



The Kew Society Newsletter • Spring 2024

Welcome....

to our spring newsletter. We hope you are full of the joys of spring; it's been rather a wet one, as you may have noticed, but the amazing blossoms and flowers blooming all over Kew have provided some compensation. The Sounds of Blossom Festival at Kew Gardens was also a highlight this year with the usual colourful array of spring flowers and blossoms set to music.

There is plenty going on in and around Kew and opportunities to get more closely involved in the activities of the Kew Society. Do let us know if you would prefer to opt out of receiving a paper copy of the newsletter by writing to editor@kewsociety.org



The Editor has just returned from a holiday in Japan but found on her return the Japanese Garden at the Royal Botanic Gardens to be at least as stunning as any she saw in Japan.

Would you enjoy creating, organising and running events for people in Kew?

Our Events trustee – Mary Done – will be retiring at the next AGM and taking a (more than) well-earned break from leading our much-appreciated programme of talks, outings and social events.

The other members of her team – Sue May, Jane Hogan and Heather Wakefield – will also be stepping back from providing regular help to ensure that things run smoothly.

And so I am on the lookout for someone who would enjoy applying their skills and interests to developing and managing a programme of events that are likely to be of real interest to the diversity of people who live in Kew nowadays....building upon an excellent foundation, and testing out new ideas. This will be an important role, and one that – I hope – will be both interesting and genuinely worthwhile for anyone who would like to make a real contribution to the local community.

We are hoping to expand our current mix of activities to include more social events that will be attractive to current and potential members, including families.

I would also like to build a team of 'Events friends' who could help out with the organisation of the programme that evolves. First thoughts are that different people may be interested in getting involved with different activities. If you are interested in joining the team and would like to know more, do join me for a cup of coffee to explore this in more detail. I would also be interested in members' views about what type of activity you would like to see us organise. Do get in touch at chair@kewsociety.org

Shiona Williams, Chair



Gardening update

After a three-month winter break, the gardening team started work again at the beginning of March. The first tasks of the year were to weed everywhere, cut back dead vegetation and mulch the beds with compost and feed them some 'fragrant' chicken manure fertiliser. We lost a few plants over the winter, e.g. the salvia 'Rockin Deep Purple' in the raised bed in the village, and so in May we will be replacing these and filling other gaps. We have now replaced the ornamental grasses and verbenas on the eastbound



platform at the station that were cut down in error by TfL's vegetation contractor last autumn. Fortunately, the contractor was very apologetic and paid for the new plants. We have now also given the contractor a plan of the station so they know exactly which beds they should leave alone in future. The compost bins built by our Energy Garden partner last year have been doing well. The vegetation is breaking down nicely and we will have our own compost to use later in the year. The echium pininana and angelica plants on the platform near Little Torelli have provided a dramatic floral display over recent weeks, in between the spring bulbs finishing and summer flowers coming out. John and Daphne Turner, who have tended the North Road garden next to the Chris and Chris garage for several years, have now finally decided to step down and Bharti Hindocha – one of the newer members of the gardening team – has agreed to take the lead in looking after this patch. I would like to thank John, Daphne and their younger family helpers for their fantastic work, and I'm sure Bharti will also do an excellent job in developing the garden further. We are a friendly team of gardeners: some are experienced horticulturalists and others who are keen to learn. We have a regular gardening session on Wednesday mornings, and some of the team garden at different times depending on work commitments and when they have time. If you love plants and enjoy working outdoors, please do join us via gardening@kewsociety.org.uk

Anna Anderson

Planning

Once again, most of the new planning applications in Kew over the past three months have been applications for domestic extensions. We review these but do not generally comment on them.

There is still no further news on plans for redevelopment of the Kew Retail Park. It is now getting on for two years since the initial plans were presented to local residents, following the community planning weekend led by architects JTP at the National Archives in June 2022. We have seen no updates of the initial plans.

The Mayor's decision is still awaited on the planning application for the Homebase, Manor Road redevelopment. We understand that one of the reasons for the delay is that the developer – Avanton – and the GLA have yet to agree on the developer's financial contribution to local infrastructure improvements (the 'Section 106 Agreement') as a condition of approval of the application. It is unlikely that the Mayor will approve the application until mid-May at the earliest, given the mayoral elections on 2nd May.

Richmond Council's planning committee approved the revised application for the redevelopment of the Mortlake Brewery site on 31st January 2024, subject to its approval by the Mayor and to the completion of a legal agreement. However, the applicant – Reselton Properties – then spoke to GLA officers who indicated that, if the application were referred to the Mayor, it would most likely be refused again. The applicant therefore decided to appeal directly to the Secretary of State for a decision, as a result of which there will be a Planning Inquiry held by the Planning Inspectorate from 29th May to 11th June. Mortlake Brewery Community Group (MBCG), which has been leading the campaign against the current redevelopment proposals, are intending to appear as a 'Rule 6 Party' objector at the Inquiry, for which they are planning to engage specialist planning barristers and to enlist expert witnesses. MBCG are currently crowdfunding to fund this and have raised over £36,000 of a £40,000

target to date. Please do visit their website <https://www.mbcg.org.uk/about/#about-us> and consider making a donation of whatever size to the campaign, which The Kew Society has supported.

