Newsletter
Spring 2023



West Wickham
Residents' Association

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New advertising rates from March 1st 2023

Back page (A5)	£700	Four issues only
Full page (A5) inside	£173	(£652 Four issues with discount)
Three quarter page	£130	(£490 Four issues with discount)
Half page	£ 87	(£328 Four issues with discount)
Quarter page	£ 44	

Publication dates are early March, June, September and December

Deadline dates are January 20th, April 20th, July 20th and October 20th

Please contact the Editor for more information

The new Direct Debit subscription scheme is launched

Further to our article in the Spring Newsletter last year, I am pleased to announce we are now finally in a position to launch the Direct Debit (DD) scheme to collect your annual subscriptions.

Residents signing up to pay their subscriptions by Direct Debit will make the lives of you, our members, and our Road Stewards considerably easier. Road Stewards are often faced with several return visits to residents because they have no cash or are out on the first visit.

To allow sufficient time to get a critical mass of residents on to the new system, the DD will be collected on 1st June and annually on that date thereafter.

If you haven't already done so you will find the hyperlink to our GoCardless payment plan on our website (https://westwickhamresidents.com/) and Facebook wall to enable you to sign up.

Please remember your subscriptions remain at £2 per annum and they are critical in enabling us to continue to represent you and to pursue the "Betterment of West Wickham".

Many thanks for your co-operation

Phil West *(WWRA Committee)*

2023 Annual General Meeting

The Association's AGM will be held on Friday 14th April. Following the short formal part of the meeting, attendees will be given the opportunity to put questions to one or more of our Ward Councillors.

All residents are welcome to attend. Full details are given on page 5.

DISTRIBUTOR NEEDED

Dear members, WWRA has a system of main distributor, local distributors and road stewards. The distributors for individual areas have a comparatively easy role - receive required number of newsletters, count out for the individual road stewards in their group - and deliver them to the road stewards. The commitment is just a few hours, four times a year.

We have a vacancy for this very important role; Round G - delivering newsletters to the road stewards who in turn cover Pickhurst Rise, The Drive, Langley Way, Wickham Chase, The Avenue, Goodhart Way, Hayes Chase

Could you help? If you can volunteer, contact Katrina, address on page 2.

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The 92nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of the Association
will be held on Friday, 14th April at 8.00 pm.
at Wickham Halls, Sussex Road, West Wickham

The short formal meeting will be followed by Councillor's Question Time. All residents are welcome.

AGENDA

1. Welcome to the AGM
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Election of Officers
4. Election of Committee
5. Appointment of Auditors
6. Any Other Business
7. Councillor's Question Time

A set of the 2022 accounts will be available on the website and at the AGM .

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WW PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

We are your local and friendly camera club so if you enjoy photography and want to improve your skills in a sociable atmosphere, then you have various options:-

- Come along to Medhurst Hall, Sussex Road, West Wickham at 8.00pm on any Tuesday evening between September and May and meet us.

- Log on to www.wwphotosoc.org.uk to see more of our work and look at our programme of events for season 2022/23

- Email info@wwphotosoc.org.uk. We will respond to your queries/questions.

News from the High Street



Cookery School now open

In 1991 The Kitchen Range opened its doors for the very first time and since then, there has been a lot of change. For proprietors Lucy Richards and Paul Geoghegan, opening the cookery school was a project born during the most tumultuous time for their shop. The pandemic gave them time and space to think about the direction they wanted to take their business and, during this time, the Kitchen Range Cookery School was built.

It is situated at 51 High Street, West Wickham, BR4 0LR (020 8777 0224).

A full range of classes is given on their website, thekitchenrangecookeryschool.com

A proud history

J & R Killick Ltd is one of the oldest businesses on the High Street. They have a proud history dating back to 1879 when the firm was established in West Wickham by the great grandfather of the current directors, Michael & Peter Killick.

The company, members of the National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD), have always occupied their present building in the High Street, which was built by the founder, James Killick, and where all their facilities are situated.

