

AUTUMN 2009

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# THAMES DITTON TODAY

The Magazine of the Thames Ditton and Weston Green  
Residents' Association

AUTUMN 2009

Published quarterly since Spring 1970

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Cover photo: *The World of Weston Green* by Will Derrick

*This issue marks 75 years since the Association was founded in Weston Green and I make no apology for devoting space to summarise its story. The cover image by a talented young photographer from Weston Green comprises 36 separate 10-degree exposures of the Green that took a whole day to stitch together into a spherical projection. A remarkable image. The normal range of content returns in the Winter issue. – Editor.*

[www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com)

Officers and staff of the Association are volunteers, but we must fund costs of this magazine, administrative and election expenses, and other expenses such as spring bulb-planting and the village Christmas tree. The subscription is only £3 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions (in an envelope please) may be left at Moss Chemist, 14 High Street, or Thorkill Road Pharmacy, 94 Thorkill Road, Thames Ditton. Or mail to Membership Secretary Peter Haynes at 6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton KT7 0JJ. Thank you.

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# THAMES DITTON & WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



## About the Association

Founded in 1934 our Association is a strong, locally based non-party-political organisation concerned with protecting the amenities and furthering the interests of the inhabitants of Thames Ditton and Weston Green. We work to preserve and enhance the best in our attractive environment and the quality of life of everyone in our community.

Through regular meetings, social activities, our magazine and website we keep in touch with residents' views and we raise and spend funds for the benefit of the community, from tree and bulb planting to contesting unacceptable development projects.

With five Residents' Councillors we have a strong voice on Elmbridge Council working with other residents' councillors to ensure that decisions are based on the needs of local communities and on good management rather than on party politics.

Our Residents' County Councillor Peter Hickman represents our views at Surrey County Council.

**President:** Ann Levick,

8 Basing Close, Thames Ditton

**Vice-President:** Edward Rowe,

23 Portsmouth Avenue, Thames Ditton

**Vice-President:** Maureen Sheldrick,

34 The Woodlands, Esher

## Thames Ditton Councillors

David Lowe,

8 Embercourt Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 4957

Ruth Lyon,

11 Riversdale Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 3396

Karen Randolph, Deepfield, Giggs Hill Road,

Thames Ditton 020 8398 5005

## Weston Green Councillors

Lorraine Sharp,

168 Ember Lane, Esher 07970 874 925

Tannia Shipley, 'Clinton House'

27 Lower Green Road, Esher 020 8398 2484

## Surrey County Councillor:

Peter Hickman, Little Lodge,

Watts Road, Thames Ditton 020 8339 0931

## Officers:

Chairman: Libby MacIntyre,

24, High Street, Thames Ditton 020 8398 5534

Vice-Chairman: Alan Brauner,

11 Speer Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 0870

Vice-Chairman: Martin Wilberforce,

7 River Avenue, Thames Ditton 020 8398 4732

Hon. Treasurer: Bob Huxster,

5 Station Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 3489

Hon. Secretary: Tricia Bland,

29 Station Rd., Thames Ditton 020 8339 0485

Membership Secretary: Peter Haynes

6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton 020 8398 6019

## Conveners of Sub-Committees:

Health and Community:

Karen Randolph (see above for details)

Planning: Graham Cooke 23 Ashley Road,

Thames Ditton 020 8398 8509

Highways, Drainage: Andrew Roberts

1 Boyle Farm Road, Thames Ditton 020 8786 6882

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**THE NEXT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETINGS ARE  
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# News From the Residents' Association



23 May to 18 September

## County

Thanks to all who helped with the campaign and voted to re-elect Peter Hickman to Surrey County Council on 4 June as councillor for the Dittons and Weston Green. Your support is greatly appreciated. Peter was duly elected with 2635 votes, to the Conservative candidate's 1193. Against the huge national swing to them the Conservatives lost three seats in Surrey with Residents gaining two, LibDems the other, and some close calls. The Conservatives retain an absolute majority, and continue to run the council as they have done throughout its existence.

The highly competent interim Chief Executive of Surrey County Council, hired after the resignation of the last one, made an objective evaluation of what he found before moving on himself. He wrote a damning report that described the Council as “arrogant, bureaucratic, lacking in vision, direction and strategy, obsessed with itself, inefficient, unsophisticated, with a culture of blame and bullying, a lack of leadership, and in denial about its shortcomings.” The report received minimal mention in the opening speech to the Council by its new Leader, Cllr. Andrew Povey (Conservative, Waverley), and it has not been put before the full Council to debate.

In early Summer our Highways Convenor Andrew Roberts compiled a list

of potholes in Thames Ditton and Weston Green and submitted it as a batch to Surrey. The contractors filled the bulk of them – those that met their measurement criteria – within thirty days. We will repeat the exercise: keep an eye on our website. Andrew planted the flowers round the Fountain and the Octagon, which the Association funded. The vandalised light from the Fountain is in the hands of SCC awaiting a quote from repairers.

Surrey have funds to resume the parking consultation this Autumn and a new supervising official is reading himself in. Keep an eye on our website.

## Car park charges

Despite the petition earlier this year the Elmbridge Cabinet refused to allow charges in the Ashley Road car park to be rolled back from the intolerable levels imposed in January. It was even stated that high charges for a day or longer were intended to discourage all-day parkers. This is in total contradiction to Surrey's intention, which the Association has always shared, to get all-day parkers into the car park and free up street parking for short-term shoppers and deliveries. Your Residents' councillors have now got the matter referred to full Council.

Residents may also note a report in The Times forecasting that councils would increasingly use parking charges and

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controlled zones, on which no ceiling is imposed, to raise general revenue as council tax is capped. There is no guarantee that a widespread scheme of controlled parking in the village would not be used in this way by county and borough in years to come.

## Planning

The appeal by developers against Elmbridge's refusal for 4 detached and 3 terraced houses on the **site of the old Harrow** was dismissed by the Planning Inspector. He considered the plans would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area, and the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjacent house due to unacceptable loss of privacy. The 3 storey houses would have a regimented similarity of design that was untypical and unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the area; they would be clearly visible from within the Green Belt at Weston Green and their unsympathetic nature would harm the visual amenities of the Green Belt. The developers have since withdrawn a further application while they think again.

But another Planning Inspector overturned Elmbridge's refusal for Vodafone to erect a **phone mast** by the path from Lower Green Road to Esher station, in an unsatisfactory hearing. There is a better alternative nearby on the grandstand roof at Sandown, where we understand the mast would be acceptable, but this is being ignored by Vodafone. This battle continues: several hundred signatures have already been gathered by the Lower Green Residents on a petition to Network Rail not to allow the mast to be erected on its land.

## Heritage, Conservation and Green Belt

Elmbridge's publicity machinery omitted to mention that English Heritage's annual "Heritage at Risk" register in June listed the Thames Ditton Conservation Area as at risk of neglect, decay or damaging change. Part of this, such as the state of the road surfaces or the use of non-conservation quality yellow lines or lamp posts, may be attributed to Surrey's failings; part to Elmbridge's planners not paying enough attention to the small print of specifications for developments; and part to weak enforcement, of which developers take full advantage. But some residents bear responsibility too – please keep your property well conserved.

On the positive side Elmbridge's Heritage section, who supervised the CHIP reappraisal recently, is as effective as the budget allows in making enhancements to the Conservation Areas, lately replacing the battered street signs in the High Street. The Elmbridge 'street smart' team did a splendid job to spruce up the High Street and clear weeds. Just two men (for the entire Borough) accomplished in a few days what the county and its contractors conspicuously failed to do for several years. Elmbridge Council is also more on top of the graffiti problem than it has ever been.

