs from shows such as *Be More Chill* and *Come From Away*. "After such a long break thanks to the pandemic, it's exciting to take to the stage once more," she said. *Miscast... Again!* is on Nov 18 and 19, 7.30pm. Tickets £8 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/miscastagain

● The popular cheeseboard returns to the next poetry night at the cornerHOUSE on Fri Dec 10. But to mark this month's National Poetry Day, here is Gill Davies's *Dodge 'em* from the 'fairground' theme at the last regular evening.

Cheeky chaps hanging on at the backs of the cars
chatting up every skirt, hand held out for the money,
with a banter well-worn. You'll never see change
from these boys full of danger with words
sweet as honey.

'Come now, give us a kiss and we'll go round the back,'
for a moment of bliss with some tickle and slap.
Next night, looking slick, 'Come on, girls, have a scream,'
chatting up the next chick, 'I'm the boy of your dreams.'

Every night, every night, whirl the girls, taking chances,
the silver-tongued lads make their lecherous advances.
In the morning the moon disappears, they move on,
these car casanovas strike camp and they're gone.

Radio dramas sought by centre

The cornerHOUSE is looking for more radio dramas to stream on its website.

Last spring, the arts centre in Douglas Road received 24 submissions to its Radio Shorts initiative, from which a dozen were selected by a panel of judges.

This autumn it is hoping for another good crop of five to 10-minute dramas. The deadline for entries is November 15.

Information on easy ways to write, record and source great sound effects for a radio play is on the cornerHOUSE website at www.thecornerhouse.org/cornerhouse-radio-shorts-2

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Saturday 13 November

Ben Tarlton (cello) and Ljubica Stojanovic (piano) play music by Schubert, Beethoven and Brahms, as well as French composer Dutilleul's 1976 work, *Trois Strophes sur le nom de Sachet* for solo cello.

Saturday 15 January 2022

Esteemed organist D'Arcy Trinknow puts the outstanding pipe organ at St Andrew's through its paces with music by Bach, Rheinberger, Saint Saëns and others.

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Saturday 4 December
Joanne Lunn (soprano), Robin Blaze (counter-tenor) and Ben Costello (piano) perform Lieder, English art songs and stirring scenes from several Handel oratorios.

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● Surbiton Racket & Fitness Club awaits delivery of its padel courts – a squash, badminton, tennis hybrid. The ground-works are complete, with a mini tennis court next to the two padel courts. A fun game for all the family, it starts with underarm serving. You can play off the back wall and keep rallies going. Email info@surbiton.org



Tatum Diamond loves the ocean. And for the next few years the sustainable handbag and purse designer will see plenty of it... from the deck of 40ft catamaran Nautilus.

Malta's Valletta marina is Tatum and husband Caspar's current home after leaving their four-bed semi in Pound Close, Long Ditton. They're learning the ropes in the Med before setting off to the Caribbean. "If that works out, we'll go through the Panama Canal to the South Pacific, head for the Galapagos, Fiji, New Zealand and Australia," said Tatum, whose nine days previous sailing experience included five on a training course.

Caspar grew up in the Scilly Isles, sailing with dad, water skiing or working on the ferries. "Our journey has only just started," said Tatum, a keen scuba diver. "We plan to be in Malta for six months before becoming more nomadic."

She said it was a leap into the unknown. "We're starting gently to build our confidence." What prompted the big adventure? "A recognition that life is short and the world is changing," she said. "We love travel, but realised the impact it has on the environment. Sailing allowed us to combine a love for the sea, with a more sustainable way of seeing the world."

The environmentally aware couple have been involved in beach cleans in Malta, and hope to become self-sufficient, generating electricity via solar panels and desalinating water.



On the crest of a wave





What do they miss? Friends, family and... next-day deliveries. Caspar plans to get his pro skipper licence and Tatum wants to study marine biology. Visit www.watermarksailing.com to follow their blog. Full story: www.thegoodlifesurbiton.co.uk Jane Grove

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It's just not clicking for Blues

After three home games in a week, Chelsea Women won't be back at Kingsmeadow until Nov 18... just as well as recent showings against Wolfsburg (a late draw) and newly promoted Leicester (a last-gasp win) were chastening, and strewn with baffling errors.

Emma Hayes, right, has never been guilty of underestimating opponents... but several of her players are in the dock, charged with that crime.

It has made Hayes' entry to women's football's hall of fame a little uncomfortable. How did she react when she heard the news? "To be honest, I couldn't work out if there was a hall of fame," she admitted. There is, but it's brand new. She also said Leicester had shown real class by presenting her with a plant and two bottles of wine.

Maybe she should give some to her girls in royal blue at half-time. Something's not quite clicking with the team, and she has to get to the bottom of it.

Tim Harrison



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Long-serving members:
Back: Brian Taylor, Vic Taylor and David Lark.
Front: club president Brian Eastwood and Don Hankin

● Surbiton Bowling Club has marked its centenary year by giving all visiting teams a commemorative pennant, and a potted history written by member Julian Smith. The main event was a special match day when Surbiton played Imber Court, Surbiton Royal British Legion, Hook & Southborough, and Chessington, in a tournament at Alexandra rec. The playing season restarts in May. New players welcome (www.surbitonbowlingclub.uk)

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