Up until May 2001, the Company were also builders and joiners but the then directors of the Company decided to close down the building and joinery division to concentrate solely on funeral directing. The old joinery workshops were re-furbished and their facilities at West Wickham were totally modernised. The Killick family have always been very proud and privileged to serve West Wickham and the surrounding area and offer a caring, sympathetic service tailored to the wishes and needs of the deceased and the bereaved.

The Company has always been family owned and orientated. The next generation (Adam, Gareth, Julia & Maria) are fully involved, and you can be assured of the very best attention. For more information call 020 8777 4502 or go to www.jrkillick.co.uk



Killick's premises on the High Street.

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Electrification of the 119 and 358 bus routes

By the time you read this, many of the diesel buses on route 119 should have been replaced by fully electric vehicles.

An item in the Autumn 2021 issue of this Newsletter talked about a trial being conducted into the feasibility of using tram style rechargeable electric buses. The 358 route took part in the trial which is now complete and this route along with others in the Capital will start using the new buses later this year. Route 358, which operates between Crystal Palace and Orpington, passes through Links Way and South Eden Park Road in West Wickham and is currently served by a fleet of single-deck diesel buses. These will be replaced by the new electric service from April onwards. When the new electric buses pull into Crystal Palace or Orpington bus stops, a pantograph will drop down from the charging unit to connect with the bus and top up the batteries. The bus can be charged in just a few minutes, making it ideal for use at end-of-route bus stops.



Update on the cashless car park situation

We mentioned in the Winter 2022 Newsletter that the Council plans to remove all cash-based ticket machines in their car parks and on the street. We continue to make strong representations to our Councillors about the adverse effect this will have on some members of the community. We have already heard from one resident who is partly disabled and with no access to a mobile phone who will not be able to use the Council car parks in the town. We have had little response from Councillors yet, other than to confirm that, because the 3G Sim cards used in the pay machines will expire in April, the removal of the machines on street, as well as in the car parks, will take place in the next few months. This is a year earlier than originally intended for the street-based machines. Suggestions regarding the ability to use debit/credit card payments and a facility to purchase a season type ticket, have been passed on. As it stands, car park users will need to download the Ringo app to their smartphone or use their mobile phone to ring or text the number displayed in the car park.

Expansion of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)

The Mayor of London has announced that he will expand the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) from Tuesday 29 August 2023, when it will operate across all London boroughs, 24 hours a day, every day of the year except Christmas Day. Vehicles that do not meet the emission standards must pay the £12.50 daily charge. There will be a scrappage scheme and an extended grace period for drivers who receive benefits or are disabled. Details, including the emission standards, can be found on the TfL website: tfl.gov.uk/ulez.

We submitted a response to the ULEZ consultation and we are very disappointed that, despite nearly 60% of all respondents voting against the proposal, the Mayor has decided to push ahead with the ULEZ expansion. We remain concerned that this does not allow residents and businesses long enough to change vehicles. While we recognise the extension of a grace period for blue badge holders there are many others who will not be eligible for scrappage support but unable to afford the expense of either upgrading vehicles or paying the fine!

Bromley Council has confirmed its continued opposition to the proposal and that it is questioning the basis of the Mayor of London's decision. Councillor Colin Smith, Leader of Bromley Council said, "The decision to blatantly ignore a significant majority opinion of Londoners who responded to TfL's consultation exercise, based on the highly questionable, selective and incomplete findings of a research paper commissioned by TfL themselves, simply cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged." Councillor Smith also said that Bromley, along with other Councils, is examining the legal basis of the decision.

Councillor Smith explained that from the latest authenticated data to hand, Bromley already has amongst the cleanest air in London and that the 'scheme' isn't actually about air quality in the final analysis. He believes that the intention remains, under the guise of ULEZ, to erect a network of traffic cameras across the whole of the Capital which can then be used at the flick of a switch to introduce road price charging. He added, "Whether that is a good thing, or bad thing, clearly depends on your point of view, but it should at least be fully debated and publicly scrutinised as a policy initiative in its own right, rather than slyly slipped in through the back door under a false agenda as a fait accompli."