We mentioned in our Winter newsletter that a planning application (P/2023/3208) had been submitted for the large-scale redevelopment of the Sega site behind the Brentford Stadium. The Kew Society joined Richmond Council, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Historic England and even Brentford Football Club in objecting to the development on the grounds of the height (up to 80 metres) of the proposed tower blocks and their visual impact on nearby heritage assets, in particular the Kew Gardens World Heritage Site. The applicant was criticised for providing a visual impact assessment based solely on views of the tower blocks when trees were in full leaf, not when they were bare during winter months. They subsequently provided a revised assessment including the visual profile when trees were bare and thus the tower blocks more visible, which augmented the adverse visual impact of the proposed scheme.



A visualisation of the scheme from the developer viewed over the M4 flyover

John Ricketts

Update on Manor Circus

In providing our report on the Manor Roundabout works in January 2024, we were able to rely on advice from TfL. Sadly, our contact there is no longer responding to us! However, as most readers will be aware, access south from Sandycombe Road was re-opened in early April, and the H37 and 110 bus routes were restored shortly thereafter. This is a month later than we had previously been advised but, in the meantime, the project has taken a new twist. The Council is considering whether to permanently prevent vehicular access south from Sandycombe Road, so the roundabout that has been installed is a temporary one. We understand that traffic data is to be collected by the Council with the southbound carriageway open to act as a baseline to traffic data already collected during the temporary closure. From this a decision is to be taken whether closure, or other traffic management solutions, might have merit and, if so, a consultation process by the Council would be held. We wait with bated breath to hear the outcome. Either way, we understand from the Council that the new



Manor Road Circus as at April 2024

roundabout will become permanent. In the meantime, we are aware that while residents in Sandycombe Road may welcome the lower traffic volumes that flowed whilst access south onto the A316 was closed, others – for example, those in Raleigh Road and Ennerdale Road – have experienced increased rat-running as a result. In contrast, shop owners in Sandycombe Road were concerned that their trade was reduced. Therefore, there seems to be no simple solution to the proposal, and we will continue to pursue this issue on behalf of our members. Whilst traffic on the A316 now flows more freely than was the case at the start of the works, we remain concerned as to why the contractor appears to be dragging their feet in completing the project. In the meantime, their materials and huts are preventing two running lanes on the A316, and access north into North Road, from being restored. Although TfL originally stated that the completion date would be Spring 2024, advice on the ground is that it could be another two to four months before this happens. Again, we have received no news directly from TfL who, in their note to residents of March 2024, undertook to explore acceleration of the works. But instead, the project update on their website is advising that the works ‘will last until summer 2024’, which would be a whole year from when they started.

Trevor Whittaker

Heathrow recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic but does it still want a third runway?

Heathrow Airport Limited was devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Passenger numbers fell from 80 million to 22 million during 2020, most of whom flew in the January and February before the lockdown. Only 19.4 million passed through the airport in 2021 – the lowest number since 1972. Work on plans for building a third runway were put on hold, leaving Heathrow with a bill for £504 million which it had already spent on planning and early construction works. It also reduced its operational costs in 2020-2021 by temporarily consolidating flights into only two terminals. Nevertheless, its financial results for Q3 – October 2021 – showed that it had lost £3.4 billion since the start of the pandemic. Unsurprisingly, some commentators predicted that full recovery was a long way off – see <https://simpleflying.com/heathrow-pandemic-loss-3-4-billion/> However, such predictions proved to be unduly pessimistic! Passenger numbers climbed in 2022, and by 2023 had recovered to 79.2 million – the third highest number ever. By the end of 2023, the airport also reported a small profit of £38 million before tax for the first time in four years – see <https://www.internationalairportreview.com/news/213618/>

The rapid return of Heathrow to 'business as usual' begs the question, what are Heathrow's intentions regarding further expansion? Before the pandemic, the number of annual flights was capped at 480,000; but a third runway, already approved by the UK Government, would allow up to 740,000 flights per year if built. Passenger numbers would increase ultimately from about 80 million to an incredible 135 million per year by 2050! Many West Londoners, including residents of Kew, the Richmond Heathrow Campaign (RHC) <https://www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org/about.htm> and Richmond Council, strongly opposed this expansion



on the grounds that the present number of flights already seriously compromises the quality of life because of aircraft noise, night flights, overcrowding on road and rail transport in the area and air pollution. Carbon emissions from the airport also challenge achieving UK climate change targets. More flights would be intolerable!