The credit crunch has caused approved developments as well as applications to stall and there are too many unsightly boarded and neglected properties of note, of which the most worrying is the former Home of Compassion, a Grade 2 Listed building of great historic significance for





Green Belt there, at Sandown and at Cobham. There is Government pressure to accommodate more housing in the region and the Association is concerned that despite general protestations to the contrary aimed at embarrassing the Government, those who presently rule Elmbridge have shown themselves disposed to allow development on Green Belt. Residents are keeping a watchful eye on the Metropolitan Police's Green Belt land at Imber Court.

the village. Thieves stole lead from the conservatory roof and York stone from the exterior. The Association and some of its concerned members pressed the owners, the insurers and Elmbridge to improve its security. We have also been in touch with the Neighbourhood Police team who have stepped up their own coverage. Meanwhile the crumbling and dangerous old wall by the slipway was shored up before removal and should be rebuilt.

The administration in Elmbridge continues to allow Green Belt land in the borough to be eaten away, notably in voting to demolish historic Moore Place in Esher and build another new luxury hotel on a fresh site adjacent to it. Residents' councillors voted against. Other nibbles are being taken out of the

## **Ember Centre**

Following the successful campaign to prevent Elmbridge from axing the Ember Centre, the Vera Fletcher Hall Association, the Residents' Association and a resident who prefers to remain anonymous but was inadvertently mentioned in the last issue, each donated £500 towards computers and other instructional facilities at the Centre, which is thoroughly reinvigorated and fully used by its elderly members. They will shortly start line-dancing.

## **Milbourne pond**

At the time of writing, the pond has dried out completely although annual rainfall in the present decade is running at 6% more than the long-term average, and

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even the wettest July on record failed to make an impact. Residents are deeply concerned, to put it mildly, and our Weston Green councillors have placed the matter firmly on the Elmbridge agenda again. There may be polarisation between officials who prefer to keep the ‘wildlife pond’ as it is, even without any water (or aquatic wildlife) in it, and residents – taxpayers – who want it restored to its former state as a pond with water in it for two centuries. Funding may be a problem. Residents will be fully briefed and consulted – keep an eye on our website.

## Doings and Dates

**St Nicholas Restoration Appeal:** work on the church electrics and heating will now begin on 21 September. Brochures are being distributed throughout the parish and we encourage readers to bear in mind the history of the church and parish which is central to that of the village, the importance of the building and churchyard to the visual scene, and support the appeal with a donation. These can be sent (with Gift Aid on a form in the brochure) to the Parish Office, Summer Road, KT7 0QQ. Donations can be made online at [www.justgiving.com/stnicparish-thamesditton](http://www.justgiving.com/stnicparish-thamesditton) (tested, and works – Ed). Bearing in mind the secular factors mentioned above, the Residents’ Association also proposes to make a modest donation. Works may affect the **Remembrance Service** on 8 November. After a short service at 10am the congregation will proceed to the War memorial to join the Scouts’ ceremony by 11 in time for the act of Remembrance.

**If you can play the trumpet or bugle for the Last Post please get in touch urgently with Hilary Franklin on 020 8398 8551.**

**Janet Espley** has retired after thirteen years as Head of Thames Ditton Infants School, during which the school has consistently been among the very top state primaries in the nation. We welcome Julie McCallum-Allen and Claire Barwell as the new Head and Deputy of the school. Mrs. McCallum-Allen came to Britain from the USA 24 years ago, lives in Putney and was head of Beauclerc Infant & Nursery in Lower Sunbury for 6 years. Mrs. Barwell comes from Hurst Park Primary, has two young children, and lives in Surrey.

This year’s Residents’ Association **Christmas Party** will take place on Saturday 12 December at the Vera Fletcher Hall. Enjoy a three-course dinner among friends together with your favourite music. At £29 a ticket (no increase on last year), it’s a wonderful community occasion and great value. For tickets phone Lorraine Sharp on 07970 874 925 early – it always gets sold out. The **Christmas Fair** in the High Street will be from 1800 – 2200 on Wednesday 9 December, organised by retailers and businesses under the auspices of the Residents Association. There will be an **Autumn Fair** in the Vera Fletcher Hall on Wednesday 21 October from 10 till 6 organised by **Stitchery** as a unique ‘shopping event’ to celebrate ten years of the current shop, which will also feature an exhibition of original paintings by local artist Lisa Tolley.

**[www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com)**

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# Consult Before You Decide



a study in local democracy



*Residents march against the Joviel plan to develop the High Street – 26 January 1967*

The Residents' Association is 75 years old. It embodies a thread of local democracy that has run for centuries in the Dittons and Weston Green. Early history of residents' protest and engagement in local administrative matters is scant but recognisable: petitioning the Lord Protector after Henry VIII's death to dismantle the extensive enclosed deer Chase around Hampton Court (1547); protesting the failure of Lord Onslow's heirs to maintain Ember Lane in good order (1783); forming a vigilante force to act against highwaymen and brigands in the locality (1792); and engaging in the basic administrative

affairs of the parish. The building of railway lines in the mid-1800s met with strong opposition from Thames Ditton residents to the loss of farmland and commons. This led to compensation for landowners and subsequent large payments to local rates by the London and South-Western Railway Company. Then, in 1873 Chelsea Waterworks proposed to build reservoirs on 50 acres of meadow upstream of the Swan, part of the Palace Estate, where Albany Reach is today. Local residents joined together in Defence Committees to mount such a strong protest that the House of Lords threw out the Bill, the reservoirs were built at

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Molesey instead, and what is now our only riverside walk was saved. It undoubtedly helped that famed barrister and former Chancellor Lord St Leonards, then 92, was still active and living at Boyle Farm. The inhabitants of Thames Ditton have repeatedly been well-placed to draw on the resources of some formidable residents.

The late 1800s saw some industry in Thames Ditton, the advent of a newer population to serve it, and the first flush of house-building consequent on the railway links. By the end of the century, the sparse population had more than doubled. The Local Government Act 1894 established county and metropolitan boroughs, urban and rural districts with their own councils, and a year later Esher and Dittons Urban District Council was formed. The focus of local administration shifted away from local householders and the immediacy of the parish. A second wave of house-building followed in the decade after the Great War, and it is from then that we begin to see the pressures that led to residents forming an Association. Traffic was already becoming a problem, and in 1925 we find residents taking a traffic census. The building of Hampton Court Way in 1932 across common land, bisecting Weston Green, was followed by plans to build a by-pass for Esher across the commons too. And so, in 1934, the Thames Ditton Residents' Association was formed to fight it. The ideas and ideals of Residents' Associations were now becoming prevalent: others in South-East England were founded from around 1923 and one had been established in neighbouring Hinchley Wood in 1932.

By 1939 there were a thousand Residents' Associations recorded nationally. The Association was heavily centred on Weston Green (and two years later added 'Weston Green' to its title): only one of the Association's local Government and General Purposes Committee of 10 members did not have a Weston Green address. It is believed that the Association put up candidates for the Council from the outset. The residents of Long Ditton Ward subsequently joined in. The Association campaigned on planning and highways issues, and its support grew steadily. By 1938 membership, at one shilling per head, numbered around 800. There is a certain irony in associations for the defence of local amenities being set up by newcomers, residents of villas lately built over farmland; and in those who were a prime cause of more traffic being active in limiting it or lobbying for it to be routed elsewhere! But we must be glad they did so.

There is little record of activities during the period 1939 – 1945. The end of war, however, saw a renascent Residents' Association. In 1946 it had two councillors and the following year saw dissemination of a stirring document with themes wholly relevant to this day:

*“... Your councillors can only properly represent you and your neighbours if you tell them what you are thinking... it is no good sitting back and grousing about the council's sins of omission and commission, if you don't do anything about it...”*

*“... party politics should be kept out of local government. When we wish to support a candidate we do not ask his religion, nor do we ask his politics, we*

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want to send the best men and women to represent us on the council, without party or creed entering the matter...

“... the areas we represent should not be allowed to become an arena for a political dogfight for politicians and careerists...