Central London Bus Review (CLBR)

The Association is pleased to note that many of the bus cuts proposed in the CLBR will not be going ahead. We raised our concerns with TfL about impact on residents who travel by bus and interchange with some of the affected services. There are more than 620 bus routes in London and more than 70 routes were originally proposed to be affected. The plans being taken forward will impact 18 routes which are all in areas with numerous alternative public transport options and where there will be enough capacity on buses to meet demand. Passengers will still be able to make the same journeys, with additional interchanges in some instances.

Route 507 will be extended towards Fulham, and will be renumbered 11, and route 521 will be withdrawn, with the night service N11 restructured. Route 16 will run on route 332 between Brent Park and Paddington. The night route N16 will be renumbered N32. The proposed changes to routes 3, 6, 11, 23, 26, 59, 77, 133, 211, C10 and N26 will still go ahead to minimise the impact of withdrawn routes and ensure a continued reliable bus network in central and inner London. Other existing routes will not be affected.

Friends of West Wickham Library



"The RSPB"

Speaker to be confirmed

Wednesday 12th April 2023 @ 2.30pm



"Hedgehogs"

A talk by Lynda Zissell

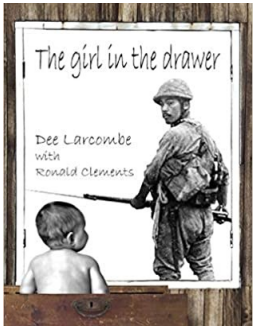
The talk will be preceded by the AGM

Wednesday 10th May 2023 @ 2.30pm

"The Girl in the Drawer"

A talk by Dee Larcombe

Wednesday 14th June 2023 @ 2.30pm



All talks are held at West Wickham Library - doors open from 2pm

(fwwl@btinternet.com)

Glebe Way, West Wickham

Entry: £2 members (£3 for couples) & £3 for non-members
Meetings may be subject to alteration without notice.
Programme correct at time of printing

Perambulating the Bounds

The ancient custom of beating the bounds (I prefer the more lyrical, 'perambulating the bounds') is still observed in parts of England and Wales. The practice originates from a time when maps, or means to reproduce maps, were largely unavailable. The custom may be traced back to at least the Anglo Saxon period and is likely to predate this. It involves a group of citizens from a given area (in more recent history, a civil parish) walking the geographic boundaries of their locality in order to maintain a mental map of its boundaries. Key to the practice is the identification and demarcation of prominent boundary markers, commonly these were features relating to the natural history of an area. The more distinctive the feature, the more effective the marker. Ancient trees, banks, hills, streams and woodlands were all used.

Knowledge of the boundaries of an area is as vital today as it was then. For a range of purposes, including defending that area from would be invaders, levying taxes and more prosaic purposes, such as demarking someone's right to harvest crops, fell timber and utilise other natural products.

In today's digital age, the requirement for such 'mental mapping' of an area has long since been made redundant. There are far more efficient digital methods of marking land. However, I argue the practical skills of perambulating the bounds are far from obsolete. There are a range of psychological and physical health benefits to be derived from learning the natural landscape around where one lives. Keeping a detailed mental map of one's natural surroundings is surely also where an interest in the environment and nature conservation starts.

Here I outline two perambulations that I have charted around our neighbourhood. Feel free to try them and let me know how you get on. Better still, have a go at marking your own bounds and finding your own boundary markers. Discover some of the wilder patches of West Wickham and adjacent areas. Record and document our rich wildlife as you go.

