

WESTCOMBE NEWS

A Voluntary Group Devoted to Fostering a Sense of Community

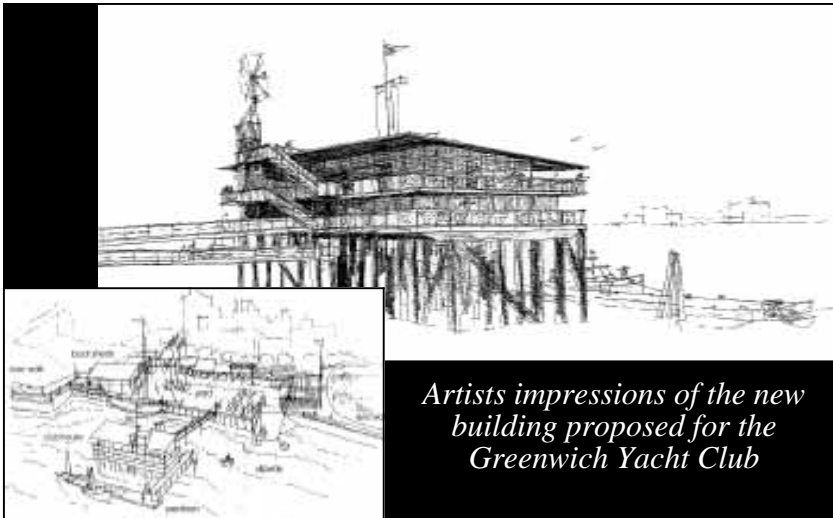
Est 1972

June 1999 Issue 6

Free to 3,200 Homes

Inside this Issue

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Artists impressions of the new building proposed for the Greenwich Yacht Club

Tide Turns For Greenwich Yacht Club

The tide has turned for Greenwich Yacht club which is now set to see in the millennium from its new premises at Peartree Wharf alongside the New Millennium Village.

The Club, founded in 1908, with more than 200 members, will be the first river - based recreational facility established on the New Millennium Village site. It expects to move from its existing premises off River Way, Greenwich, to a new Clubhouse on Peartree Wharf by the end of the year.

Club Commodore, Norman Crawford, said "For the past couple of years it has been a question of anchoring and hoping in the middle of the massive Millennium building site. Our main access road on River Way has been dug up, and half of our boatyard and our workshop and lockers have been demolished to make way for the development. When we lifted our boats into the water last month, we had to hire an extra long crane to lift our craft over the new riverside walkway that is still being built. But we have persevered and now our members are looking forward to seeing in the Millennium from our new premises."

"We have had strong support from Greenwich councillors and English Partnerships, who are in charge of the Millennium Village development, because they appreciate how important it is to work in partnership with the Borough's only river based sailing club on the Thames."

Greenwich Yacht Club is a non-profit making club run entirely by its own members. Mr Crawford said, "We were founded by

Greenwich water men and people who worked on the River as a boating club for ordinary people. We still have that non stuck-up atmosphere and we want to keep it that way. Our pleasure is in boating and good company, so we welcome anyone who shares this outlook and we look forward to being a lively part of the New Millennium Village. "The move to our new premises alongside this exciting development opens up new opportunities. We already host professionally recognised sailing classes and we hope to develop wider educational and river related activities in our new premises. To boost this side of our activities, our members will be considering whether to seek charitable status to make the most of the recreational activity on the Thames that our Club provides.

"Later this month we shall be putting the draft terms of a new 25 year lease for our new premises to our members. Once that has been agreed we will be ready to move in time for the Millennium."

Spectacular views for new club

Architects Frankl and Luty of London, received planning permission for the Greenwich Yacht Club last October. They are designing boat building sheds, a cafe and classrooms that will surround a yard open to the Thames. The plans are for the clubhouse to be built on an existing jetty situated out in the river, with a pontoon and slipway allowing access at low water. The position will afford spectacular views from the bar and terraces of the Millennium Dome and the Thames barrier.



What can be done?

61 Westcombe Park Road.

For the past nine months the Environment Committee has attempted to come up with some answers about 61 Westcombe Park Road. Since then Westcombe News has received a number of letters from local residents expressing concern about this property. At the end of May, there was still no sign of repair work beginning. The premises are, though, somewhat more secure than was the case earlier this year. Councillor Alex Grant, Vanbrugh Ward, has been asking council officers about the property and there is still nothing positive to report. Except for reasons of environmental health, the council has no powers at its disposal to force the owner to repair it. The owner is probably lying low, waiting for his insurance claim to be accepted.