“... The Residents’ Association is not concerned with ‘isms’, abstruse political theories; nor with ideologies. What we are very much concerned with are the practical everyday affairs of our local communal life...

“... accepts instructions from no body, no party, no office, no one except the residents who compose it.”

The constitution was recast in 1948 and subscriptions raised to half a crown. By 1951 the founding Vice-Chairman, Col. Rees, who had later become Chairman, was still President of what was now entitled the Thames Ditton, Long Ditton and Weston Green Residents’ Association. Although only nine members attended the AGM that year, membership remained healthy and voters continued to turn out for Residents’ candidates.

## **Informing residents**

There were pre-war attempts to communicate with residents via a newsletter, ‘The Resident,’ that appeared occasionally, and after the war there were occasional such publications and reports in the local press. From these we can see that while support remained consistent, the Association was sometimes less active, sometimes more. At the AGM in 1958 retiring Chairman P. R. Noakes noted the absence of major issues, which indicated “*the generally satisfactory*

*manner in which local affairs were conducted by Esher Council.*” The Association had achieved success on issues such as road safety, street lighting, the condition of paths and ditches, cycling on footpaths, and had been represented at a public planning enquiry.

In 1960 a smart bulletin announced that the Newsletter would be resumed and a public meeting held at the village hall in Embercourt Road. The meeting would be open to all residents whether members of the Association or not, with Residents’ councillors attending, to report and be questioned. The Association’s objectives and modus operandi were restated. Hitherto, it seems that public meetings had been called only occasionally when there was a particular issue of concern to be discussed, with business mostly being effected by the Executive Committee and subordinate Committees of the Association. This was probably the first meeting to set the pattern of present day Open Meetings of the Association, where it was made explicit that “matters brought to our notice by non-members receive as much consideration as those which reach us from members.” There followed a list of the Association’s activities since the War.

This bulletin and meeting appears to be another of the periodic convulsions to re-energise the Association. A certain T. S. Mercer was about to be elected as Press Secretary. The newsletter, however, does not seem to have lasted.

## **Threats to the village**

In 1964 Long Ditton residents broke away to form their own Residents’ Association. But if the parent Association

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in Thames Ditton and Weston Green was worried about any drift downhill, it need not have been. What was about to happen had effects lasting forty years, galvanised the Residents' Association and boosted membership no end. In late 1966, the Association was tipped off at the eleventh hour that a Council Planning meeting was about to approve a plan to demolish the West side of the High Street, widen the road, build a 1960s style boxy shopping precinct and put a road from the Octagon to Station Road behind it. This was dubbed the Joviel Plan, after the name of the developers. The Chairman of the Council Planning Committee, Cllr. Limmer (Conservative), who was said to support the developers' plan, himself lived in the village. The Association managed to get consideration deferred while residents were consulted. There followed a highly-organised campaign that received the support of 70% of Thames Ditton people, mostly irate: on one occasion they marched through the village to Councillor Limmer's house in Speer Road. The London Evening Standard devoted a half page to the demonstration under the headline 'The Fury of The Friendly Village.' Drawing on resourceful and well-connected residents, thorough preparation and mobilisation, the Association defeated the plan.

In the aftermath of 'The Battle of Ditton,' residents' tails were up. Membership reached a high point. The constitution was rewritten, providing for a voting general Council of some fifty members as well as an Executive Committee which met monthly, followed by the Association's Council, before monthly Esher Council meetings. In the

Spring of 1970 a regular publication appeared at last – the quarterly, Thames Ditton Today. That year, historian T. S. Mercer published 'More Thames Ditton Tales and Scandals'. In the foreword he wrote: "*... the village is being eaten away bit by bit and only perpetual vigilance can save it from losing its atmosphere. Our bulwark against this destruction is the Dittons Residents' Association.*"

And so it proved to be, on many fronts.

## Highways

Roads, traffic and parking have been major, often intractable, issues. Faced with lorries and commuters cutting through Thames Ditton to avoid the Scilly isles, in 1970 a traffic census was mounted by volunteers but the authorities seemed more concerned with clearing the roads for more through traffic than in reducing it. A Surrey proposal to put a connecting road from Portsmouth Road to Station Road, demolishing the George and Dragon, was seen off. There followed a series of battles to get Surrey to implement the 1973 Heavy Commercial Vehicles Act by restricting lorries over three tons from the Thames Ditton 'triangle' – and also to press businesses in the Woodlands in Weston Green to restrict voluntarily the movement of HGVs to one agreed route. Finally, in August 1980 an order was made to ban heavy lorries from passing the railway arches at Thames Ditton station. Further operations were mounted to monitor, witness, photograph and report to the police the many lorries whose drivers ignored it.

**Parking** has also been a long-running issue. In 1971 Ashley Rd car park was established and a year later there were



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established and a year later there were proposals to remove cars parked against the wall of the Home of Compassion, which had caused accidents and one fatality. In 1974 the Association resisted draconian police action to ticket cars parked along the High Street, noting that: *“... a degree of parking in the High St., by slowing down and discouraging through traffic, contributes to its safety... one of the great benefits of the village both to customers and to shopkeepers is that it is still possible to briefly park and shop.”* The problem of all-day parkers became increasingly serious throughout the 1980s: there was a colourful leaflet campaign to get them to use the car park, with support from local shopkeepers and High St residents who contributed campaign expenses.

In 1992 the Islanders petitioned for speed humps in Summer Road; they even raised £600 which would pay for one hump! The Association asked Elmbridge to look at **traffic calming measures**, and also to prevent commuter parking in Basingfield Rd and Lower Green Rd. Elmbridge carried out a traffic study, but action was deferred while Surrey & Elmbridge considered the issue of parking enforcement following decriminalisation of parking offences. After three years of study, debate and public consultation, controversial speed bumps were installed in 2001, and the 20mph zone in 2003, with a dramatic reduction in accidents. An amended parking scheme, however, ran into difficulties. In Weston Green, suggestions to restrict parking near Esher station led to such a wide area being concerned about displacement of parked cars that a scheme was judged

unworkable. In Thames Ditton any scheme not only had to be self-financing but needed to take into account the interests of all residents, including the Islanders, who kept their cars in the area. Moreover, responsibility for Highways was now taken on by Surrey from Elmbridge, and the Association observed that it was *“extremely difficult for our councillors and officers to get access to Surrey’s Highways department.”* With a Residents’ Association County Councillor (Peter Hickman) elected for the first time in 2005, parking was back on the agenda. The Association carried out a further major exercise to consult residents in 2006-2007, and after reconnaissance work by Surrey and extensive official public consultation, the formulation of a parking scheme again ran into difficulties. Residents’ interests as well as those of retail and other businesses, commuters, office workers, and parents using cars for the school run, were too often competing and incompatible. The budget and the allotted time was exhausted before conclusion. As of Autumn 2009, the consultation will be renewed over the next few months under a new Surrey official.

## Roads

The publicly-owned commons are an obvious easy route for any strategic planner charged with building a road or railway link from South-West London, crossing the Thames by the reservoirs to link up with roads now established on the north bank and connecting with Heathrow and the motorway system. There were such proposals in 1966 (‘Link Road’) and again in 1971 (‘Ringway 3’) and 1975: the ‘inner orbital route’ – a four lane

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highway to relieve the river crossings at Hampton Court and Walton. Again in the early 1990s, the HASQUAD (Heathrow and Southwest London Quadrant) proposals to build a new motorway to Heathrow would have destroyed the commons round Weston Green and made Thames Ditton's roads worse rat-runs. Each time such proposals were aired, the Association spent an enormous amount of effort working in conjunction with like-minded organisations to research, consult the public, expose Surrey's Chief Engineer to public meetings and lobby against. To date, that these efforts have succeeded owes as much to the enormous costs of the projects, and occasionally timely economic recession as to the consideration of officials and Ministers. Plans for a third runway at Heathrow are likely, sooner or later, to place a through route across the commons back in the frame. Other Association activities on highways over the years included a very long and ultimately fruitful campaign to improve safety along **Hampton Court Way**.