Many who read *The Sunday Times* (25th February) were delighted with its report that Heathrow had shelved plans to build a 3rd runway and that the airport's new CEO – Thomas Woldbye – 'is understood to have begun disbanding the third runway team'. However, it provoked a rapid response from Heathrow denying that plans for a third runway had been shelved. Interviewed by City A.M. (the business newspaper), the CEO said that plans to expand were 'hugely important'. 'We're coming up with an updated strategy during the next couple of months, and that will include a piece on how we handle capacity and also how we can handle capacity until we get to the third runway, because that is by nature quite a few years into the future.' <https://www.cityam.com/heathrow-denies-report-that-third-runway-plans-have-been-shelved/>.

More recently, Heathrow's Chief Financial Officer – Javier Echave – told BBC's *Today* programme in an interview reported in the Evening Standard (24th April) that making a decision on restarting the 3rd Runway programme was an important and complex decision which the Company 'will get into as fast as we can'. Thus, Heathrow's appetite for a third runway appears to have revived post-pandemic but, as HACAN tweeted, the 'lack of clarity on timeline and detail is unfair on communities threatened with destruction & increased noise & air pollution'.

Roger Mason

Heathrow – your opportunity to get involved

The Kew Society is currently looking to replace Nora Dennehy on the RHC Committee following her retirement as a TKS Trustee. RHC represents three amenity groups in our Borough including The Kew Society. If interested and think you can help, please contact chair@kewsociety.org

Interview with Dr Florence Rabier, Director-General of European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts

Florence Rabier is the Director-General of the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), based in Reading. She has been the Director General since January 2016, having led the organisation through a period of major change and expansion. Florence is an internationally recognised expert in Numerical Weather Prediction who has greatly contributed to delivering major changes at both ECMWF and Météo-France.

Florence is French, and moved here from Toulouse in 2013 to start her work at ECMWF. She is married and has three children. Florence was living in Kew until very recently when she moved to Teddington. Claire asked her about her work and her predictions for the future.

What was it that attracted you to working in meteorology?

I grew up during the 60s and 70s in Biarritz in the south-west corner of France, close to the Spanish border and the Pyrenees. My parents were teachers, and we lived on the 7th floor of a block of flats with an unobstructed view of the Atlantic coast to the west and the mountain range to the south. I could follow the changes in the weather from the living room window and was fascinated by the alternations between cold and rainy northwesterly winds one day while the next day could offer southerly winds with clear and warm weather. This view from this apartment in Biarritz sparked an early interest in weather and meteorology in me.



What is the difference between climate science and medium-range weather forecasting?

The simplest description of the difference is that weather is the conditions produced by the atmosphere, and climate is the statistics of weather. 'Statistics' can be simple averages, or more sophisticated techniques.

Many analogies are used to express the difference between the weather experienced right now and climate. I especially like that of a person walking a dog. The person will follow a path and walks with purpose, knowing very well the route they want to take. The dog will dash about, distracted by other animals or curious smells, either side of the path. The dog cannot go too far because he is being held with a lead. The dog is the weather, and the person is climate.

We hear a great deal about the worrying predictions in terms of climate change and how this will cause problems such as flooding and droughts. Will the work that you are doing help us to mitigate the impact of climate change and, if so, how?

At ECMWF, we do computations of weather forecasts for the next days, weeks and months and monitoring of the climate at the global scale, all around the world. The weather forecasts help us to be prepared for the

impact of climate change, providing early warnings to help protect life and property. The monitoring of the climate, done in the context of the European Copernicus programme, helps document climate change to alert the public and policy-makers. Both weather predictions and climate monitoring help to mitigate climate change by optimising our use of renewable energy, for example. With the fine knowledge of the climate of the wind and clouds/solar radiation over an area, one can decide where to optimally locate new wind farms or solar panels. We can plan the impacts of weather climate on the power system at different time ranges for optimal use.

Can you tell our readers about some of the more interesting projects you are currently involved in?

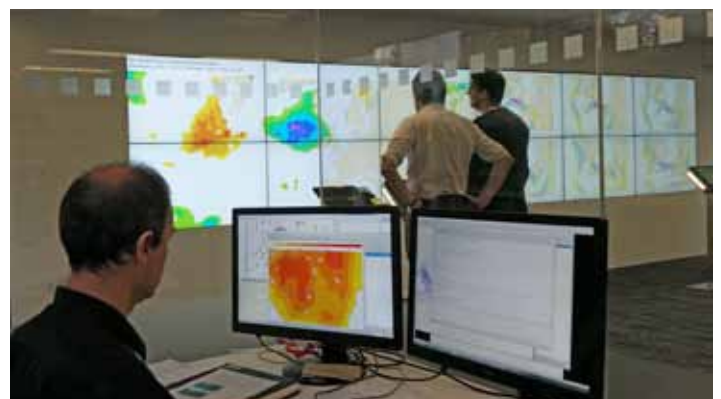
A new development in the context of the Copernicus programme is to monitor the emissions of Carbon Dioxide: this will be done with the same tools as those used for monitoring the weather applied to atmospheric composition and with the data from new satellites launched by the European Space Agency. This will contribute to the 'Global Stocktake', which looks at everything related to where the world stands on climate action and support, identifying the gaps, and working together to chart a better course forward to accelerate climate action.