Small-leaved lime at the county line

This route starts at the entrance to Sparrows Den playing fields off Corkscrew Hill. Cross through the gate in the picket fence and take the public footpath along the west edge of the pitch-and-put golf course, upslope to the east edge of Spring Park (woodland). In the short turf are the red-hued flowers of sheep's sorrel and the tiny leaves of parsley piert, both of which indicate free-draining to slightly acid soil. Enter Spring Park Wood from its far eastern end and take the central path (aligned roughly east-west) through the woodland. Track west, neither gaining nor losing altitude. On entering the woodland world, other than the obvious changes in tree growth and accompanying shade, light and humidity, you should see a patch of dog's mercury and a patch of three-cornered garlic. The

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former species is a denizen of semi-natural woodland and denotes slightly basic to neutral soil. The common name arose because this plant was generally considered to be of little or no worth - a 'dog's' plant is one considered to have no medicinal uses. Three cornered garlic is a garden escape and is not native to the UK. Indeed, in some parts of the country it is a real pest, taking over large swatches of natural habitat. By gently crushing its leaves you will discover for yourself why it is a member of the garlic family. Ancient and introduced species growing together signal one of the many ways that people have impacted the natural world and perhaps give an inkling as to how natural woodland communities may change in the future.

Now make a beeline through the woodland, for about 700 metres, your target is the local authority boundary between Bromley and Croydon. How are you to find this boundary in dense woodland, you may ask? The easy answer is, use a map of course! But what I want you to do is hunt for the point along the central path where small-leaved lime becomes frequent in the tree canopy. Why should this be significant? Well, small-leaved lime is a rare plant in Kent. Nowhere does it occur very commonly, and West Wickham is one of its key locations in the county. It is thought that the species declined after the last ice age, perhaps in response to climatic change. Some fascinating research carried out by Geoffrey Kitchener and others from the Kent Botanical Recording Group, earlier this year, put forward the theory that small-leaved lime may have been preserved on the county line between old Surrey (now Croydon) and Kent (now Bromley) by generations of woodsmen and land owners. Why should the tree be preserved here? For precisely the reason that it demarks the old county boundary. So, there you have it!

If you want to know a little more about small-leaved lime, descend south, out of the woodland following the old 'county line'. The slope is steep and gravelly so do take care. You should find the Corporation of London ranger station. There is a conveniently placed notice board explaining a thing or two about the small-leaved lime.



Small leaved lime

Head back to Corkscrew Hill along the southern boundary of the woodland, noticing a newly laid hedgerow along your path and some patches of bare soil (probably helped by the diggings of pet dogs) where some interesting insects have been found by Corporation's rangers. The bee wolf (a parasitic, solitary wasp species) is among them. Do look this species up, it has an amazing ecology, it is a predator of honey bees and was considered rather rare and localised before recent decades. Perhaps its expanding range has something to do with climate change?

Up onto the chalk for ancient woods

My second perambulation starts, rather conveniently, where the other one left off, at the old county line on Kent Gate Way. It may be convenient to park in the Corporation

of London's car park for Spring Park. Cross Kent Gate Way and pick-up the footpath which runs up the western edge of Croydon Rugby Club/Thames Water's Addington Pumping Station. Pass through the bollards and enter Birch Wood (on some old maps shown as Foxhill Shaw). This journey tracks southwards for approximately one-and-a-half miles, through Birch Wood across a small clearing where 'Castlehill Ruffs' is marked on the 1:25,000 scale Ordnance Survey map, and into Rowdown Wood.

The presence of Thames Water's pumping station at the low point of the route is significant, for this location is on the flat valley bottom which lies on gravelly alluvium. As one passes through Birch Wood, southwards, eventually topping out on the chalk soils of New Addington, it is possible to observe a subtle change in woodland plant communities in response to the change in soil type. The location for the pumping station intercepts water in the chalk aquifer from water draining the high chalk ground to the south of the station. In Birch Wood, oak, sweet chestnut, hazel and pedunculate oak are the more common tree and shrub species. Bluebell and wood anemone are common in the ground flora. Further south, towards Rowdown Wood, these species continue but with a notable change to ash, field maple, dog wood and old-man's beard as the key trees/shrubs/climbers. The ground flora changes to include much more dog's mercury, heralding the chalky soils.

