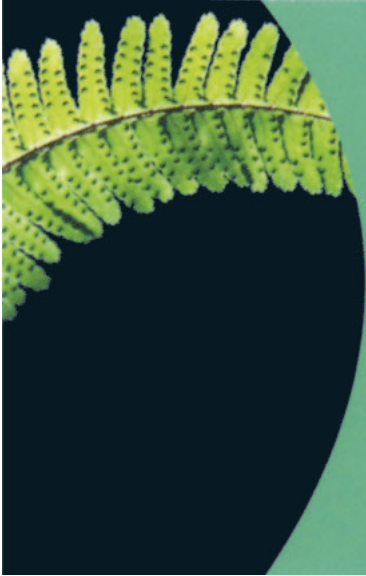


# THAMES DITTON — TODAY — SUMMER 2012





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# THAMES DITTON TODAY

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

Published quarterly since Spring 1970

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Summer 2012

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## Advertisers

Thames Ditton Today is delivered to an influential 4000 households throughout Thames Ditton and Weston Green. Contact Verity for rates for full page, half and quarter page advertising.

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Cover photo: *little owl surprised by summer in nearby Bushy Park – photo by professional photographer, resident David Spink (07966 238 341)*

[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 Boots 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 organization 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:** Maureen Sheldrick,  
34 The Woodlands, Esher

**Surrey County Councillor:**  
Peter Hickman, Little Lodge,  
Watts Road, Thames Ditton 020 8339 0931

## Thames Ditton Councillors

Sandra Dennis,  
Little Bradley, Thames Ditton 020 8873 2936

Ruth Lyon,  
11 Riversdale Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 3396

Karen Randolph,  
Deepfield, Giggs Hill Road,  
Thames Ditton 020 8398 5005

## Weston Green Councillors

Ruth Bruce,  
15 Imber Grove, Esher, 020 8398 8324

Tannia Shipley, 'Clinton House'  
27 Lower Green Road, Esher 020 8398 2484

## Officers:

Chairman: Libby MacIntyre,  
24, High Street, Thames Ditton 020 8398 5534

Vice-Chairman: Martin Wilberforce,  
7 River Avenue, Thames Ditton 020 8398 4732

Hon. Treasurer: Bob Huxster,  
5 Station Rd, 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 02 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 February – 19 May 2012



*Ruth Lyon and Ruth Bruce*

Thanks to the very many volunteers who helped with posters, delivering election material, telling, and to election agent Peter Hickman for doing the clerking, and to all those residents who turned out on a chilly, damp day to keep an independent voice on the council for Thames Ditton and Weston Green by electing the Association's candidates. Ruth Lyon was re-elected to represent us in Thames Ditton, with 73% of the vote. Ruth Bruce was elected for the first time to represent us in Weston Green, with 78% of the vote there. Both have excellent track records of service to our

local community. Both their main party political rivals appeared out of the blue from PR and lobbying consultancies, an activity much in the news. Turnout was generally low throughout Elmbridge, reflecting perhaps the general disgust with politics which has been heightened by the never-ending sleaze, sharp practice, broken promises, and incompetence reported daily in the national media whichever political party rules Britain.

Elsewhere in the Borough the Residents gained seats in Hersham and Walton, and the LibDems regained Long

---

Ditton, from the Conservative party. The postponed election in Esher ward will take place on 21 June, where Esher Residents have an excellent candidate in businessman Gary Lay.

## **Dry under Esher Station Bridge**

For twelve years our indefatigable Weston Green Councillor Tannia Shipley has been working away at the authorities and riparian owners to clean out and maintain the drainage away from the bridge. Over the period, she has trudged the two miles of culverts, drains and gutters that make up the system, many times; and become an expert on the subject. She and Peter Hickman our Councillor in Surrey have herded officials from Network Rail and Surrey County Council into the same pen, and they and their contractors have gradually investigated and cleared blockage after blockage culminating in a major job to clear the Victorian culvert under the Long Arch along Portsmouth Road last year (it looked as though it had been blocked for a hundred years).

Once, the recent deluge, the first such since the Long Arch was cleared, would have led to a persistent flood under Esher Station bridge, with sodden commuters unable to pass on foot without a wetting. But this time the waters drained almost immediately: the morning after revealed it as dry as the proverbial bone! So – well done, and particularly Tannia, but all involved including the authorities can take credit for working on this problem for so long and it seems with good effect. What's more, this year Surrey's

contractors have been seen maintaining the culverts without being chased. Excellent.

Now for the flooding under Hampton Court Way bridge.

## **Milbourne pond**

This focal point of the Weston Green Conservation Area has existed probably for about 300 years. The building of Hampton Court Way in the early 1930s blocked some of the runoff from the common, and problems began to be recorded in the press a few decades later, since when there have been recurrent and ever more serious episodes of the pond losing water which have culminated over the past four years with long periods when the pond has dried out altogether. Neither does it re-fill properly when heavy rain falls.

The Conservation Area designation for Weston Green emphasises its preservation. Both residents and the council have been energetic in efforts to restore and defend the pond. But during a decade when annual rainfall has been close to its long-term average, all these attempts to save the pond as a proper pond filled with water have failed. And so, determined to find a definitive solution, we engaged a global firm of international consultants to carry out a full hydrological survey of the pond. Andrew Roberts arranged this and ERM Foundation very kindly did the work *pro bono publico*.

On receipt of the report we asked the hydrologists to carry out some further calculations concerning water-runoff from





*Milbourne pond*

the adjacent surfaces. In a nutshell, the solution that will work entails an impermeable artificial liner, with mesh to retain aquatic vegetation. The calculations by the hydrologists show that the pond would be unlikely to receive enough water from runoff alone to fully offset losses through evaporation. To keep the pond filled, an occasional top-up would be needed. This could come from a small borehole to the local aquifer that is

perched a few metres below the ground surface.

We are now tying up ends to present to the authorities a case which will be as complete as possible. It is the only way forward that will guarantee the future of the pond with water in it. If all pull together, that aim can be achieved. Once approved, the matter of funding will need to be addressed – which may require community fundraising.

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## Planning

Elmbridge planners rejected **Colets'** application to extend their car parking into the residential area by the Infant School. There was a very large number of objectors.