You recently went to COP28 in Dubai. What were your feelings about the conference in terms of what it achieved?

I was really happy about the fact that COP28 recognised the need to reduce fossil fuels, as the text calls for countries to contribute to a transition 'away from fossil fuels in energy systems in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science'. This is a clear success although I would have preferred, as many nations did, a stronger wording such as a 'phase-out' of fossil fuels.

An obsession with the weather is thought to be a British characteristic, perhaps because we live on an island. Do you notice any difference in attitudes between the French and the British when it comes to the weather?

Frankly, I have not noticed a big difference between the two countries, as we also love to start a conversation in France by talking about the weather!



Scientists analysing the current weather situation

You lived in Kew for 10 years – can you tell us what were the highlights of living in Kew and whether there is anything that you will miss (or not miss!)?

I will certainly miss the community in West Park Road, highlights being the Coronation street party and during Covid when we organised regular outside events for much-needed social interaction (at a reasonable distance). The proximity of Kew Gardens was also fantastic: it is such a special place to visit any time of the year!



Claire Bethel Flags of all the countries supporting the ECMWF

Events

Opening the door in 2024 – private guided tours by the excellent Royal Albert Hall guides enthralled our members with stories about the history of the site: how the building was founded 150 years ago, the royal love story that made it happen, and how the Royal Albert Hall echo was solved.

We followed this with a splendid talk and book signing by Kerry Barrett, author (under the pseudonym of Posy Lovell) of *Kew Garden Girls* & *Kew Garden Girls at War*: these novels offer time to put your feet up, relax and understand more about the history of the local women who offered support during the war years.



Mogden Sewage Works ...

Our attention then swung to more practical local affairs through two relevant and fascinating events: a guided tour of Mogden Sewage Works by their Area Treatment Manager and a presentation by Michael de Podesta entitled 'Is it possible to live a carbon zero life?'. Both offered practical guidance in this rapidly changing world, aiming to better understand and



... and our visitors

concentrate efforts on improving sustainable ways of living.

The weather was set fair as we shared the March Kew Market charity stand with Pensford Field. Thanks to all who helped or just popped by for a chat. This joint initiative benefits both Societies. Supporting and keeping green spaces sacrosanct is vital for the enjoyment of those who live in, or visit, Kew – we must not become complacent about this stunning and historic area and the risks posed by increased development and traffic.

Our appetite was whetted when local resident Jack Andrews cooked up a storm with his excellent talk on his long-time friend – Elizabeth David – entitled *An Omelette and A Glass of Wine*. Elizabeth David, known as the Queen of Cuisine, introduced garlic and herbs to enhance the bland recipes of the 1950s.



Farringdon Guided Walkers

Helen Bartolome's first circular walking tour this Spring provided a fascinating overview of the weird and wonderful features around the rapidly-changing Farringdon and Smithfield Meat Market which is destined to become the new home of the Museum of London. Helen will repeat this splendid afternoon's tour in October 2024.

Reinforcing our strong links with RBG Kew, interested parties were updated about Kew's new Carbon Cycle Garden by Richard Wilford from RBG Kew. This was a joint initiative of The Kew Society and the Kew Community Trust.

Coming up in the next couple of months – and now open to book:

Friday 17th May 2023 – "A Bit of a Carry On" – an illustrated talk by Tyler Butterworth. Come along to the National Archives to hear *Darling Buds of May* actor Tyler Butterworth tell the funny, moving and unashamedly nostalgic untold story of his much-loved parents who lived locally: the nation's first female TV impressionist Janet Brown, and the inimitable star of the Carry On films – Peter Butterworth.

The talk covers heroic wartime escapades at POW camp Stalag Luft 111 to a night at Chequers with Mrs. Thatcher. This is a warm and uplifting journey from wartime to showtime, delving deep into the golden age of British TV & film comedy – it's a chance to hear about two of British comedy's brightest stars, who lived to make

us laugh.

Check the Kew Society website for details of summer and autumn events including the debate on 'The Coercive Acts' taking place: Saturday 1st June 2024 1.00pm to 3.15pm – the response to the Boston Tea Party.

Mary Done

Exploring the electric bike revolution in Kew

Reduce your carbon footprint and contribute to a cleaner environment by opting for an electric bike! With its picturesque landscapes, rolling hills, and bustling city vibe, the Richmond area is the perfect place to embrace the electric bike revolution. Your intrepid reporter/committee member has been out investigating the electric bike revolution with the following results:

Why use an electric bike?

Arguably convenience is the main reason to use an electric bike. Whether you are leaving from home or need to complete a journey from the station, using an electric bike is a rapid, easy way of getting to your destination. But don't forget those environmental reasons! With zero emissions and energy-efficient technology, electric bikes are a sustainable mode of transportation that aligns with London's green initiatives.

Oh and electric bikes make commuting a breeze, allowing you to effortlessly glide through our streets and larger green spaces with ease.