Just past the Rugby Club the path offers an option to continue straight (due south) or to veer briefly to the east and then to take the boundary of Birch Wood southwards, as it skirts the field edges of Wickham Court Farm. I encourage you to take the eastern branch. There are a number of large sweet chestnut and pedunculate oak trees along this narrow woodland path and one should hear the song of skylark in the spring, early summer and even winter arising from the adjacent fields. The woodland edge is also a good place to spot roe deer and potentially also badger. I have observed the small yellow flowers of goldilocks buttercup (an ancient woodland indicator) growing along this path. Before entering the world of chalk soils, the path passes through an area of almost pure, and relatively even-aged silver birch trees. The light arising from the amassed ranks of white trunks is stunning and the whole woodland has a feel, for a brief second, of somewhere altogether more remote and boreal. At the southern end of Rowdown Wood there is a public footpath, routing you to the east (if you hit the industrial estate, you have gone too far). By taking this footpath towards Layhams Road it is possible to take in superb views south to London, with Canary Wharf and the City both in view. The footpath crosses under an electricity cable where I have observed ravens roosting and (I'm informed) peregrine falcon occasionally occur.



Pedunculate Oak

The footpath eventually enters a small woodland called Rushfield Shaw, forming the western boundary to the Police dog training centre where you may find your way to Layhams Road, Nash and back to West Wickham via footpaths around Well Wood. A small amount of road walking is required so do please be careful.

Richard Gowing

Editor's note: *This second walk forms the initial part of our annual Boundary Walk which takes place on Rogation Sunday - May 14th this year. Unfortunately, no committee member is available to lead the walk this year so if any Road Steward or regular boundary walker is willing to lead the walk, would they please contact me or the Secretary.*

Keep an eye on our website westwickhamresidents.com for any changes.

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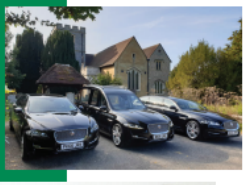
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A look at Wickham's Past



Wickham Green

In 1910 when this picture was taken, Wickham Green and the houses around the station were separated from the main village around the High Street by open fields. You can see Station Approach on the left and in the distance the station masters house. To the right of Lawrence, the coal merchants shed, you can see the black weatherboarded Cooks Farm. This was pulled down in the 1930's by George Spencer to build a parade of art-deco style shops in what is now Red Lodge Road. The signs on the corner advertise the Railway Hotel and below that is an estate agents advertisement for the new houses being built at Langley Park. The dark line above is not a radio mast it is just a flaw on the negative as all copies of this postcard have this line.

Red Lodge Road once led to Red Lodge, situated on what is now St Mary's Church in The Avenue. This became the Home Farm for the Langley Park estate and its richly carved panelling went to Pennsylvania Museum when it was demolished in the 1930's. To the right of the picture is a terrace of cottages including an old ale house, The Leather Bottle, while on the corner were tea rooms and a garden. These were all demolished to make way for the Leisure Centre as was Cootes Farm in Station Road (then known as Beckenham Road). As late as the 1950's the tea shop building was still standing and operating as a sweet shop and tobacconist.

Peter Leigh (WWRA Committee)

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External Defibrillators – where are they and how to use them…

As well as the indoor defibrillators mentioned in previous Newsletters, West Wickham now has at least three Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) which can be accessed at all times. They are at the entrance to West Wickham Station, at St Francis Church in Ravenswood Avenue and at Emmanuel Church in the Grove. We are also being offered a further installation, the siting of which is still being considered.

I spoke to Ian Moore of Emmanuel Church who explained the operation of the defibrillator installed on the external wall. Like the installation at St Francis, the Emmanuel AED is registered with 'The Circuit', a database which is a joint initiative of the British Heart Foundation and the Ambulance Service. When a defibrillator is needed, you should call 999 and the call handlers will tell you where the nearest external defibrillator is located and give you the access code to open the case. Once opened, the defibrillator gives verbal instructions for its use. Once a defibrillator has been used, the database operators inform those responsible for the installation so that it can be checked, and any used items replaced before it goes back into service.

Editor



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Churches Together in West Wickham – Celebrating Easter

On Good Friday, 7th April, and Easter Sunday, 9th April, Churches in West Wickham will be holding services commemorating the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

All are welcome to these services. Please visit Church's websites for further details.