## Planning

Planning has been a bread-and-butter subject for the Association from its inception. It has made decisive interventions on crucial planning issues since the Joviel Plan ignited the fighting spirit of the village in 1966. A host of lesser but cumulatively important applications has been rigorously contested. The Association also demonstrated a constructive approach.

In 1973, proposals to build 150 houses on the **Old Pauline** sports grounds were successfully resisted, along with plans to

build a twelve-storey block of flats on the site of decaying **Ferry Works**, and the Council's intentions to develop the remaining Albany riverside including the replacement of the old Vaudeville club, then used as a warehouse. On the **Albany** site, a competition for redevelopment proposals organised by the Association was won by the Skiffers, and the Association played a part in ensuring that the plans eventually approved contained provision for the continuation of that sporting club. Equally, the Association took a constructive view of the Old Paulines' subsequent plans to build the health and squash club we have today, with accompanying parking (some of which was parlayed into use for High Street offices and others). After reviewing the options to acquire the Ferry Works site for public access to the river, which proved costly and unfeasible, the Association promoted the work of architect Katharina Dry (later Halasz), a resident, for a sympathetic restoration of this significant industrial building to provide continuing local industry and employment without noise, smell or other drawbacks.

This positive approach was successful enough for the same architect to be called upon for the conversion of **AC Cars'** premises in the High Street into a mixed development of residential and office accommodation, with parking, that we now have at Harvest Lane. Again we see the Association being constructive, but firm. Having given the proposals a fair wind, residents were not going to stand by when the developers later breached planning conditions to add height to the building in construction. The Association



*Ferry Works – an outstanding restoration to preserve local employment*

economy as part of the character of Thames Ditton, rather than yield to pressures to convert buildings to residential use. As well as plans for the AC Cars site, plans to redevelop the old **Foundry** opposite Ferry Works were also supported, with modern offices, sheltered accommodation, and provision of more parking spaces.

In 1993 the Association found itself fighting on two major fronts. **Sainsbury's** had proposed a superstore on the Seething Wells Waterworks site, and **Tesco** revealed their interest in the site of the old Milk Marketing Board at Giggs Hill Green. These sites were already in commercial use. The Sainsbury's proposed supermarket was twice as big as their Cobham store plus parking for up to 800 cars and 431 houses and flats. Tesco proposed a marginally smaller store but nevertheless huge, with a filling station and an office block. Several of the surviving small retailers in Thames Ditton would have been put out of business, and

when the association researched at first hand the daily vehicle movements at Cobham and other superstores it was plain that the already serious traffic problems in our area would be quite insupportable with either new supermarket, let alone both. Moreover the listed waterworks building at Seething Wells would be demolished and the prospect at Giggs Hill Green irretrievably impaired. A packed Open meeting at the Vera Fletcher Hall revealed overwhelming opposition to the Tesco proposals in particular.

Working with neighbouring associations and others like-minded, the Association hired a barrister and was represented at appeals. Both supermarket proposals were rejected in 1995. The Association then went to work to find a constructive way forward for the Giggs Hill Green site. By now, Residents' groups formed the Cabinet in Elmbridge Borough Council and those from Thames Ditton were well placed to be heard and heeded. At the end of 1996, after no less than four sets of developers' proposals had gone to appeal, plans were approved for 140 houses, 4 acres of recreational land and a health facility. That we have these facilities, public tennis courts and a recreational area is to a very large extent attributable to the Association's efforts as is the fact that we do not have a gated and private estate there with maximum density of identical houses facing the Green. An article in the Summer 1997 issue of Thames Ditton Today, "The Final Chapter" by Stan Perry (planning



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issue of Thames Ditton Today, “The Final Chapter” by Stan Perry (planning convenor) and John Barton well illustrates the painstaking, detailed work of the Association, its constructive approach, and firmness when developers’ intentions varied from what was approved.

Always seeking the proper application of planning guidelines as well as consultation with residents on planning proposals, the Association has also devoted effort to the planning strategy that underpins those guidelines. It campaigned from 1970 for the establishment of Conservation Areas in Thames Ditton and Weston Green and with the Town and Country Amenities Act 1974 these soon became a reality. It researched and submitted on the ‘Surrey Structure Plan’ in 1978 and since then on further strategic planning documents for the county and for Elmbridge, has latterly contributed to the reappraisal of the Thames Ditton Conservation Areas and is now considering the Elmbridge draft Core Strategy for the period to 2026. From 2001 it also pressed for all phone masts to require planning permission.

## **Shops**

As well as providing parking for shoppers, the fostering of small retailers that contribute to the village character has been a concern since the mid 1970s. In 1977 a major tussle failed to prevent closure of the sub-Post Office at Winter’s Bridge. In 1988 Alison Dwelly, then 16, wrote a seminal work in Thames Ditton Today recording the disappearance of village shops over the previous decade, which led to the Association setting up a working group: the support of our local

MP was also enlisted. From that time the Association has actively, and usually successfully, defended small retail premises against change of use. With some setbacks: in 2004 the Association, after mobilising the whole of Weston Green and researching and mounting an energetic case, unsuccessfully resisted the closure of Weston Green Post Office as part of the euphemistically-named “Post Office Network Reinvention Programme.”

## **Water in, water out**

Drains and water have been frequent themes, with the Association predicting, then reacting to the floods of 1968 and lobbying for the flood prevention measures then instituted; trying to nail the sewage smell in the High Street for thirty years and in 1989 pressing Thames Water to reduce pollution entering local rivers; during the present decade successfully persuading Thames Water to invest several million pounds in upgrading the sewage scheme for Thames Ditton; and battling hard with county officials and others to get drains properly maintained near Esher Station and in Station Road. Support for residents’ efforts to preserve the two ponds in Weston Green, and involvement in works to clear the flow of the River Rythe, have also featured.

## **Noise**

1972 saw the start of a long campaign against excessive aircraft noise which took years of research and effort, working with like-minded organisations in the area. After persuading Surrey and Esher to support more acceptable proposals on local overhead routes, lobbying London Airport and the Department of Trade made an impact. Subsequently plans for a

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helicopter service linking Gatwick and Heathrow to be routed over Thames Ditton and Weston Green were seen off, and the route was moved to the north side of the Thames. Aircraft noise re-emerged as an issue in 1987 when airlines pressed for increased night flying from Heathrow. The following year, the Federation of Heathrow Anti Noise Groups (in which the Association played an active part) was successful in getting night flights restricted.

### **Community, amenity and social**

The Association has always been active with small, but cumulatively significant, initiatives to beautify the villages by planting trees – particularly after the great Storm of 1987, and also along Albany Reach and Giggs Hill Green; planting flowers and bulbs, and occasionally organising litter picks or scrubbing graffiti.

The swell of support following the Battle of Ditton led to the Association's first recorded social evening: 300 people sat down to a dinner staged by 'younger members' at the youth Club in 1971, the forerunner of the annual residents' Christmas Party. Events were also organised to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee year, and the millennium celebrations when a domed tent was erected at Colets for a Ball. Latterly the Association has fostered and provided insurance cover for the Christmas Fair in the High Street.

Scouts, Guides, and sporting clubs have also been given modest, and sometimes significant, support. The Association played a role in securing new accommodation for the Ajax Sea Scouts

and modern premises for the Skiffers; in preventing developers' plans to build 12 houses on the Tennis Club and supporting the Club's subsequent efforts to change the law (and then staging a fund-raising event for the Club's appeal to buy the freehold); in supporting the Cricket Club and the Harry Hawkes Eight; and currently in supporting the Guides' efforts to raise funds to restore their hut.

The Association has been very active in the long-running battle to preserve hospital facilities in Thames Ditton, and in the purchase of the old Village Hall and its restoration to the Vera Fletcher Hall. But these histories are more properly set in the context of the Friends of the Hospital and the Vera Fletcher Hall Committee with which key Association figures were involved.