Which provider is easiest to use?

For hiring, the simplest provider to use is Lime which operates dockless bicycle rentals. In Kew, their bikes can be found in the designated bay outside 103A North Road, Richmond TW9 4HJ as well as at the side of the street almost anywhere. On the day that I looked, there were over 50 Lime bikes available in the Kew area. Whilst Forest bikes can also be seen they are much less prevalent making them less convenient to use.

Lime bikes can be found by downloading the Lime app and registering for an account. You must be aged 18+ to register. The app enables you to locate, unlock and pay for your ride.

How much?

Lime charges a fixed rate of £1.00 to unlock an e-bike (or e-scooter) and then 20p per minute to ride. Whereas Forest bikes are free for the first 10 minutes and thereafter cost 29p per minute. Put simply, if your journey is less than about 40 minutes then Forest does win on price!

Safety?

Safety is a key issue that concerns your reporter. Really, you should have your own helmet available for use or be riding on a route that enables low risk. You will have seen that TfL is investing heavily in creating cycle lanes, most recently at the Manor Roundabout, but the junctions of these routes still need care! However, plan carefully and it's possible to find safe routes, for example, to Richmond town centre, Richmond Park, Brentford, Chiswick and via the towpath to Barnes.

Any other criticisms?

Well, several potential criticisms actually: your reporter and his deeply-loved family dog were nearly obliterated by a hoodie riding at ridiculous speed on the Thames towpath! OK, they were riding an electric scooter (I assumed modified) but risk from youngsters riding at unwarranted speed can apply to electric hire bikes too, albeit bikes hired by Lime / Forest are speed limited.

The largest area of criticism though has been from hire bikes left in the middle of pavements, inconveniencing pedestrians and blocking prams, wheelchairs and those with disabilities. A major reason for this, it seems, is driven by the need for users to upload an 'end trip photo' of the bike for review by Lime / Forest (using AI to scan it) to show that it's been safely parked and upright. The user is required to repark the bike if the location is not evaluated as suitable. Thankfully these rules have recently been tightened up to include that a bike should not be blocking the path of others, with fines by Lime starting at £2 for the first offence and increasing to £20 for the fifth offence, at which point the rider is permanently banned from using the service. In fact, in some areas, e.g. Soho and Covent Garden, initial fines for improper parking start at £10; and Lime has created *geofencing* which prevents their bikes from being parked in certain streets (or taken out of their operational area) – in busy areas parking has to be in mandatory locations. Perhaps I'm alone in this, but it seems to me these measures are



Trevor Demonstrates !!

working and careless parking of bikes has much reduced. Apparently, research shows that over 80% of riders do not reoffend once fined. Also Lime have introduced technology to make it much harder for their e-bikes to be hacked, thought to be particularly useful at targeting underage riders. If an account holder is found to have allowed an underage rider (imposter) to hire a bike, they are subject to being permanently banned from all Lime services globally.

Although the Council provide a licence to both Lime and Forest, if you have specific issues relating to a such a bike, you should report it direct to the provider (i.e. not the Council) as below:

- Lime: Email: support@li.me Telephone: 0800 808 5223. Each Lime / Forest bike has an identifying number on it.
- Forest:
 1. Locate the “Report a Badly Parked eBike” QR code on the phone holder of the eBike.
 2. Scan the QR code using your smartphone.
 3. You will be directed to a live chat where you can submit your report and provide details about the incorrectly parked eBike.
 4. Email Forest at cs@humanforest.co.uk with the eBike ID, location and an image of the bike.

Why not buy an electric bike of your own?

As well as completing a journey by hire bike, why not consider buying an electric bike of your own? Prices start from around £500. Bike shops will allow you to test ride and purchase electric bikes from top brands. Those locally known to your reporter are:

- Crown Cycles in St Margarets <http://www.crown-cycles.co.uk/>
- Moore’s Cycles in Twickenham <https://www.moorecycles.co.uk/>
- Cycle Race in Sheen <https://www.cyclerace.co.uk/>
- Richmond Cycles <https://richmondcycles.co.uk/>

Their knowledgeable staff can help you find the perfect electric bike that suits your needs and budget.

Happy electric bike riding!

Trevor Whittaker

The new 20mph speed limits

Our members will all by now have spotted the extension of the 20mph speed limit to the South Circular and other main roads in the borough. The aim of the lower speed limit is primarily for road safety – intended to lead to an overall improvement in the ‘liveability’ of neighbourhoods, reduce the need for physical traffic calming measures and to aid the Council’s wider aim to improve air quality. It is hoped that it will create ‘a safer and healthier environment for all road users’ and bring about greater consistency with other roads in the network which already have 20mph speed limits. There are – arguably – also some benefits in terms of air quality as well, though the evidence on this is less clear-cut and there are arguments on either side, especially if one has to drive in a lower gear to prevent the engine from labouring.



From this ...