**Ba Siam** (the former Crown Inn) have not appealed against Elmbridge's refusal of their retrospective application for the angular structure adjoining the restaurant. The deadline for appeal against the decision passed on 30 April. They have until 30 June to remove the structure, failing which the Council will prosecute for non-compliance with an enforcement notice (a criminal offence).

Elmbridge refused what amounted to a change of use for the **former Bakery** to convert it to a private dentists' clinic. The refusal has been a matter of debate in the village. The refurbished shop is in an ideal trading position in the High Street. It remains policy to preserve shops bringing footfall to the High Street, and resist their conversion into non-retail uses (which can later proceed more easily to residential use). This approach has succeeded in stemming the loss of shops over the past 25 years, but it bears re-examination. On a positive note, the village bakery was lately taken on by Nice Buns which is doing a good trade; the former off-licence, now Mehra's store, is gradually being improved and stocked on a 15-year lease, and the ex-hairdresser's (Stuart Lane) is now Dolce, a tasteful coffee-shop with cakes and newspapers run by Francesco, who intends to add good ice-cream in the near future. All of these attract footfall to the High Street.

## East of the Turnpike

From time to time Thames Ditton residents East of the Portsmouth Road have commented that they feel under-represented; but have stood back when invited to do something about that. So the Association's Executive Committee has now co-opted **Shirley Davenport**, whom you may know from the Ripieno Choir, to give more voice East of the turnpike. Shirley, who lives on Thorkhill Road, used to work as a journalist including for the Sunday Telegraph. She's already flagged up several ideas for improving the area, and is now deploying her skills as a newshound on the local history of the roads and houses in that part of Thames Ditton – especially the period in which they were developed post-1880. She has unearthed some valuable info about Southville/Westville Roads, which is of use not just for history but to bolster views on current planning applications there. If you have information from your deeds or other sources about roads in that area, their history and their inhabitants in times past, please get in touch with Shirley on 020 8873 3702. With her mellifluous voice, 'tis a pleasure to call.

## Doings and dates

By the time this issue hits the streets we will have had the first High Street Summer Fair (and several Jubilee street parties). **Tracy Blatchford** has done a terrific job organising the fair, with participation from many businesses, the schools and About Thames Ditton. The High Street will be enlivened by the new Union Jacks procured by **Tricia Bland** with loans from the Association, which has donated a few hundred pounds for the

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publicity materials and provided insurance cover for the event under its auspices.

For the third year running, Thames Ditton resident **Jayne Thomas** has an entry in the RHS Hampton Court Flower Show, 3-8 July. Her entry is in the Summer Garden category, and is called "Celebration and Jubilation". Jayne won a silver medal for her Midsummer Night's Dream garden two years ago, on a Shakespearean theme; and last year her Mont Blanc garden won a bronze.



*those sporting moments – cricket on the Green*

**Caroline James** is organising another Secret Gardens event in the vicinity of the High Street on 17 June. **Pam Bannister** is again organising the wonderful Queen's Road Hanging Basket and Box competition to coincide with the Flower Show. Judging on 4 July.

The outstanding **Ripieno Choir** is staging its 2012 Supper Party at the Yehudi Menuhin School, Stoke D'Abernon on 23 June. Call 020 8399 7231 or Google their website for more information.

Colets' Deputy Gym Manager **Damian Wood** is raising a team of at least fifty cyclists for the Capital to Coast Cycle Challenge on 1 July, in aid of children's charity Norwood and and the Down's Syndrome Association. The core of this will be Colets members but others in the local community are encouraged to join in, with pre-training and a carbohydrate loading feast (Lasagne) in the mix. The sixty miles from Esher College to Hove will be more sociable than competitive. Contact Damian on 0208 398 7108.

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The **Guides** in Thames Ditton have got their final grants (hooray!) which means that works to restore the Hut on Church Walk should begin imminently. Many thanks to all those who have helped raise the money – further details to follow later in the year. A few thou are still needed to replace the ancient heating system which finally gave up the ghost last year.

A welcome to **Rebecca Hicks** as new Head of Thames Ditton Infant School, and a fond farewell to Julie McCallum-Allen who leaves the post at the end of this academic year. Mrs Hicks has been Deputy Head of Christchurch Primary School in Surbiton for a number of years.

Our cover photographer this month is resident **David Spink**. He's given up a career in marketing to make a living by his camera. His advertisement is on page 10: and to whet your appetite, here's another of his photographs:

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



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# Horsing Around The Manor

## – the Mounted Police



*a fine dapple-grey snorts for the camera at Imber Court*

Our first encounter with the Mounted Police in these villages is usually when traffic slows down behind two large horses walking side by side, their police riders clad in fluorescent jackets. A less romantic encounter may be with an enormous pile of steaming horse droppings along one of the local footpaths to school!

Yet we all love to see the horses and take pride that it is here they are acclimatized to traffic and narrow spaces in learning their duties.

Curious to know how relevant the Mounted Branch is today, I went along to their headquarters at Imber Court to find

out more. I was greeted by Sergeant Peter Agnew who kindly gave me a tour of the stables and training grounds. It was clear from the start that a love of horses is definitely a prerequisite for joining the Mounted Police. Sgt. Agnew greeted each horse with real affection and the occasional polo mint which it ate up with immense satisfaction.

The history of the Mounted Police began back in 1760 during the bad old days of highwaymen, who were plaguing London's turnpikes and making life generally unsafe for travellers. Sir John Fielding, the Bow Street Magistrate at the

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time, developed a plan for mounted patrols to deal with the problem. The plan was so successful that the original Horse Patrol of eight men increased to more than 50 in 1805. The Bow Street Horse Patrol could then provide protection on all main roads within 20 miles of Charing Cross. Today, there are over 140 officers and 107 horses based at seven operational stables across London, but it is here at Imber Court that every officer and horse receives the extensive training needed in order to deal with policing in a city like London. The type of work that a police horse undertakes is varied and demanding, from the pomp and ceremony of a military parade, to football matches and sporting events, public demonstrations and incidents best forgotten such as last summer's riots.