Coney Hill Baptist Church
Coney Hill Road
coneyhill.com

St John's Church
Layhams Road
stjohnsww.com

West Wickham Methodist Church
Hawes Lane
bromleymethodistcircuit.org.uk

St Francis Church
Ravenswood Avenue
stfranciswestwickham.co.uk

St Mark's Catholic Church
High Street
Saintmarks7@btinternet.com

St Mary's Church
The Avenue
stmarywestwickham.co.uk

Emmanuel United Reformed Church
The Grove
godwithus.org.uk

West Wickham & Shirley Baptist Church
Wickham Road
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Councillor's Corner

The Councillors who represent West Wickham Ward, attend our committee meetings. They have no voting rights, but we do get the chance to air and debate issues face to face and they often take away actions and commitments arising from these discussions. We have asked them to provide regular updates on the progress of issues most frequently raised by members and items of interest to the Town. This is their latest report. Their contact details are given on page 2 of this Newsletter.

Waste and recycling collections

With the recent bad weather and festive period some collections have had to be rescheduled and understandably some residents have found this frustrating. Normally when collections are missed, they will be collected the following day as part of the new schedule. Residents are able to check collection dates and rescheduled dates via the following link on the council website: recyclingservices.bromley.gov.uk/waste

Once entering your postcode, you will be able to select your address. This will then show you when and what your next scheduled collection is (Food Waste, Paper & Cardboard Recycling, Cans, Plastics & Glass Recycling, Non-Recyclable Refuse). It will also show when your last collection took place. You are also able to report a missed collection from this page.

Idling Vehicles

Following complaints from parents about cars idling with their engines running outside Oak Lodge School, Councillor Bennett visited during school going home time and spoke to the Headteacher. He observed five parked cars running their engines, four turned them off on request. One driver of a white van responded by revving his engine. One parent was parked on the yellow zig zags. Civil Enforcement Officers have been asked to visit the area. Councillor Bennett approved, as Executive Member for Transport, Highways and Road Safety, a banner to be placed on the school railings to remind parents that it is an offence to idle a car engine and tickets can be issued. Such pollution affects children's lungs.

Highways

We are pleased to say that the following West Wickham Roads are in the first phase of the Councils Carriageway resurfacing programme: Chessington Way, Hawkhurst Way, Hawthorn Drive and The Glade.

We hope to see more Roads in West Wickham in the next phase as well.

Croft Avenue car park - update

The Car Park will close in the next few months for the building of 26 new homes to help towards tackling the housing problem – Bromley has more than 1,500 families in temporary accommodation at expensive cost to the taxpayer. There are six other car parks as

well as free parking on street within walking distance of the High Street. As part of the development the library is being modernised and expanded and will include a new meeting room.

Leisure Centre

We have no new updates yet about the Leisure Centre. Repair costs are in the order of £2m – as your local councillors we believe it would be better to build a new centre.

Potholes

Following the snow and frost the borough has had to contend with hundreds of pot-holes over the 500 miles of road within London's biggest borough. Bear with us as they are filled.

West Wickham Ward Councillors:

Nicholas Bennett, Hannah Gray and Mark Brock



Rotary West Wickham

The last two months of 2022 proved to be busy in terms of fundraising, which resulted in one of the most successful years in raising funds for deserving causes for a number of years. We were able to hold our Fireworks and Musical Extravaganza on the 5th November for the first time since 2019. We held prices at 2019 levels to attract as many old and new visitors as possible. We sold tickets by way of our Fireworks website; through local schools; at Club Langley (who hosted the event) and at Matthews the Jewellers who also sponsored the evening along with fellow West Wickham High Street business, Croft Radio.

We had around 5,000 visitors and raised around £17,000 for local charities, schools and community projects in the West Wickham, Hayes and Beckenham area. Far beyond our wildest expectations. We followed this up 2 weeks later with our Christmas Fair raising £560 for St. Christopher's Hospice and St. John's Primary School in Shirley who provided the venue. Our Christmas Collections raised £2,350 in round figures and we are so grateful for the willing help and enthusiasm of the Bromley Borough Police Cadets and the 7th West Wickham Scout Group, to who we are happy to give donations.