Signs appeared more or less overnight and are hard to miss, and speed cameras have been changed accordingly. The change is undoubtedly going to take time to get used to, but it should be noted that motorists (including some of our members) have been issued with penalties for exceeding the 20mph speed limit, so do take them seriously.

The remaining roads that have 30mph speed limits in some sections and the sometimes poor signage between them is causing some confusion. If you have one on your car, using the speed limiter can help you to observe the speed limit and saves you constantly having to watch your speedometer – and might give you a chance to watch the road too !!



.... to this !!

Old Deer Park: path to the Thames

Access to the Thames and Old Deer Park (ODP) from the heart of Richmond involves a new path in a joint Council/ODP Working Group project. Stage 1 – from Park Lane through the A316 car park – was completed in 2019. Stage 2 – linking the car park to the river and ODP – started last September and will complete this Spring. The completed, delightful, winding, unbound gravel path from the car park will be extended with a permeable resin gravel path to the raised board walk to the park constructed under Twickenham bridge. The short path from Old Palace Lane to the boardwalk awaits a top coating.

Kew Road ha-ha

Heritage:

- Restoring the historic wall
- Survey & Archaeology
- Historical research
- Training & Apprenticeships



Nature:

- Creating a corridor for hedgehogs
- Flowers for bees, butterflies and other pollinators
- Food plants and nesting materials for birds
- Education trail

The ha-ha alongside the Cricket Ground is in great need of renovation. Habitats and Heritage – the charity that cares for the natural and historic environment and climate in south and west London– is expanding its Green Hubs project at the Kew Road ha-ha to repair the wall and to create a native wildlife corridor. As well as necessary repairs to the historic wall, the intention is to create a corridor for hedgehogs, plant flowers for bees, and to provide food plants and nesting

plants for birds. There are plenty of opportunities to get involved, see <https://habitatsandheritage.org.uk/get-involved/our-projects/kew-road-ha-ha-conservation/>

The Original Maids of Honour

You may be familiar with *The Original Maids of Honour* tea rooms and bakery on Kew Road. We asked Jasmine Spicer, who grew up in Kew and has worked with Maids of Honour for many years, to tell us more.



Jasmine aged eight, when she lived next door to the Tea Rooms

“Embark on a magical journey through time with The Original Maids of Honour, for a real taste of local history”. While the story of King Henry VIII’s inaugural bite of the sumptuous Maids of Honour tart at Hampton Court Palace is a right royal slice of Richmond heritage and the incredible start of the story of Maids of Honour in Kew, there’s perhaps even richer history to be found in the many local memories which are so fondly cherished.

My own first encounter with Maids is a story which is particularly close to my heart. I moved to Kew Road when I was eight years old, in the early 1980s, far from my friends and family and feeling a bit of a stranger in the new area. I’ll never forget the day I first walked into the tea rooms on Kew Road and saw all the lovely cakes lined up, and the beautifully golden round pies being wrapped and sliced. The enchanting building and curious decoration made it feel like I’d stepped into a fairytale, and as the yummy *Maids of Honour* tart centre melted in my mouth, all my worries melted away too. I was lucky enough to have moved in right next door to the tea rooms and fondly recall my childhood mornings waking up to the delicious smell of freshly baked pies floating in through my bedroom window and the charming sounds of the bakery pots and pans busily making the day’s fine

fare. I also recall rushing home from Queen’s (now King’s) School each Friday afternoon to receive my pocket money and dash straight into Maids for my Rum Truffle, so that I could celebrate the end of the week proudly, with a ridiculously luxurious and chocolaty treat! Not a lot has changed! In this rapidly changing world, Maids of Honour is still as it always has been, with its welcoming charm and irresistible array of home-cooked, traditional, freshly-baked goods. And suffice to say, my mouth still waters whenever I see the cakes and pies all in a row, and a most mischievous smile forms on my face when I spot my childhood love, the patisserie’s divine Rum Truffles! As a Kew girl, hearing the magical variety of Maids stories, from fabulous older Kew residents, from newly arrived members of the community, and from visitors to the area from all corners of the globe, has been the real heart and joy of Maids history: birthday cake celebrations, romantic high teas and the many twinkles in people’s eyes when they talk about Maids ‘best in the world-ever-’ traditional pies....if you know, you know.

Oh, King Henry VIII. If you want to find out the fascinating story behind the iconic tart and some more about Maids of Honour’s local history, head over to its website www.theoriginalmaidsofhonour.co.uk



Then – and now



Great Escapes: Remarkable Second World War Captives

If you haven't yet seen the Great Escapes Exhibition at the National Archives, it's well worth a visit.

The National Archives reveals some of the extraordinary stories featured in its upcoming exhibition – Great Escapes: Remarkable Second World War Captives – which opened on 2nd February.

It's the real life experiences of prisoners of war and civilian internees in the Second World War, many of which have never been told before.