Any illegal action such as the possibility of an insurance scam can only be resolved in the courts. It would not be a council matter. The only action the council can take, regardless of how bad the condition of the property becomes, is to order the owner to restore the property to its original state. The only good news among this frustrating inaction is that the council will not accept any revised application that might propose the demolition of the building.

Another property standing empty under similarly mysterious circumstances and owned by the same person is the old Nurses' Home in St. John's Park. This property is at present inadequately supported by scaffolding at the front and rear and has recently had its roof removed following a fire. The Old Nurses' Home lies open to the elements and decay. It is not in the Vanbrugh Ward, and outside the Westcombe Society area, but Councillor Grant has said he would pass on the Society's concerns to the Blackheath Ward Councillor Rhodri Harris.

We will continue to update you through Westcombe News about the sorry state of affairs surrounding these two properties.



GALLERY

at

Pine Interiors

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The views expressed in the WESTCOMBE
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Display Ads: (Single) edition	10 editions
from £25	£18

Small Ads: Personal 10p per word
Commercial 20p per word

Westcombe Society Membership

For those who wish to become Society members please send this form to: Anne Greenslade, 15 Bernard Ashley Drive, Charlton SE7 7UB.

I wish to become a member of the Westcombe Society for 1999-2000.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Telephone Number _____

Please tick (as appropriate) I have enclosed a cheque for:

Family Membership (£3) []

Individual Membership (£2) []

Senior Citizen or unemployed (£1)

I would like to volunteer, please send me more information. []

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News from the Westcombe Society

What A Great Meeting - the AGM

Many thanks to the fifty or more people who came to the AGM of the Westcombe Society on 15 May and enjoyed the party. There was so much of interest to be reported but in summary.....

The existing committee was re-elected with the change of Andrew Riley becoming chairman and Patricia Slade-Baker becoming Treasurer.

Jill Slade remains as Secretary and Anne Greenslade as membership secretary. Anne Williams and Jenny Maloney who stepped down were thanked for the work they had done in the year. The winners and runners-up of the John Petty Award gratefully received their prizes from Ida Petty.

The society made a surplus for the year of £317. Views on the membership fee ranged from having a free membership to doubling it. The winner of the Pol Roger champagne, donated by Majestic of Greenwich, was Donald Champion. Many thanks to Carol Riley and all the people who helped her organise the delicious food. And thank you to everyone who volunteered their services and ideas - we will be contacting you later.

Our key efforts for the year will be to enlarge on the membership (after making a decision about fees in readiness for September), find a replacement for Anne Greenslade who will be leaving us in the summer, and have a great community summer fayre and Dickensian bazaar.

Summer Fayre - Mycenae Gardens-Sunday 11 July 2-6pm

Put this date in your diary because by turning up you will have the time of your life!

Yes! This highly successful event from last year has come round again. This open air Westcombe community party allows young and old alike to play games, run races, and bounce on castles in the grounds of Mycenae House. Local schoolchildren will be there to have fun and run their own stalls. A highly-regarded jazz band 'Timepieces' will play from 4pm. BBQ food and drink will be on sale. Bring a picnic. Bake a cake and donate it to our cake stall. Get those dancing/bouncing/running shoes on. Summertime is here!

Contact Liz Court with offers of cake and help with stalls. Tel 293 0242. She also needs a loud hailer. Do you have one to lend?

We would like to thank Woodlands and Mycenae House for their help in running this event.

Dickensian Bazaar - 20 November 1999: Help!

We have a venue and a date. Last year was the best ever Bazaar raising £1,4000! We have half a dozen people willing to run the event but **we need six more volunteers in order to make this flagship of the Westcombe Society happen.**

Some of last year's key people can not commit as much time this year due to health, family and work commitments. Since the last appeal we have had one enthusiastic response.. but can we have some more. There will be a **'make or break' meeting** on Wednesday 16 June at 84 Beaconsfield Road. Please contact Caroline Owens on 853 0948.

Your commitment can be tailored to how much time you have. What is involved is not onerous and is fun!

* Be an entrepreneur and help run and organise a particular stall which makes lots of money for the society

* Let your advertising consultancy skills run riot and get involved in the publicity

* Use those magazine articles you have kept to positive effect and make decorations and food (this would be a great trial run before trying it out on your friends and family)

* Try out your power of persuasion and see what local traders will give you

Remember the money raised gets ploughed back into community events and local charities. So the time you give will make a difference.

Adult Nearly New - Saturday 22 May

Apologies to those people who came to Mycenae house to buy clothes. The Adult Nearly New had to be cancelled at late notice because there were so few stallholders.