### **Local Government and boundary change**

From the outset the Association resisted local government reorganisations that would dilute the local voice on local matters or lead to decisions being taken in more distant bodies. In 1971 it supported Esher Urban District Council's bid to remain a separate authority, but reorganisation in 1973 saw Esher merged with Walton & Weybridge to form Elmbridge. Elections that year to the new council (to exist from 1 April 1974) saw 3 of the Association's candidates topping the poll, and a young mother of four, Ruth Lyon, elected for the first time. But now the Association had three out of sixty-six councillors (subsequently 60) instead of three out of thirty-six on the old UDC. The Local Boundary Commission's

*continued on page 27*

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# Curtain Up



## at the Vera Fletcher Hall

In its eighteenth year, our Autumn programme brings the best of the country's performers in a splendid mix of drama, music and children's entertainment. One highlight is the return of **Louis de Bernieres** and Ilone Antonius Jones to celebrate National Poetry Day on Friday 9 October. "**Notwithstanding**" is an evening of stories, poetry and music featuring de Bernieres' new poetry and his latest book, with tales of English village life accompanied by mandolin, guitar and flute.

On Friday 16 October we welcome back **Commedia Productions** with Mozart's **Magic Flute**. Sung in English, this is an exciting new full-scale production blending passion and mystery with the Queen of the Night and comedy with Papageno and Mozart's sublime music. The singers, from major opera companies, are accompanied by Commedia's pioneering "virtual orchestra". Anyone who came to their "Madame Butterfly" last year will know what a treat is in store.

**Songs from the Potting Shed** on Friday 23rd October sees international opera singers Pippa Longworth and Karl Daymond celebrate their love of all things horticultural- even the snail, slug and frog – which spawned some of the greatest poetry, music and frustrations known to man. Put down your spade and come into the garden, Maude! Pippa and Karl have won critical praise from Maria Ewing, The Times and the Financial Times. This promises a great evening for garden lovers and opera buffs

alike. Opera lovers have another treat on Friday November 27th when Charles Court Opera presents Iolanthe – Gilbert and Sullivan's ever popular "fairy opera", with its satire on the House of Lords and the political party system (what has changed?), with "Tripping hither, tripping thither" and "When I went to the Bar as a very young man". Banished by the fairy queen 25 years ago for marrying a mere mortal, Iolanthe returns with the news that she has a son Strephon, who wishes to marry Phyllis, a Ward of Chancery. Unfortunately for the lovers, the Lord Chancellor also has his eye on the lovely Phyllis but after much singing and quite a bit of dancing both Peers and Peris arrive at a satisfactory arrangement and everyone can go home happy.

**Love & Madness Productions**, who gave us their memorable "Othello", Playboy of The Western World and last year's "La Ronde" return to the Hall on Friday 13th November with their productions of "**A Taste of Honey**" and "**Romeo and Juliet**" in the afternoon and evening. The Independent newspaper says of Love & Madness that they are reinventing Shakespeare while remaining faithful to the original text". Shelagh Delaney's "A Taste of Honey" has become a stage classic with its story of Jo, a 17 year old working class girl in the 1950s who leaves home to embark on a series of unsatisfactory relationships. It helped to create a genre which revolutionised the





*Romeo and Juliet –  
photo by Love and Madness*

English theatre and is directed by Neil Sheppeck with a stirring background of jazz. In exploring the pains of youth it is complementary to “Romeo and Juliet” and is directed by Owen Horsley who spent three years with the acclaimed Cheek by Jowl company and whose recent “Edward II” won rave reviews in London.

The Hall has a reputation for high quality chamber music and we have a special treat on Friday November 6th when two brilliant young musicians from the famous Yehudi Menuhin School in Cobham, **Cosima and Sao Soulez Lariviere** (violins) join **Nigel Hutchinson** (piano) in a concert including Bartok, Prokofiev, Paganini and Sarasate. Cosimo and Sao’s parents live in Thames Ditton and their children are among the elite young musicians in the whole country,

studying under the teacher at the School who taught among others Nicola Benedetti. The concert is in aid of the Mayor of Elmbridge’s charity “Newlife Foundation for Disabled Children”. The tickets will include canapés and there will be a bar for drinks at the tables.

As always our children’s programme sells out early so if you have children or grandchildren don’t delay booking! On Saturday October 17th Martin Bridle the Puppet Man returns with “**Goldilocks**”. Martin is brilliant in giving the traditional tale of Goldilocks and the three bears extra humour and drama. On Saturday 28th November Image Musical Theatre returns with their “**Beauty and the Beast**”, a family participation musical based on the European fairy tale where Beauty sees beneath the ugly frightening exterior of the Beast.

Finally, Christmas is celebrated with two splendid seasonal productions. On Friday December 11th **Muse and Music**, with a West End cast direct from the Jermyn Street Theatre, presents “**Christmas Gold**” with the joy of the season packed into an hour of cabaret, comprising carols, show songs, comedy and poetry. On Friday January 15 Charles Court Opera return with their inimitable pantomime for all the family – “**Dick Whittington**”, a thigh-slappingly sensational and terrifically funny production, toe-tapping routines and musical treats from pop to opera. Definitely not to be missed !

See page 46 for times and tickets for these shows. You can keep in touch with events at the Vera Fletcher Hall on the website:

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demarcation of wards was undermined by an unwanted challenge from Long Ditton, and in the subsequent public enquiry the Association successfully prepared and argued a case for the status quo in conjunction with the Thames Ditton Conservative Association.

While Weston Green has generally been attached to the ancient Elmbridge Hundred, the history of the Dittons lies predominantly with Kingston Hundred and parish: but we have always been on the very borders, with residents preferring Elmbridge and Surrey. Tussles have arisen, and will likely occur again. In the winter of 1989 a battle loomed to prevent Thames Ditton and Weston Green wards being transferred to Kingston (with its high density planning guidelines). In 1992 the subject arose anew with a Boundary Commission proposal to transfer the majority of Long Ditton to Kingston, which could well have expanded to include Thames Ditton and Weston Green. The Association supported Long Ditton's opposition to the proposal, and the outcome was success. Then in 1994 the Local Government Commission reviewed council structures in Surrey with the aim of reducing two tiers to one. That year there were not one but two Boundary Commissions – on parliamentary and local government. Kingston constituency was to be split and part joined with Richmond. Kingston wanted instead to take in the Dittons, Hinchley Wood and Molesey. Again there was a good deal of research, preparation and lobbying with satisfactory results. Kingston's constituency plan was rejected, and in 1995, Secretary of State

John Gummer decided to preserve Elmbridge, retaining two tiers of local government.

## **Politics without politicking**

Like other Residents' Associations, the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association was established as a non-political organisation. But to put forward candidates for election is in essence a political act. The foregoing history of achievement makes abundantly clear that direct engagement has brought significant and worthwhile benefits to these villages. The Association has taken a pragmatic view at the cost of frequent agonising over politics. It tries to avoid party politics and prefers to focus on issues.

In these parts the dominant political force during the past century has been the Conservative Party and we can see that in the first three decades of the Association's existence the people who made the new Tories, the growing business and professional middle-class, were essentially the same people who made the Residents' Association without the political hoo-hah. It would not have been in the Association's interest to rival the Conservatives too strongly: in 1951, the Thames Ditton Conservative Association had some 2000 members. The Residents' Association numbered some 800 households. Probably, many of these were the same. For many years there was evidently a tacit understanding that there was room to co-exist: the Association's candidates for the borough Council might not often be contested by the Conservatives and vice-versa; there was no challenge at County level; and a



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residents' group running the local Council was hardly viewed as a serious prospect.