Sgt. Agnew explained that the type of horse most suited to police work is a large, draft horse often interbred with another breed such as a thoroughbred. Size definitely matters, but if a horse is too big this can be disadvantageous to a smaller rider, and with a 50/50 split between men and women Mounted Police officers, it is important that a horse is not too large to ride and control.

After a horse has been purchased it's given a month's trial to see whether it has the right temperament for police work. As prey animals, Sgt. Agnew explained, a horse will instinctively run from danger. A good police horse will stand its ground in the face of danger and not flinch. It's really old fashioned bravery that they are looking for. Those that do not pass the trial are either sold on or are used to help train novice police riders.

The training at Imber Court is individualized for each horse, lasts up to six

months and is separated into three stages: Red, Amber and Green. At the Red stage, horses are asked to stand still and be calm. They should also be able to get in and out of horse boxes with a minimum of fuss. At the Amber stage, horses are introduced to new environments including the streets and green spaces around Thames Ditton. Residents will often see two riders side by side and it is often the horse on the inside that is the novice, accompanied by a more experienced 'escort' horse on the traffic side of the road.

The Green stage is the final stage before the horse is issued to an officer out on duty. The horse will patrol up to two hours daily, will have been escorted into Kingston on more than one occasion, and should be able to stand and move forwards in busy traffic. At this stage the horse is introduced to recordings of military bands, crowds and trains in a controlled environment within one of the indoor schools at Imber Court.

It was inside one of these schools that I was greeted by a life-size puppet of the Grim Reaper! Sgt. Agnew explained that at the G20 demonstrations, some police horses had been alarmed at the sight of life-size puppets of the Reaper and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Who wouldn't be? So they decided to get one at Imber Court and use it for training purposes. Other training techniques include smoke machines and riot shields which the horses are slowly exposed to. In order to get them used to having objects thrown at them, which can often be the case during a riot, a trainer will begin by throwing rolled-up balls of paper at horses, followed later on by tennis balls so that eventually the horses get used to that sensation.

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*seen a thing or two, guv'nor*

Once a horse has passed this stage it is issued to a trained officer at one of the seven mounted stables within the Metropolitan Police. The training continues and the horse is gradually introduced to more challenging situations including football matches, escorting the Military and tasked patrols.

The grounds at Imber Court are far larger than I imagined, with a number of stable blocks, an enormous indoor training centre, tack rooms, a smithy where the all-important horse shoes are made, large paddocks and even an odd circular building called a horse walker, where horses can be led round and round without a rider in order to burn off a bit of energy before they hit the streets of Thames Ditton. It's even used to exercise those horses experiencing sore backs – a common complaint – that cannot be

ridden for a while but which still need exercise.

The final stage of my tour took me to the museum, a rather dark, eerie room full of ceremonial uniforms and swords, old photos, paintings, a life-sized stuffed policeman on horseback in full regalia, and a grisly photo of the devastation left by the 1982 bombing by the IRA of the Royal Horseguard, where the lifeless bodies of a number of dead horses lay on the ground. In a glass case beneath is a mound of cards and letters from well-wishers hoping for the speedy recovery of Echo, a horse that was injured in the blast but who did survive.

As for the foreseeable future, Sgt. Agnew remains optimistic that Imber Court will continue to train officers and horses to the highest possible standard. Imber Court is a centre of excellence for other Mounted Police forces from around the world, many of whom come here to complete specialist courses. In fact, before the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, police officers from the Metropolitan Mounted Police went over to help train the South African Mounted Police officers in public order tactics.

2012 will be an extremely busy year for the Mounted Police. There's the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June plus the Olympics to contend with. Every horse will be out doing its duty during this busy time. So the next time you're held up in traffic in Thames Ditton because of police horses, it's worth remembering the intensive training they've had to go through and the important role they'll probably have to play in London this year.

**Samantha Williams**

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# Lamberts of Weston Green:

## Part II – Admiral Robert Lambert



*“On a superficial view the body appeared very fat, which state was confirmed by the first incision down its centre, where the fat was upward of one inch thick over the sternum, and one inch and a half over the abdomen... lungs were quite sound... heart was of the natural size but thickly covered with fat.”* Opening Napoleon’s abdomen, his personal physician Dr Autommarchi found *“...a mass of cancerous disease.”*



*death of Napoleon on St. Helena – Steuben*

Thus read the momentous dispatch by Rear-Admiral Robert Lambert, announcing Napoleon’s death via the Admiralty to the nation. As Commander of the Royal Navy squadron guarding the former Emperor on the island of St. Helena, he had earlier sent forewarning: *“General Buonaparte has been attacked with a dangerous illness which is expected to prove fatal. In the event of his decease I shall immediately dispatch a vessel to England with the Intelligence.”* Napoleon died on the evening of

Saturday, May 5th, 1821. He had himself requested that an autopsy be carried out. The body was inspected next day by Lambert among many others, both British (including the wonderfully named General Pine-Coffin, from an enduring Devonian military family of Pine-Coffins) and from Napoleon’s French retinue. That did not prevent conspiracy theorists from claiming in the 1960s that the British had poisoned Boney with arsenic; but studies over the past decade have reconfirmed that the cause of his death was indeed stomach cancer.

With some months remaining of his final seagoing command, Admiral

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Lambert, with his flag over HMS *Vigo*, 74 guns, left St. Helena that September and via the Cape station cruised homewards to Weston Green, arriving in home waters in January 1822. On board the *Vigo* were two noteworthy young officers: his youngest brother George, as Flag Lieutenant, and Lt. Robert Lambert Baynes, of a family intermarried with the Lamberts and probably named after his father. Both were to become well-known Admirals in due course – one starting a war by exceeding his orders and the other, by ignoring his, preventing one. As they went, they charted the inlet 250 miles north of the Cape which today is the holiday resort and winemaking area named Lamberts Bay.