To find out more about Rotary West Wickham, contact Barry Fenton on 0751 4358364 or email fentonbarryrotary@gmail.com

Ian Leach

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"I would like to say thanks to the two guys who were absolutely brilliant and are a credit to your company.

The work they did to our bathroom has changed my wife's quality of life and I would like to thank you so much." Mr & Mrs Brushwood





The history and importance of RAF Biggin Hill

From its opening in February 2019, Biggin Hill Memorial Museum is recovering well following the effects of the pandemic lockdowns. I visited the museum and spoke to the director, Katie Edwards, who is enthusiastic about the programme of events they are organising this year. These include lectures, talks, music concerts, craft workshops, farmer's markets and displays. Special events this year include a Merlin engine start-up day, a 1940's day around the time of the Coronation in May and a visit from Colin Bell DFC (Distinguished Flying Cross), a 102 year old who served in World War 2 on operations as a Mosquito bomber pilot. You can check Colin's story by searching for him on the web. The museum is open Tuesday to Sunday, 10am – 5pm, and you can use the museum café without visiting the museum. Further information and news about events can be found by visiting their website at bhmm.org.uk.



The museum is run by a charitable trust which employs two full time staff who are ably supported by 28 volunteers on a shift system. Katie tells me they could always do with more volunteers!

Linked with the museum and complementary to it, is St George's Chapel. Verger Margaret Wilmot explained that just before the RAF left Biggin in 1992, a group of volunteers formed the 'friends of St. Georges' with several objectives including preserving the Chapel and its memorials and looking after the 'gate guardians', the Spitfire and Hurricane that stand each side of the gate. The friends hold events including a flower festival and talks about subjects such as the War Graves Commission and the Small Ships Association. Information about the Chapel and its events can be found at rafchapelbigginhill.com



Women and war exhibition in the Chapel

If you're old like me, you're likely to have knowledge and experience of RAF Biggin Hill's history but for younger readers who aren't so familiar with the important role played by Biggin Hill and the service personnel based there in the 1940's, I recommend that everyone, young and old, visits the museum and Chapel – there's a lot to see and learn.

Editor

Encouraging news from local theatre

Following the item about Theatre 62 in the Autumn 2022 edition of this Newsletter, I spoke to Jan Stockwell who is a member of Theatre 62.

"Since we last spoke Theatre 62 has held two quiz nights and put on three more plays. It has been fantastic to welcome so many new audience members and new actors from West Wickham. We are thrilled you have discovered Theatre 62. Some of you have already returned to see another show, and some have even returned to act in shows. It is great to play to some full houses again, and local resident's continued patronage will secure our survival. Some newcomers to theatre 62 have become members which means they will receive our monthly newsletter which has advanced notice of upcoming shows and events. We now have our new comfortable seats, and our theatre looks very lovely. I will continue to get flyers out in the high street shops, the library and the WWRA notice board on Ravensbourne Avenue. I will also hand out flyers in the High Street again. I have really enjoyed meeting so many West Wickham residents and spreading the word about what goes on in their Local Community Theatre"

'The God of Carnage' by Yazmina Reza and directed by Nikki Packham was the theatre's October production. At Theatre 62 the seating is erected for each show and this one was set in the round. This gives the director the flexibility to create interesting and exciting staging for their productions.



This play is set in the present day. Two children have had a fight which resulted in the loss of two teeth by one of the children and the two sets of parents get together to discuss it. Because the staging was in the round it afforded the audience an up close and intimate experience as the parents became unhinged before their eyes. It was dramatic and very funny.

The May 16th-20th production will be a murder mystery.

An induction loop is on for all performances. Please mention when booking, so you can be seated in area of theatre which is fully covered. If you need further information about helping or joining the theatre, email news@theatre62.org.uk

Details can be found at theatre62.wordpress.com and the Box office (07542 716888) opens exactly one calendar month before the show opens. Please mention the West Wickham Residents Association when booking.

Theatre 62 is on Corkscrew Hill, Satnav BR49BA



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