A turning point was 1966 and the Joviel Plan, which energised the electorate behind the Association and flagged up an area of contention between Residents and party Conservatives – development that put profit first. And a principle dear to the Association – consultation of the residents. Similar things were happening elsewhere in Elmbridge. By 1976 there were 36 Conservative councillors, 14 from Residents' Associations, 7 Labour and 3 Liberals. The Conservatives still had one councillor in Thames Ditton and one in Weston Green with the Association holding the other seats. The Conservatives gradually lost ground in the borough. In the mid 1980s a joint Residents-Liberal Democrat administration briefly led Elmbridge before Conservatives regained control in 1988. The Residents had an appetite to contest more seats when there were candidates available. Shortly after 1988, Conservatives were also instructed by Central Office to contest every seat (nationwide). The days of any 'tacit understandings' were gone.

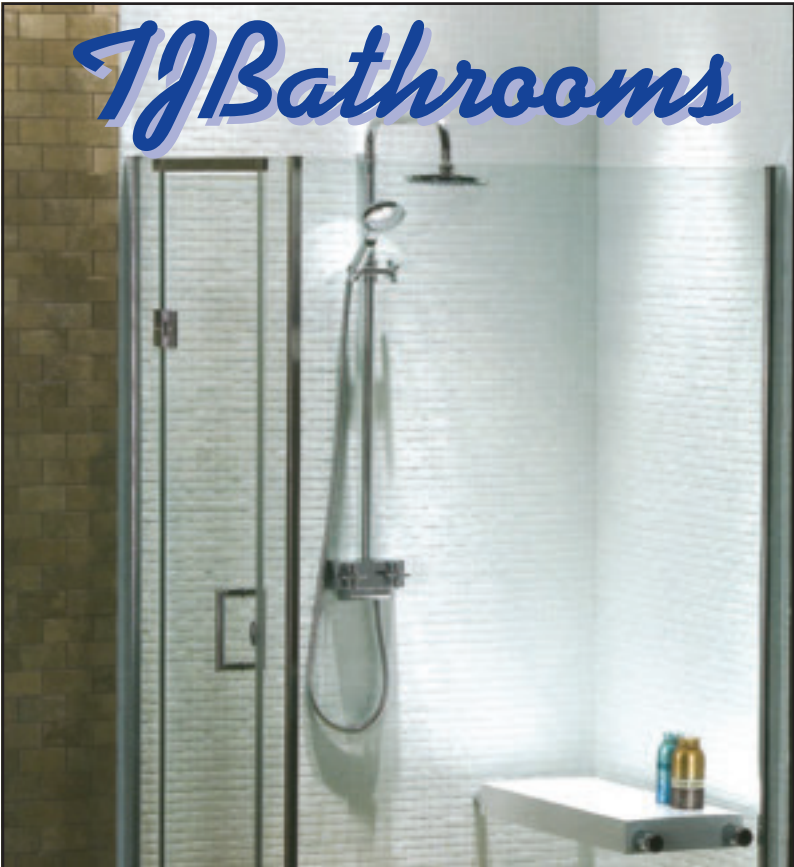
After elections in 1992, of 60 councillors there were just 19 Residents, but 22 Conservatives who refused to form a minority administration: the lot fell to the Residents. None of the political parties would take posts in the Residents' administration, no doubt wagering that the Residents (many of whom were inexperienced at Council) would fail with ignominy. The Residents agreed a common platform which the LibDems and Labour indicated they would

passively support. This was a success. Three years later, council tax had been reduced by 35% without a cut in services, and the Residents were set for a protracted sway in Council until 2006.

The Association and our local residents most certainly benefited from the increased say in borough affairs during a period when there were major issues in Thames Ditton and Weston Green. This came at a price, however. It is noticeable that the Association's centre of gravity shifted somewhat towards Elmbridge and its borough-wide institutions. It also meant that to regain office the Conservatives felt obliged to emphasise differences and attack the Residents: which they did. Meanwhile the Association was able to draw a distinction between politicians in local government and those at Westminster. It retained a useful working relationship with MP Ian Taylor, whose support was enlisted for a variety of causes, including the fight against the HASQUAD motorway proposals, support for small retailers, the rejection of Tesco, and the struggle to preserve local hospital facilities. Many moderate conservative residents drew a similar distinction: they would support the apolitical Association in local elections, and the Conservatives in national elections.

Finally, with the national political parties' continuing chicanery in funding, electoral reform was imposed in 2000. The Association was obliged to register with the new Electoral Commission if its name was to be used by its candidates. Ever pragmatic, with great reluctance it bit this bullet. As of 2009, at least forty other Residents' Associations around the

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## Towards 100 years

There may be newer readers who think – erroneously – that not only is the Association 75 years old, but its members are too, and this story will prompt the question: ‘What next?’ or even: ‘Will it live to be 100?’

After researching this account, it is clear that the Association has achieved a great deal of real substance and indeed has been that very bulwark described by T S Mercer. Without it, Thames Ditton and Weston Green would have lost more green space and commons, have less commerce, fewer sports, recreational and cultural facilities, be noisier, smellier, wetter, destroyed by roads and traffic and look more like Hounslow. The villages could well have been split up and parts absorbed by Kingston. The Association has stuck to its principles, it has adapted to change: its constitution was again modernised two years ago. Its active members have been, and are, diverse, resourceful and of very wide experience: from architects, doctors, pharmacists and barristers to business people, redoubtable mothers, film producers, shop workers, journalists, experienced civil servants, diplomats, Montgomery’s Head of Camouflage and the Government’s Chief Restorer of Paintings.

The Association continues to attract new blood, though never as much as it would like. ‘Apathy’ has been a leitmotif of many a Chairman’s annual review for more than sixty years. The growing pressures of working life inhibit volunteering. Yet the Association retains an effective Executive and a band of volunteers that would be the envy of its rivals. Attendance at Open meetings waxes and wanes according to

topical issues, but membership remains solid and residents consistently make the effort to vote.

There will always be threats to these villages, small or large, new or – like those of roads, traffic, threats to Green Belt, boundary changes and the downside of living so close to Heathrow – old and oft repeated. The Association has experience in countering them, and a contingency fund. It also has an eye for improvements and a sense of community.

As long as threats remain; as long as politicians fail to consult residents, all of them, and act on local issues accordingly; as long as there are those who care about Thames Ditton and Weston Green enough to volunteer their time; and as long as villagers want the authorities to do things *for* them rather than do things *to* them; then there will be a Residents’ Association here.

**Keith Evetts**

*This account is based on items in the Mercer Collection; the books ‘Fifty Years of Thames Ditton and Weston Green’ and ‘A Historical Sketch of Thames Ditton’ by Philip Burchett; and reports in the issues of ‘Thames Ditton Today’ from 1970 to the present day. All these sources are available in the Dittons Library. I have also researched internet archives and taken some oral testimony, though not (yet) as much as I should have liked. With limited time to summarise the story and working alone, I may have included some inaccuracies. I should be grateful if readers would write to point these out (gently!), or to contribute direct personal experiences of events that may add a different perspective. While many individual residents’ associations in this country have their own histories, it seems the history of these associations within the broader democratic context has not yet been written.*

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# The Blue Plaques Scheme

celebrating 75 years



To commemorate the Association's 75th anniversary we launched a Blue Plaque Scheme for Thames Ditton and Weston Green, and invited residents to nominate sites which

deserve to be recognised because of their historic nature or the people who have lived there. We received a flurry of nominations and drew up a 'wish-list:'

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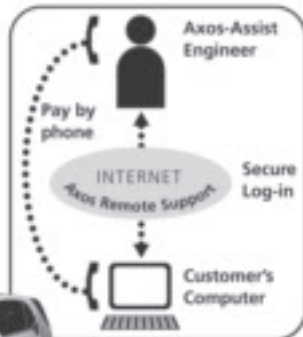
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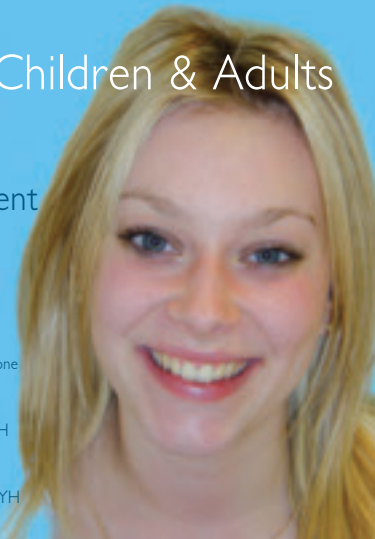
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## **The Old Slaughter House (Stag's Court)**

Probably the oldest (1580) secular building in the village, this barn became a slaughter house in the 18th century. Richard 'Dickie' Porter, the Royal Deer Catcher, rented it together with a butcher's shop in the High Street – now Stitchery.