For Robert Stuart Lambert, “Dear Bob” as his mother Catherine called her eldest son in her diaries, it was the culmination of a naval career that began at the age of 8 during the American War of Independence, when he shipped aboard HMS *Niger* in 1779 as midshipman under his father’s command. They transferred to HMS *Leviathan*, then used as a store-ship in the West Indies, which foundered in the Atlantic during a storm in February the following year. It’s not clear whether they were on board at the time, but they came back from Jamaica aboard another vessel. His mother kept young Bob in London for a couple of years after that, and sent him to Mr. Virgin’s boarding school in Hammersmith, while his father was off again to Jamaica in 1782 for his final post as Commissioner of the naval dockyard there.

At 14, an age where today’s teens play video games, eat pizza and scowl at their

parents, Robert’s service record shows him again at sea off the cold, wet coast of Scotland from 1785 – 1787 as midshipman in the sloop HMS *Termagant* (18 guns). Her acting captain was Lt. Rowley Bulteel – a most attacking skipper. A fellow midshipman on the little *Termagant* was 13 year old George Cockburn, reputedly a priggish chap, who wound up as First Lord of the Admiralty.

“Dear Bob” kept up his sea time with consecutive postings, still as midshipman, in the Mediterranean aboard HMS *Carysfort*, 28, (1787-1789) under Capt. Matthew Smith, then during the French Revolutionary Wars on HMS *Crown*, 64 guns, under Commodore (later Admiral Sir) William Cornwallis in the East Indies 1789 -1791. Promoted Lieutenant at the age of 20, Robert Lambert served out there on the sloop *Ariel*, 18, for five months, then for two years on the *Phoenix*, a frigate of 36 guns. The previous *Phoenix*, which foundered in 1780, had been commanded by his father and also by Richard Onslow, a friend of the family and nephew of Arthur Onslow of *Ember Court*. Returning to the Channel Fleet by 1794, in March Robert was posted to the *Barfleur*, 98, under Rear-Admiral Bowyer’s flag and captained by Cuthbert (later Lord) Collingwood, Nelson’s friend.

A major battle between the newer, heavily armed French fleet and the Royal Navy took place off Ushant that year, the Battle of the Glorious First of June. Lt. Lambert was in the thick of early action on 29 May when HMS *Barfleur* and HMS *Orion* attacked the *Indomptable*, 80, with

*(continued on page 27)*

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# Getting an Oar in



*up for it – TD Junior School*

The Skiffers are keen to bring in new blood, and the students at Thames Ditton Junior School are keen to get out of school when it's not raining. A group of highly competent Mums provides the catalyst and it all comes together.

Thursday afternoons at the school are set aside for activities and one of these is now provided for about sixteen boys and girls at the Skiff & Punting Club. It's become very popular – over 100 applying, the lucky ones to be picked out of the Sorting Hat.



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Said Charlotte: “It’s cool to get out of school and miss spelling which is the most boring subject!” For Mary it had been her first time rowing on the river “but you fall into it quickly,” she observed. Others have tried boating before, William for example on his parents’ boat at Ipswich.

The rowing machines rock, they say, with an awesome digital game where

you work out while “eating white fish and avoiding black ones.” And there’s no messing about on the river. All is well-ordered and enthusiastic, with proper instruction and a watchful eye on safety. Good for the children, good for the Club. Admirable use of time, wouldn’t you say? But about that spelling, now...



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**Summer** is on the way and, following another year which saw a further increase in letting complaints, **The Property Ombudsman** is renewing his call for standards to be raised across the lettings industry in his latest Annual Report. His office dealt with 7,641 letting enquiries during 2011, a 26% increase on 2010. Slightly more than 25% of these complaints concerned letting agents not registered with TPO and there is concern that those consumers may have little alternative but to undertake potentially costly legal action to pursue their complaint, a daunting prospect in the current financial climate.

TPO acknowledges that it is not current Government policy to consider regulation of letting agents but his report highlights several areas where simple changes could be made to provide greater protection for consumers and, in doing so, support those letting agents who are already providing a service in accordance with agreed industry standards.

Landlords who are new to lettings, will no doubt be attracted by lower fees and may not enquire what protection the agent can provide should problems later occur.

Agents who protect client money and follow the TPO Code of Practice can give landlords this reassurance. If all landlords ensured that their agent had these credentials, TPO firmly believes that tenants and landlords would see the benefits and stories concerning ‘rogue agents’, with which we are all familiar, would dramatically reduce.

The Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 required all sales agents to register with a redress scheme. Since then, his office has seen a year upon year improvement in standards relating to sales agents. If letting agents were compelled by law to register with a redress scheme, he believes that standards across the lettings industry would improve in a similar way.

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mutual destruction. Dismasted, the Frenchman was not taken by the ravaged British ships, being towed ignominiously, but indomitably, home to Brest by another French vessel. Casualties on the *Barfleur* were 9 killed and 25 wounded; Admiral Bowyer lost a leg.

Robert Lambert was then posted to HMS *Queen* that August, in the Channel Fleet, monotonously patrolling the coast of France to watch for and engage enemy ships sallying forth.

The Earl Spencer was made First Lord of the Admiralty on 18 December 1794 and Robert's father lost no time in lobbying. His mother noted on 8 January: "*Capt L saw Lord Spencer. Wrote to Bob.*" In May 1795 he was promoted Master and Commander, despatched to the East Indies again, and given the acting captaincy of the sloop HMS *Swift*, 18 guns. Under the flag of Commodore, later Admiral, Peter Rainier, he was made Captain of HMS *Suffolk*, 74, with effect from 13 September that year.

Now the *Suffolk* became part of history when on the outward voyage, alas for local prestige shortly before our Robert Lambert took command, she trialled the Navy's new remedy for the scurvy. At the instigation of Scottish physician Gilbert Blane, who pioneered health reform in the Navy, the Admiralty's Sick and Hurt Board ordered that lemon or lime juice be issued with the grog on board the *Suffolk* during her voyage to Asia. There was no serious outbreak of scurvy. The Admiralty then ordered that citrus juice be used throughout the fleet and the Americans began calling the British 'Limeys.'