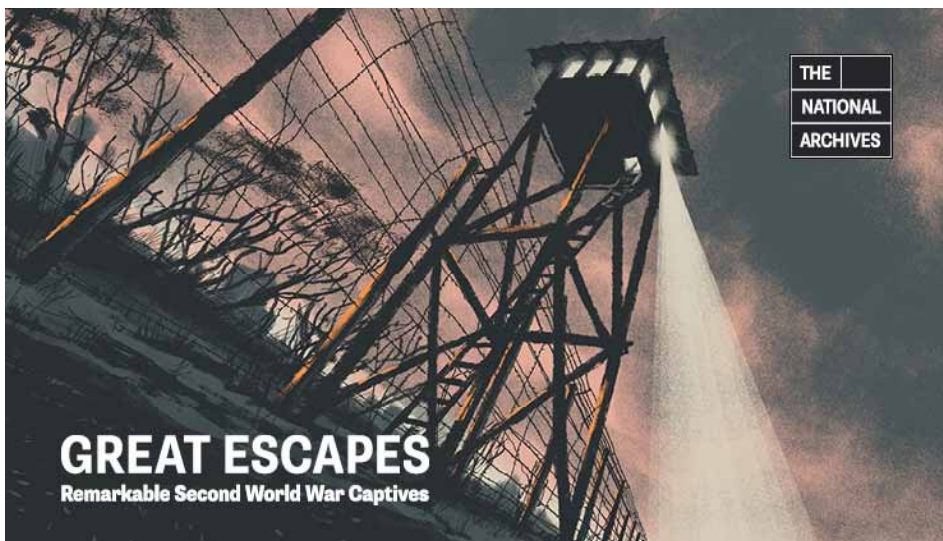
To mark the 80th anniversary of the Great Escape from Stalag Luft III on March 24, 1944, it features first-hand accounts from survivors, including hand-drawn maps and sketches showing how prisoners planned the escape and built their tunnels. See how far they had to dig using tools like spoons, forks and tin cans. Also included, on loan from the Imperial War Museum, are items used by successful escaper Oliver Philpot as he fled across Europe after escaping from the same camp under the Wooden Horse.

For the first time, it was able to make public some of the secret coded messages hidden behind photographs and sent to relatives in Britain by prisoners of war, which show how Britain's top secret intelligence organisation MI9 gathered information in order to help other Allied servicemen evade and escape capture.

German Bernhard 'Bert' Trautmann – Manchester City Football Club's legendary goalkeeper – who was held in British prisoner of war camps, also features in the exhibition, alongside the first Colditz escaper Airey Neave and actor Peter Butterworth, who was involved in The Great Escape and the Wooden Horse (see Events – *A Bit of a Carry On*).

One extraordinary captive in the Far East – Ralph Burton Goodwin – managed to swim from Sham Shui Po camp to freedom in mainland China and then travel thousands of miles home. Another – Leading Aircraftman Frank Williams – befriended the only dog to be registered as a prisoner of war in the Second World War. Judy – a liver-and-white pointer – saved lives by distracting Japanese guards in Gloegoer camp in Sumatra as well as rescuing passengers when the transport ship Harugiku Maru was sunk. After the war she was awarded the Dickin Medal, on loan to The National Archives from the Imperial War Museum: the animal equivalent of a

Victoria Cross.



Many prisoners unable to escape their prisons sought mental escape from their punishing living conditions. Artist Ronald Searle's haunting sketches of prisoners who built the Thai-Burma railway are shown alongside author P G Wodehouse's experience of imprisonment in Upper Silesia, where he wrote *Money in the Bank* before being forced to deny collaboration after making controversial broadcasts to the US on German radio.

One of the most extraordinary items on show is a patchwork quilt made by women and children in Changi

camp in Singapore in 1943. Olga Henderson, now 91, was imprisoned there with her family as a nine-year-old, and recalls gathering scraps of tattered clothing to make the blanket which still bears the embroidered names of her fellow captives. This item is also on loan from the Imperial War Museum.

Civilian detainees held in Britain feature too, including artist Margarete Klopffleisch who created remarkable sculptures in response to her internment in Port Erin Camp on the Isle of Man. One of our most extraordinary exhibits is her sculpture *Despair*, which has been loaned by a private collection and which is normally in the care of Leicester Museum & Art Gallery.

Dr. William Butler – a curator of the exhibition, and co-author of the associated book *Captives: Prisoners of War and Internees 1939-1945* – said: "Many people will have heard the story of the Great Escape, thanks to the 1963 film, but our exhibition also reveals stories not yet told.

"Great Escapes is about the agency of individuals, their courage, resilience, and ingenuity in the face of adversity. We hope to show visitors how prisoners and internees made decisions in order to feel human, with community and activity groups being formed 'behind the wire', whether they be escape committees or choirs.

"Many of these stories are about hope despite the incredibly difficult circumstances prisoners and internees

faced during the Second World War.”

Steve Burgess, Head of Events and Exhibitions at The National Archives, said:

“We must thank our team of volunteers at The National Archives who catalogued around 200,000 War Office records which has allowed us to uncover new material and tell these stories for the first time.”

The exhibition has free entrance to all.