## **Cesar Picton, Picton House**

Cesar Picton was brought to Britain from Senegal as a six year-old slave and was well-treated and endowed by the aristocratic family to which he was given. He later amassed a considerable fortune as a coal merchant in Kingston, bought the imposing and delightful Picton House in the High St. in 1816 and retired here until he died in 1836.

## **Hannibal Speer, Old Manor House**

Hannibal Speer was lord of the Manor of Weston and a key benefactor to the villages. He gave the drinking Fountain at the Boyle Farm roundabout, land for the Village Hall in Embercourt Road; land for the Cottage Hospital; and on long lease for the Lawn Tennis Club, both situated in Weston Green Road. He built and lived in the Old Manor House, Station Road, originally known as West End Lodge, from 1880.

## **Peter Willans, Maybury Lodge**

In the late 1800s Peter Willans, who lived at Maybury Lodge in the High Street, was famous for the design and manufacture of the high speed reciprocating steam engine at Ferry Works. Another Willans engine powered

early dynamos to light, for example, the Burgtheater and State Opera in Vienna.

## **Arthur Brian Burton, the old Foundry, Summer Road**

In the late 1800s, as Cox and Sons, the Foundry cast bronze statuary by leading sculptors. Its greatest works were produced under Burton's long stewardship as manager from 1900-1933 including the huge Peace Quadriga at Hyde Park Corner and Eros in Piccadilly Circus.

## **Lord St. Leonards, Boyle Farm**

Born Edward Burtenshaw Sugden in 1781, son of a London hairdresser, Edward became Britain's highest earning barrister. MP for Weymouth from 1828, he was made Solicitor-General, knighted under the Duke of Wellington, and rose to be Chancellor. He bought Boyle Farm as his home and took a great interest in the village.

The list will be refined as we consider exactly where plaques should be positioned, and seek owners' permission. When plaques are mounted, fuller background on each will appear here.

Others such as the Milk Marketing Board and Sir Sydney Camm, designer of the Hawker Hurricane, have been nominated and more would be welcomed, particularly from Weston Green residents. This is just the beginning of a project that we hope eventually will lead to historic walks round the villages along 'blue plaque' routes, to keep our history alive for those who come after.

*Tricia Bland  
Hon. Sec.*

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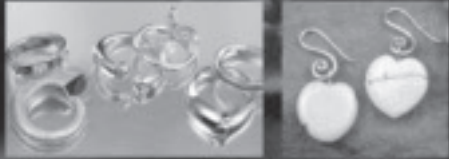
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# A Century of Dittons Scouting



The Dittons Scout Group began 100 years ago and will celebrate this milestone with events during 2009/10. The Scout Troop was formally registered in September 1910 under the Leadership of Rome Attwell, who was to be the driving force behind the Group for the next 38 years. Meetings of boys had been taking place under a lamp post on the north side of Giggs Hill Green. When Rome Attwell was persuaded to help they moved to a corrugated iron hut in Thames Ditton Churchyard where the church hall now stands. Subsequent meeting places included the harness room in the stables at Boyle Farm, the local brewery, a garage and a laundry shed. The early years were marked by camps in and around Thames Ditton, Esher and Cobham and even attendance at the King's Rally in Windsor Great Park.



*Archie Lawrence, at 97 Dittons' oldest Scout attending celebrations on 13 September 2009*

The Group's early service to the community included fitting a trek-cart with hoses and standpipes to help with fire fighting. They laid on a demonstration for Baden-Powell when he visited Kingston to receive the Freedom of the Borough in 1913. During the First World War the Troop was kept going by the Patrol Leaders. Afterwards, the Group flourished in all sections: Wolf Cub Pack, Scout Troop and Crew of Rover Scouts. The Rover Crew assisted in many National Scouting events and led the way in the County. In 1932 a friend of Rome Attwell, Harold Wesley, gave the Group

the present Headquarters at The Shack at Willowbank. The Group grew in number and individual proficiency. Many summer camps were held in the New Forest and along the Dorsetshire coast. Members of the Rover Crew did regular service at Thames Ditton Cottage Hospital.

With the onset of the Second World War many Leaders were called into the Services. Again the Patrol Leaders and older Scouts took over running the sections. Rome Attwell's nephew, Roger,

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*handing on the standards in the 100th year*

who was involved in Heavy Rescue work in London, took over the Scout Troop in 1941. All Scouting activities continued: camping was under trees to hide from enemy aircraft. National Service work, like erecting air raid shelters, was also carried out.

Scouting accelerated after the war. The Senior Scout Section was formed and in the years between 1950 and 1975 twenty-six boys gained the King's or Queen's Scout Award.

Over the years a number of members have attended World Scout Jamborees, and been active in both Surrey County

and Esher District activities. A steady flow of boys, and now girls, have developed good citizenship through Scouting in The Dittons. In 2008 a second Beaver Colony and second Cub Scout Pack were opened. Former members of the Group have spread out over the world and taken the Group's unique spirit with them; this year a new Group has been started by one former member in a South African Township.

All of the early members of the Troop have 'Gone Home' and later generations now lead the Sections. Individuals continue to achieve personal triumphs through the Scout Programme. For our young people of Scout Troop age to

go on achieving, and getting full benefit from membership of the Group, we need more adults to come forward and help put that programme into action.

***Neville Biden, Group Chairman  
(A Ditton since 1942)***

*Neville is too modest to mention it, but at the centenary celebrations many others did: after a few years in which the lack of volunteers to help run the Group almost led to its terminal decline, with his and Keith Berry's inspiration it has been turned around and is now one of the ten fastest-growing groups in the country. They have a good time too – 140 parents and friends attended the celebratory supper and barn-dance at the Shack, and around 200 adults were at the lamp post ceremony of renewal on Giggs Hill Green this year. Hats off – and do join in! Editor*

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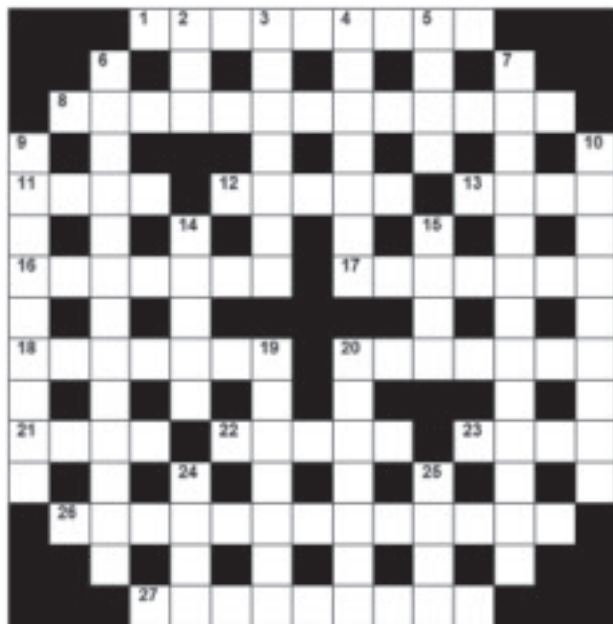
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# Autumn Crossword