With his crew healthily charged up on

grog and lime, Captain Lambert set off to Trincomalee with the squadron and a military force to 'reduce' the Dutch garrisons in Ceylon, Amboyna and Banda, and install as Governor Hugh Cleghorn (whom you may remember as the senior civil servant who received Jacob Hansler's counter-intelligence report – TD Today Spring 2011). Things went well: all the Dutch colonies were taken in the course of 1795-1796, and great booty was seized. Robert Lambert was made substantive post-captain on 11 April 1796, and captained the *Suffolk* until 18 June 1798 when he fell ill. He eventually returned home in February the following year. Now, Captain Robert Stuart Lambert at age 27 had been in the Navy for 19 years – including a few years at school, but still on the books; and continuously at sea for the past thirteen. It was time to find a mate.

In the summer of 1798 his parents bought Weston House, earlier called the Mansion House. It's not clear what state it was in after five years of legal wrangling following the death of its previous owner, George Jarvis, in which his estranged daughter Lady Mary Twysden had contested the will (and paid the rates). The Lamberts had the building pulled down and rebuilt, and by early 1799 it became their weekend and summer residence. If here you notice a slight discrepancy between this and the previous article, which was based on earlier accounts, it's because my further progress on the Lamberts' papers and naval postings has made it clear that the Captain Robert Lambert who bought Weston House was the father. At that time, both Robert Sr and Robert Jr had the rank of

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Captain. Robert Jr. was still convalescing in Asia.

Young Captain Robert spent a good deal of time at Weston Green when not busy cultivating influence in London. Towards the end of 1799 he was frequently to be seen driving over to Richmond to court Charlotte Pigou whose well-off family lived there. There were calls between her parents and his, a rather frenzied week in November with three Balls in three successive nights including one at Hampton Court; the parents signed the marriage contract and on Wednesday 11 December 1799 Catherine Lambert, who had spent two guineas on a new gown, wrote: "*Went to Marylebone Church where my Dear Robert was united to Miss Pigou. We all breakfasted at Wimpole Street and dined there. The new married pair went to Weston.*" And two days later, the rest of the family followed them down here!

Late the following year Robert and Charlotte leased 40 Somerset Street, Portman Square, which he kept as one of his London houses until his death. The couple may then have had a son Robert who died: but I have not yet definitively traced him, and I am still toiling through the diaries (several years are missing). However at age 30 Robert Lambert was off to sea again in January 1801 as Captain of HMS Saturn, 74, a handsome command in the Baltic expedition of Admiral Hyde Parker. In the reserve squadron under the cautious Parker for the battle of Copenhagen on 2 April, he did not share the glory of the attacking squadron led by Nelson – who famously ‘turned a blind eye’ to Parker’s signal and

pressed home his risky assault, with success, against the Danes.

At the end of May Robert Lambert was transferred to captain the frigate *Alcmene*, 32 guns, a lesser command, while James Brisbane, who as Commander of an 18-gun brig during the battle had impressed Nelson, was promoted Captain and given command of the *Saturn*. But luck was with our man: *Saturn* was sent to the Leeward Islands as the flagship of Rear Admiral Totty who, together with several officers and crew, caught yellow fever and died. Robert Lambert remained in the grim, grey, unglamorous Channel then escorting convoys to Newfoundland and Lisbon, and stayed healthy.

Ashore from 2 July 1802, nine months later in April 1803 he and Charlotte christened their (presumably second) boy, John, at St. Marylebone. Alas their baby son died aged two months. Catherine wrote that the couple were greatly afflicted. Robert spent several years without a ship, despite his record and the Lamberts’ good connections. In November 1804 his mother wrote to a family friend in Jamaica: "*Lord St Vincent went out of office without performing his promise of giving my son a ship, he somehow managed to disoblige almost all his friends.*" (St. Vincent, Admiral Jervis, as First Lord was renowned for taking a tough line against influence). "*Robert is yet unemployed but I hope will not remain so long, especially if we have War with Spain which seems but too probable.*" From about that time Robert seems to have taken over Weston House, his parents moving to Brighton for the sea air – old Capt. L. suffering from gout and kidney stones, and dying on 21



*HMS Duncan at Mahon – attributed to Anderson*

December 1805. Robert junior took an interest in community affairs. As Captain Lambert he appears in Thames Ditton vestry minutes in 1806, and in 1809 he contributed to a fund for ‘supplying the Poor with coats at prime cost.’

In January 1812, Robert Lambert was given command of HMS Duncan, 74, launched a year earlier as one of forty ships of the Vengeur class – known by those who sailed in them as “the Forty Thieves” on account of sharp practice in the dockyards. Charlotte appears to have stayed with Lambert relatives in Sussex or London while Weston House was let.

Robert’s 30-month command of the Duncan was spent partly in the Channel on the dreary blockade of Brest, where the ship hit the Black Rocks in September 1813 and pumped its way to Falmouth shipping five feet of water. The crew were involved in a brawl with militiamen in Plymouth a fortnight later. The turn of the year saw the Duncan on convoy duty for Spain, Portugal and the Mediterranean, then escorting another convoy to Cork. In February 1814 she was part of the Mediterranean fleet which chased a French squadron into Toulon. That June, Captain Lambert left her at Mahon, Menorca.

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On return to England Robert Lambert appears not to have resumed occupation of Weston House immediately: it remained let to John Turner. But in 1816 we find Robert back in parish records as a Justice of the Peace and in 1817 involved with vestry administration of the workhouse while his wife was appointed a School Visitor. Charlotte died aged 40 in 1818 at Beauport in Sussex. It is likely



*Napoleon bored on St Helena*

that at this period Robert had built the cottages on his land since known as Admiral's Row (they are opposite All Saints' church), for the cottages appear in our rates book for the first time in 1819, against his name, and that was the year he was promoted Rear-Admiral.

In September 1819 Rear Admiral Robert Lambert was given command of the St Helena squadron with his flag over HMS *Vigo*. After Napoleon's earlier escape from Elba, Britain was taking no chances with the captured General. The posting must have been tedious: Napoleon was bored, and the social life was claustrophobic. Admiral Lambert established himself ashore on the island at The Briars, not far from Longwood where the erstwhile Emperor was housed, and presented his card – but Napoleon declined to receive him. It must have been with some satisfaction that our Admiral

viewed the corpse of the man whose name had terrorised England, and whom his brother General John Lambert had helped to defeat at Waterloo. Another story with which to regale guests over dinner at Weston House!