Open gardens in Marksbury Avenue – Sunday 9th June from 2.00 – 5.00pm

The National Open Gardens Scheme gives visitors access to over 3,500 exceptional private gardens throughout the country. It has raised over £30 million for nursing and health charities through admissions, teas and cake so is well worth supporting. The relatively small gardens in Marksbury Avenue are taking part this year – they are probably about the average size for Kew. The most common reaction from visitors is ‘Wow! – I could do this with my garden’.

Although of similar size, the five neighbouring gardens are all very different. At No. 26, you will find many New Zealand natives. Fruit trees abound with plums, figs, apple, red and black currants, apricots, mulberry, feijoa, loquat and citrus, alongside a delicate chamomile lawn. Over the road at 59, the garden has evolved largely through own propagation and self-seeding. No. 60 is a typical town garden where visitors can enjoy a fine display of patio roses, flowering shrubs and climbers, including numerous varieties of clematis, displayed around a curved lawn. Next door is a family garden, created from scratch in 2018. No. 65 is an even newer garden, designed in 2021 with symmetrical lines softened by old favourites plus contemporary grasses, cercis and canas. Seating ‘rooms’ catch sun and shade.

Teas are available at the Barn Church, and entry is £7.00 for all five gardens.



26 Marksbury Avenue



60 Marksbury Avenue

MEET IN KEW

JOIN US FOR A FREE EARLY EVENING DRINK AND MEET SOME NEW PEOPLE FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD. WINES, BEER AND SOFT DRINKS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE FOR A DONATION TOWARDS COMMUNITY PROJECTS

6th June 2024

EVERY FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH EXCEPT JANUARY

6pm - 8pm
Kew Community Centre,
The Avenue, TW9 2AJ

THE KEW SOCIETY
In Collaboration With

KEW COMMUNITY TRUST

KEW DIARY 2024

2024

5th May	Our stall at Kew Village Market	The Kew Society
5th May	Kew Horticultural stall at Kew Village Market	Kew Horticultural Society
17th May	'A Bit of a Carry On' – a talk by Tyler Butterworth	The Kew Society
25th May	Bowls Big Weekend	Mid Surrey Bowling Club
1st June	'The Coercive Acts' – a response to The Boston Tea Party	The Kew Society
2nd June	Kew Village Market	Kew Village Market Committee
6th June	Meet in Kew, in the Kew Community Centre, The Avenue, TW9 2AJ	The Kew Society
9th June	Summer Party & Plant Sale	Kew Horticultural Society
9th June	Five open gardens in Marksbury Avenue	The National Open Gardens Scheme
12th June	Great Escapes – a Curator's Tour at The National Archives	The Kew Society
28th June	'From Kew to the Amazon' – a talk by Nick Ovenden	The Kew Society
4th July	Meet in Kew, in the Kew Community Centre, The Avenue, TW9 2AJ	The Kew Society
7th July	Kew Village Market	Kew Village Market Committee
21st July	Kew Society Picnic (details TBC)	The Kew Society
25th July	A Guided Tour of Syon House	The Kew Society
1st August	Meet in Kew, in the Kew Community Centre, The Avenue, TW9 2AJ	The Kew Society
4th August	Kew Village Market	Kew Village Market Committee
6th August	A Guided Tour of the Handel & Hendrix Museum	The Kew Society
24th August	Summer Show	Kew Horticultural Society
1st September	Kew Village Market	Kew Village Market Committee
5th September	Meet in Kew, in the Kew Community Centre, The Avenue, TW9 2AJ	The Kew Society
25th September	'Poets & Princess, Naked Ladies & Rock Gardens' – a talk by Celia Holman	The Kew Society
8th October	Footsteps around Farringdon – a walk with Helen Bartolome	The Kew Society

For full details of Kew Society events, see our website: details below.

OPEN DAY – BOWLS BIG WEEKEND (a national event)

Saturday 25th May 2.00 – 5.00pm

No previous experience necessary – just wear flat shoes

We are also offering the following two Tuesday and Thursday afternoons/evenings for anyone interested in taking bowls further, to come down and practise, before deciding to join, i.e: 28th May; 30th May; 4th June and 6th June – from 3.00pm onwards.

The club is also offering a generous half-price subscription, for the first year, to new members.

www.midsurreybowls.co.uk

If Hand-Delivered:

For Address Label

Contact Us

Your Committee includes:

Chair	Shiona Williams	chair@kewsociety.org
Vice-Chair & Environment	Jeremy Lumbers	environment@kewsociety.org
Hon. Secretary	Diana Ormond	secretary@kewsociety.org
Hon. Treasurer	Steve Williams	treasurer@kewsociety.org
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Patrons

Nick Baird CMG CVO
Sir David Durie KCMG
Sir Donald Insall CBE

JOIN NOW by visiting our website:

www.kewsociety.org

Charity Number: 1173016

You can write to us at:

The Kew Society, 90 Forest Road, KEW, Surrey, TW9 3BZ



@kewsociety