## By Margaret Briggs



A £5 Voucher for spending in any Thames Ditton or Weston Green shop will be awarded to each of the first three correct entries opened after the closing date of 7 November 2009

The completed puzzle (or photocopy) enclosing your name and address, with the envelope clearly marked 'Crossword Competition,' should be sent to:

Thames Ditton Today  
Crossword Competition  
6 Church Walk  
Thames Ditton  
KT7 0NW

### ACROSS

1. Two days before tomorrow (9)
8. Seasonal vacation (6,7)
11. Possesses consistency of snow (4)
12. Twists round currents of air (5)
13. Outside entertainment contains Regal appearance inside (4)
16. Belt around the Earth in imagination (7)
17. Ponders the proper way to reply (7)
18. Weeping (2,5)
20. Old retiree looks like his dog (7)
21. Shares out sparingly (4)
22. Large aquatic animal (5)
23. Got in the Royal Academy first but was still wet (4)
26. Wine is first across and can be taken anywhere (13)
27. Drinkers' end (9)

### DOWN

2. Tree with serrated leaves (3)
3. Get rid kindly of those that tear about, but end with ones slower than the rest (7)
4. Ed makes error so as to ask for it again (2,5)
5. Make raid on dry land (4)
6. Find atomic energy concept difficult? Why not quote Mary Hunt? (7,6)
7. Contradictorily wrong sometimes but actually right often (13)
9. Occasionally but only in selected eras (9)
10. Grip an end anyway to satisfy whims (9)
14. Put back spare parts to secure (5)
15. We and the Latin Queen – friendly or not (4)
19. One who falls usually on their feet (7)
20. Musical group of three voted first (3,4)
24. Against everything in American tins (4)
25. Three Wise Men (4)

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# Solution to the Summer Crossword

by Michael Jackson



N	O	R	T	H		M	A	L	A	G	U	E	N	A
I		I		U		U		I		O		L		P
G	R	O	U	N	D	N	U	T		R	O	A	D	S
H			G		I		E		G		P			E
T	A	P	E	R	E	C	O	R	D	E	R	S		
S		E		Y		I				O		E		G
H	A	R	T		U	P	A	N	D	U	N	D	E	R
A		I		S		A		O		S		T		U
D	E	C	A	T	H	L	E	T	E		L	I	M	B
E		A		R				O		S		M		S
		R	E	A	R	R	A	N	G	E	M	E	N	T
R		D		N		I		T		V				R
I	C	I	N	G		G	U	I	N	E	V	E	R	E
M		U		E		I		M		N		R		E
E	L	M	B	R	I	D	G	E		S	P	R	A	T

Two correct entries this time. Each wins a £5 Voucher for spending in any Thames Ditton or Weston Green shop. Well done! Come on, the rest of you...

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Dittons and Weston Green Neighbourcare	Sue Mayes	020 8398 6714
<b>Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services</b>		
Information, Meals Services, Community		
Transport, Bus Permits		01372 474552/4
Elmbridge Community Alarm Service		01372 474560
Elmbridge Relief Carers Scheme		01372 474547
Ember Centre for the Retired	Mon & Thurs	020 8398 9870
	At other times	01372 474553
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	020 8398 6132
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3rd Thames Ditton Brownies	Mrs Heather Horler	020 8398 0364
2nd Thames Ditton Rainbows	Nicki Sutherland	020 8398 4202
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Alan Nolan-Davies	0844 414 2826
1st Weston Green Guides (All Saints)	Mrs. Louise Lewis	020 8398 4843
2nd Thames Ditton Guides	Mrs. Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
1st Weston Green Brownies (All Saints)	Mrs K Williams	020 8398 1300
2nd Weston Green Brownies	Linda Hall	020 8941 4913
1st Weston Green Rainbows	Mrs Helen Hill	020 8398 3135
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Alison Derrick	020 8398 0041
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Esher Floral Art Group	Mrs. M. Dingle	020 8398 3943
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Friends of Walsingham Care	Miss Valerie Chicken	0208 398 2932
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: Pat Farmiloe	020 8398 2787
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Arts and Heritage Club	Carol Butcher	01932 867511
Claremont PROBUS Club	Mr. P. Collins	020 8398 3125
Claygate Bridge Club	Hon. Secretary	020 8398 1710
Colets Health & Fitness	Giordano Orsini	020 8398 7108
Dittons Skiff and Punting Club	Hon Secretary	020 8398 1642
Dittons & Hinchley Wood Royal British Legion	Hon Secretary	020 8398 6263
Ember Players (Drama) Ember Sports Club	Anne Segall	020 8941 4528

Ember Sports Club	Mrs. Pauline Wareham	020 8979 8977
Ember Sports Club: Bowls	John Garland	01932 220221
Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Dr. David Cooke	01932 862841
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Margaret Robinson	01372 842401
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
Esher Camera Club	Billy Buchanan	020 8398 3169
Folk Dance Club	Pam Phillips	01372 373745
Hinchley Wood / Dittons PROBUS Club	Ken Thomas	0208 398 0526
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Nigel Hardy	020 8398 8361
Long Ditton Garden Club	Mrs. Ann Allen	020 8398 1718
Model Railway Society (Hampton Court)	Secretary	01932 241224
Mothers Union (All Saints)	Val Lomax	01932 860344
Old Cranleighan Rugby Club	Tony Price	07801 837129
Old Cranleighan Hockey Club	Eds Copleston (Men)	07775 940703
	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
River Club (BMYC)	David Walker	0870 460 3586
Rotary Club, Esher	Geoff Morris	01932 868454
Rubber Bridge TD Lawn Tennis Club	Val	020 8399 9972
Surbiton Croquet Club	Alec Thomas	020 8398 2391
Surbiton Golf Club	Secretary	020 8398 3101
Surbiton Hockey Club	Secretary	020 8398 2401
Thames Ditton Lawn Tennis Club	Chris Lewis	07770 562569
Thames Ditton & Esher Golf Club	Mark Rodbard	020 8398 1551
Thames Ditton Squash Club (Colets)	Dave Peck	020 8398 7108
Thames Ditton Cricket Club	Howard Frish (Secretary)	07947 561449
Thames Ditton Marquetry Group	Jasmine Berry	020 8398 4358
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### SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Ember Choral Society	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher Recorded Music Society	Miss S. M. Garrat	020 8398 8541
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Julia Presland (Sec)	julia@mulcott.fsnet.co.uk
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Lynwood Allotment Society	Barry Jordan	0776 282 5041
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National Trust: Richmond Association	Membership Secretary	020 8894 2972
Soroptimist International (Kingston District )	Secretary: Pat Harman	020 8390 3507
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Please contact the Editor to amend these listings

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The traditional tale of Goldilocks and the three  
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Saturday 28 November 2.30 pm  
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# Two ways to treat your Pet

To keep them healthy, pets should be seen at least once every 12-months by a vet. So why not bring them along to Beech House, Thames Ditton for their regular health checks. This way, we can detect potential illnesses early and nip them in the bud.

Our easy parking, fresh, modern & involving premises and professional engaging team will greet you each visit, making your whole experience more enjoyable.

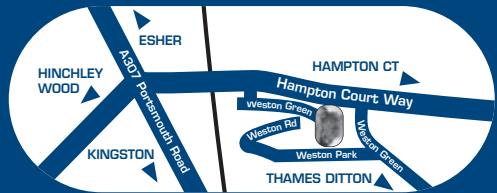
**Prevention, we think, is better than Cure.**

To keep them happy, play with them, exercise them, give them loads of praise and cuddles and spoil them with some special treats and toys. So pop into the "Beech House Pet Stop" for a wide selection of the very best.

(All the products and food we sell have been carefully chosen with your pet's best well-being in mind.)

**Beech House Veterinary Centre -  
Passionate about Healthy, Happy Pets**

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Regular health checks will ensure a longer, healthier and happier life.

**Ring now to book  
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**Beech House Veterinary Centre,  
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