Rear-Admiral Lambert returned to Weston Green for good at the beginning of 1822. At the end of the year he married again, at 51, to Louisa Ann née Wyatt, 46, the widow of Rev. Thomas Cobb, of Ightham in Kent, and in substantial funds. It looks like Robert had met her in connection with the wedding of his youngest brother George to her daughter Katherine Cobb that summer.

One feels for men who have led an active and adventurous life and who then have to find quieter things to do as they age. He re-engaged with church and Vestry matters, proposing that an organist

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should be offered fifteen guineas a year plus sixpence a day for a boy to blow the bellows, which recalled an earlier controversy as to whether this was a proper use for the rates. Admiral and Mrs. Lambert were also on the School Committee from 1826. On 10 June 1827 Admiral Lambert successfully moved that “*the ancient foot path leading from the Church to Weston Green, be preserved by the Surveyors*” of the Highways. This was seconded by Cesar Picton, and so the inhabitants of Church Walk have them to thank for the Walk’s adoption by the authorities. In due course Robert Lambert, still on half-pay, was promoted Vice-Admiral on seniority.

In October 1832 the Lambert brothers’ endearing mother Catherine née Byndloss died aged 80. Of the slave-owning Jamaican plantocracy (there is a village called Byndloss after her forebears, near Spanish Town), Catherine’s connections and assets, including the Winchester sugar and rum estate in eastern Jamaica, were woven into the Lambert family. In his letters to their Jamaican agent, Robert like his father and mother was particularly concerned that the slaves should be well-treated. The estate was barely profitable. We find him in May 1833 as one of the signatories calling for “*a meeting of Planters, Merchants, Shipowners, Manufacturers, Tradesmen, and all others interested in the Preservation of the British West India Colonies*” at the City of London tavern in Bishopsgate. That same month, the inhabitants of Thames Ditton petitioned the House of Lords for the abolition of slavery. I do wonder how that played with the several notables in Weston Green and Thames Ditton who

themselves had benefited from slave plantations, not least the Vicar, Revd. William Ellis, whose first wife had a large interest in a sugar plantation in Guyana. Later that year “*An Act for the Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Colonies; for promoting the Industry of the manumitted Slaves; and for compensating the Persons hitherto entitled to the Services of such Slaves*” was passed by Parliament and came into force in 1834.

Robert Stuart Lambert Esq, Vice-Admiral of the Blue, died at Weston Green without issue on 16 September 1836, aged 65. His second wife Louisa survived him by two years. He willed to be buried in a plain manner and that “*a simple tablet of record may be placed in Thames Ditton Church,*” where you may see it to this day. It had been a very full life.

### **Keith Evetts**

*Sources include: vast online archives concerning ships, sailors and battles of the Royal Navy; “A St Helena Who’s Who”, Chaplin, 1919; the rootschat genealogy forum; digitized 19thC Newspapers courtesy of Surrey Library Service online; Lambert family papers deposited 1984 in the Surrey History Centre; parish records; and the Wills of Capt Robert Lambert and his son Admiral Robert.*

*T.S. Mercer made a few notes (with errors) about the Lamberts but never wrote about them – perhaps because unsure of his data; Burchett simply mentions their plaques in the church.*

**See also** the Hook or Crook page (46) on Weston House &c.



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# Chairman's Address to the AGM

## Bull points – March 2012



The year has demonstrated that Associations such as ours DO make a difference, even when the odds can appear to be stacked against us.

By rallying local opinion we were able to persuade the Boundary Commission to move away from its draft recommendations to split Weston Green across two electoral divisions. In the Commission's own words, it found the 'evidence relating to community identity and interests compelling,' and decided to modify its recommendations to retain Weston Green wholly within the Dittons division.

Surrey County Council attempted to bring in parking meters in Thames Ditton High Street as part of the implementation of overdue parking measures. We asked residents to object to the pay and display measures which retailers felt would hamper their businesses and which would clutter up the centre of the village. Over 330 residents filed objections, instrumental in Surrey County Council excluding Thames Ditton from its county-wide plans for pay and display, and the County Council subsequently reversed its policy across the county.

These examples show that when we pull together we can make things happen; a weight of public opinion can make a difference; well-thought and presented

arguments can sway recommendations; and it's worth the effort even if the odds look stacked against us.

These things are at the heart of why the Residents Association is important. We provide a focal point for the community to talk through areas of interest and concern and to come to a consensus. We strive to let people know about things that will have an impact on the community. And we rally the effort needed to make a difference. Residents continue to see this – about 30% of total households in the area now actively subscribe. Thank you to Peter Haynes, our membership secretary, and to all the collectors who support him in gathering subscriptions.

Residents also recognise the need to have real local representation in local government. Our candidates Tannia Shipley and Karen Randolph were both re-elected with huge majorities. Along with Peter Hickman, representing us on Surrey County Council, our councillors put in a huge amount of effort on our behalf and we thank them.

**Communication** is key to the Residents Association and we continue to publish our quarterly magazine, Thames Ditton Today, which is delivered by so many willing hands to 4,000 households in the area and seeks to both inform and

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to entertain. Your Association's website provides news, information and a forum for residents to air their views and comments. Thanks to the volunteers who keep them going. We continue to hold six open meetings a year, so that residents can meet and talk face to face with the Executive and Councillors to discuss what is going on.

### **A few highlights:**

To enhance amenities and encourage a community spirit we mounted seven **blue plaques** in Thames Ditton and Weston Green to commemorate significant residents and places within the villages.

In April we had a drive against litter and a number of residents joined in a **litter pick** which cleared a good deal of rubbish. This year also saw the reinstatement of litter bins on Albany Reach following pressure from the Residents Association after the trial to remove them proved unsuccessful.

**Milbourne Pond** is an important landmark and amenity in Weston Green and a feature of the historic conservation area there. This year we commissioned the hydrologists of an international consultancy to examine the area and report. We shall be putting proposals to secure the pond's future. It may be necessary to raise funds.

Our **Snowman** programme has seen more people involved in clearing snow to keep pathways safe.

We supported another very successful **Christmas Fair** with fantastic **Christmas lights**, the result of a very successful fund

raising drive by the team of Tricia Bland, Caroline James and Jeremy Hamilton. It saw events from race nights at the George and Dragon to the Secret Gardens Open Day in June; as well as contributing to funds these events had a great community feel to them. The Christmas season wouldn't be complete without the Association's Christmas Party, and many thanks to Nicola Chetwynd Stapleton organised it this year.

I ask all of you to play your part in keeping the Heart in the High Street by supporting our retailers and actually shopping in the area: "use it or lose it". We all love the village feel and the local shops, but they need more than affection to keep going. We work to retain retail shops in the centre of the village to keep them viable as a whole.

Monitoring and responding to planning applications is a key part of what we do and I thank Graham Cooke for his work as our planning convener. We have supported residents in resisting overbearing development at the Harrow and the Old Cottage hospital. Other planning work included opposing the application for a taxi office at Winters bridge and six houses to replace one at 31 Embercourt Road. It is evident that cogent arguments along with tenacity really can influence outcomes, as is shown by the Planning Inspector's repeated support of the residents' position. The Residents' Association is emphatically not against development but wants to see development in keeping with the character of the area. The proposed changes to planning guidelines, particularly the presumption in favour of



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development, give us cause for concern.

To keep change in character with the area we have pushed for **more attractive street lights** to be installed in the conservation areas when Surrey County Council implements its street light replacement programme.

The history of the association is a reflection of the history of the area. To maintain the record we now have a complete bound set of back issues of Thames Ditton Today in the reference section of Dittons Library – a permanent archive from its first edition in Spring 1970. The Association has also invested in electronic scanning of all back issues of Thames Ditton Today which will be made available to the Surrey History Centre and via our website.

I would like to pay tribute to two former members of the Executive, David Lowe and Edward Rowe, who died over Christmas. Both represented us well on the council. I would also like to thank all the current members of the Executive for the time and the effort they have put in over the last year.

Most of all I would like to thank you for being members and for coming together to make a strong residents association which really can make a difference.

**Libby MacIntyre, Chairman**

*(the speech was delivered in absentia by Martin Wilberforce who took the Chair)*

  
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*Holly Youd with a card for neighbour Joan Major*

Congratulations to Joan Major of Riversdale Road on her hundredth birthday. As it was on 29 February, Joan prefers to count herself 25! When she was really 25, she joined the Air Ministry – the sole woman among four surprised

men. There she met husband Len. They moved to Riversdale Road in 1950. Joan joined the Surrey Archaeological Society: “I knew that nice Mr Mercer, and he encouraged me.” Still spry. Well done, Joan.

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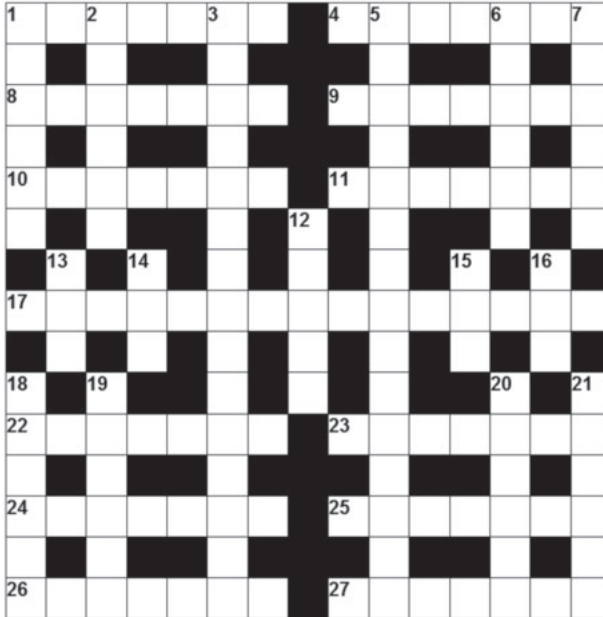
Weston Green School, Weston Green Road,  
Thames Ditton, KT7 0JN



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# Summer Crossword

By Michael Jackson



The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of 7 September 2012 will win a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

Please send the completed puzzle (or photocopy) enclosing your name and address, with the envelope clearly marked 'Crossword Competition', to:

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

## ACROSS

1. A Venetian gondola race (7)
4. Resounding applause as Bolt flashes by? (7)
8. Quickly; lively (7)
9. Driving force till "times up"? (7)
10. Manage to read poem in Old English (7)
11. Another force needed to endure (7)
17. To where athletes come, mighty leaps to perform for glory (3,7,5)
22. One entering pier is an explorer (7)
23. When performing, ice skaters and bell ringers include them (7)
24. A sum of mine paid to Her Majesty? (7)
25. Harsh rate? Use frugally (7)
27. Traveller uses two cranks to keep steady (7)

## DOWN

1. Betrayal, losing head in logic (6)
2. A welcome handshake on leaving (6)
3. Obstacles threatened every wild horse or rider of course (5,3,7)
5. On my watch, Pa, tour of 17 is due here in Weston Green (7,5,3)
6. Keep Ted in a room for questioning (6)
7. ...the impish scallywag (6)
12. Great star or market (5)
13. Greek letter marks the spot?
14. First knight rider on two wheels (3)
15. Paddle used in sailboarding (3)
16. Allow a second serve (3)
18. Greek city renowned for discipline (6)
19. Sloppy corals (6)
20. Graduates of a college, chiefly U.S. (6)
21. Wit and intelligence? *Mais oui* (6)

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# Solution to the Spring Crossword

by Maureen Willcox



Congratulations to **G.P.Clarke of 70, Longmead Road, Thames Ditton, KT7 0JF** who wins a voucher again this time.

The Summer crossword is a little easier than the last two, so more entries are expected.



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# SERVICES, CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND GROUPS

## SERVICES

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Harry Livesey	01372 474555
Dittons and Weston Green Neighbourcare	Avril Ashworth	020 8398 7521
<b>Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services</b>		
Thames Ditton Centre for Retired People	Mon & Thurs	020 8398 5921
Thames Ditton Children's Centre	Tues, Weds, Fri	020 8398 3772
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride,	ask for service at	
Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers Scheme	central switchboard	01372 474474
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	020 8398 6132
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Sally Dubery	01372 463587
Surrey Youth and Adult Education Service	Elmbridge Area	020 8979 8334
M.D.H.S. Household Services (& garden tidying)	Pam Howard (Manager)	01932 248533

## GROUPS

Girl Guiding in TD & WG	Mrs K Williams	020 8398 1300
1st Thames Ditton Brownies	Mrs. Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
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	Mrs J Epps	020 8395 0595
1st Weston Green Rainbows	Mrs Helen Hill	020 8398 3135
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Alison Derrick	020 8398 0041
Dittons Scout Group	Laura Clarke	020 8398 3447
Coffee and chat (United Reformed Church)	Mrs. E. Barker	01372 467491
Emberbrook Trefoil Guild	Mrs. Adrienne Nealing	020 8398 5582
Friends of Bushey and Home Parks	Jean Smith	020 8977 9391
Friends of Walsingham Care	Miss Valerie Chicken	020 8398 2932
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: Pat Farmiloe	020 8398 2787
Parents and Toddlers (St Nicholas church)	Information	020 8398 7211
Ripieno Choir	Nick Harris	020 8399 7231
Surrey Bell-ringers	Nick Pattenden	Nick@FSLimited.com

## CLUBS

Albany Motor Yacht Club	Secretary	01784 466651
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	07710 139417
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	Sylvia Jones	01932 788701
Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Dr. David Cooke	01932 862841
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Annabel Duncan	020 8786 6318
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
Esher Camera Club	Billy Buchanan	020 8398 3169
Esher 41 and Ex-Round Tablers' Club	Dr. R. Tudor-Williams	020 8398 0108
Folk Dance Club	Pam Phillips	01372 373745
Hinchley Wood / Dittons PROBUS Club	Geoff Francis	01932 867771
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)	Jill Cotter	020 8398 4598
Old Cranleigh Rugby Club	Tony Price	07801 837129
Old Cranleigh 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

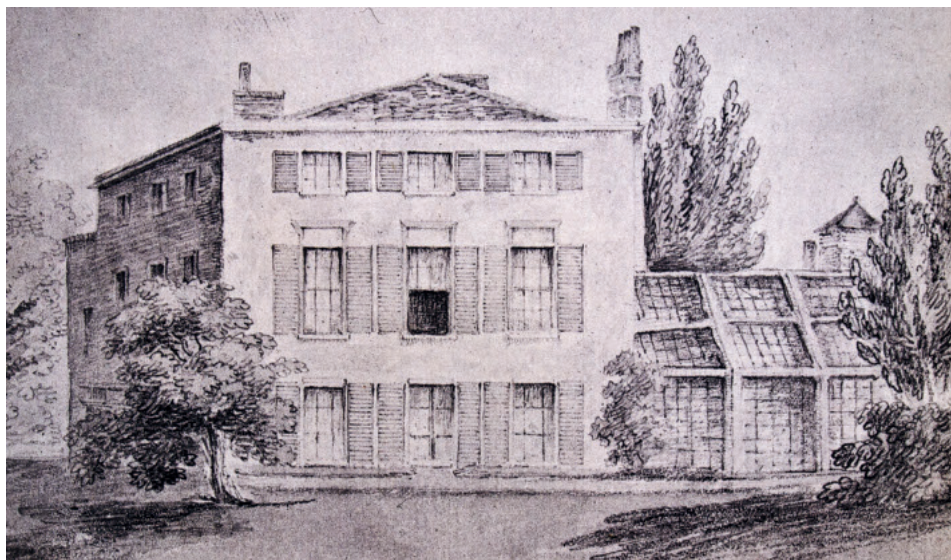
## SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Ember Choral Society	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher Recorded Music Society	Miss S. M. Garrat	020 8398 8541
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Chris Walker (Sec)	0208 398 6651
Esher and District Amnesty International	Secretary	gettle51@msn.com
Hampton Court Way Allotment Association	Lettings: John Morgan	020 8398 3049
Lynwood Allotment Society	Louise Flaig	020 8398 7704
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
National Trust: Richmond Association	Membership Secretary	020 8894 2972
Soroptimist International (Kingston District)	Secretary: Pat Harman	020 8390 3507
Thames Ditton Women's Institute (W.I.)	Secretary	020 8398 8615

## OTHER

Cancer Research UK	Mrs. Vivienne Harris	020 8398 6787
Elmbridge Fairtrade Network	Judy Porter	020 8398 6401
University of the Third Age (U3A)	Hon Sec Anne Brown	01932 881633
Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Helen Mason	08456 528 529
	Membership: Sue Morris	020 8224 0980

Please contact the Editor to amend these listings



*Weston House in about 1817*

My introductory article on the Lamberts drew helpful responses. Mark Clements, whose house stands where Weston House once stood, steered me towards drawings of it in the Mercer Collection, mis-identified by Hassell the artist. Meanwhile Jane Waddell, of Abingdon Cottage on Weston Green, saw the map and is now going to research the history of her house, probably owned by George Robert Lambert. An earlier tip-off from Tannia Shipley led me to Lambert family papers of the late Miss Alice Winsome Lambert of Shropshire. A descendant of General Sir John Lambert, she had accounted herself “*the last of the Lamberts.*” But she was not the last of our Lamberts. Descendants of Sir John’s youngest brother, Admiral George, who

live in Australia, saw my posts in a genealogy forum, read the article and got in touch, sending further documents. One of them will now be passing through Thames Ditton this summer.

Writing about Admiral Robert’s last command at St Helena, I talked to Patrick Harris at Colets, who hails from that island and also knows Lamberts Bay. He told me that a French lady visitor, one of many who still adore Napoleon, lately raised St. Helenian eyebrows by spending the night on the former Emperor’s grave on the island. All Britons must hope there is a stake through his heart! If it wasn’t for him, we wouldn’t have had Income Tax...

**Editor**



# Two ways to treat your Pet

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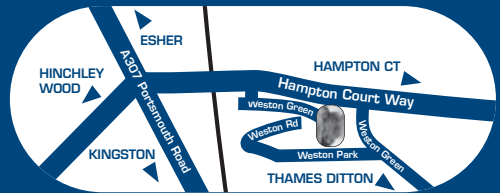
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