This happened last year as well. A Children's Nearly New will take place in the autumn but for the present the Westcombe Society will not be organising any more Adult Nearly New Sales.

The future of Greenwich District Hospital

Bexley and Greenwich Health Authority is consulting on proposals to develop the Memorial and Golden Leigh Hospital sites, and the future of the Greenwich District Hospital site once the new Queen Elizabeth Hospital opens in 2001! In 1993/4 the argument for the new hospital was that the provision of high quality, efficient services could not be managed from the existing three sites - the Brook, the Memorial and the Greenwich District Hospital and so the new Queen Elizabeth Hospital was born.

* A consultation document is available: 'Modernising healthcare in Bexley and Greenwich' (see contact numbers below). A number of public meetings were held in May. Unfortunately we received details of these too late before going to press so we could not give you any notice. The consultation period ends on 30 July 1999 and your views are welcomed on four specific areas:

* The future of the Greenwich District Hospital building and site

* The services to be provided for older people (over the age of 65) with mental health needs and the proposed siting of those services

* The proposed development of the Memorial Hospital site, including plans to provide mental health services for adults (up to the age of 65) on the site

* The proposed development of the Golden Leigh Hospital site, primarily for people with learning difficulties

It is proposed to sell the Greenwich District Hospital building and site as it is considered unsuitable for other NHS users and will cost £800,000 a year to maintain. Planning permission has been granted for the Millennium Village Health Centre, which will be built on Greenwich Peninsula. It is expected to provide GP services to about 12,000 patients, when the village is fully developed. Services that may be available for the wider community in Greenwich are also being explored. These include chronic disease management in diabetes, asthma and heart disease and on-site blood testing facilities

Please send your comments (no stamp required) to Bexley and Greenwich Health Authority, FREEPOST SEA 1927, Bexleyheath, DA7 6BR. Freephone message line is 0800 917 6310. E-mail: consultation@ics.bexgreen-ha.sthames.nhs.uk

Kosovo lunch

Many thanks to all those who attended the very jolly fund-raising shared lunch in aid of Kosovo's refugees on May 15th in Glenluce Road. The event was a great success: a total of £800 was raised - much of it through advance donations by people who could not attend. As a result, £400 is to be donated to local charities looking after Kosovo refugees in this country, including Lewisham Refugee Network and the Copleston Centre in Southwark, and the remaining £400 is to be donated to Oxfam's Kosovo Crisis Appeal and UNHCR relief work in Macedonia and Albania.

Welcoming a new estate agent to the community

Since opening their doors last April, Peter Burchell and James Power have been amazed and pleasantly surprised at how quickly they have established

**ARTS & CRAFTS
STRAWBERRY FAYRE**

at Westcombe Park Road,
Blackheath on Saturday 17th July
from 1 pm. Admission FREE -
proceeds to Charity

**All are welcome: Cakes, Tombola,
Raffles, Refreshments, Games, Crafts
and Strawberries & Cream**

themselves in the area. "There was a definite need for a fresh approach to estate agency. An independent estate agency is the way forward" said James and Peter, "people prefer the personal approach and the ultimate tenacity that you get from a partner in the business."

Peter and James are currently recruiting more staff to cope with their rapidly increasing workload. Their doors are always open, so if you require advice, a valuation or if you are looking to buy, sell or rent then call them on 858 2533

Accidents keep happening

Hopefully now that the waterworks are finished you are not suffering from 'hit and run' accidents. Thanks again for the new letters which recently arrived. We would like to write to Thames Water and Greenwich Council with a complete list of the accidents. If your parked car has been damaged since the traffic restrictions complete the details below and send them to The Page Editor of Community Life, 20 Humber Road, SE3 7LT:

ACCIDENT DETAILS

Name, Number and Road:

Type of car damaged:

Accident date:

Damage value (approximate)

Car wars - white line wars

No one could have failed to notice the white lines which occupy most of the Westcombe area roads. A community plea is to consider your neighbour and make sure that your car does not straddle two spaces and therefore excludes any one else from using it. The consequences of doing so may be forcing others to park on yellow lines and incur fines and a danger to other traffic and pedestrians.

A second point to note that in the second year of operation, the council may be asking for your viewpoint as to whether to continue with the parking restrictions ..at a price. What do you think?

Local M.P. for Greenwich & Woolwich

Do you have a matter to raise with your M.P. which affects you as an individual or the community? Contact your local M.P.

Nick Raysnford M.P. for Greenwich and Woolwich surgeries are: 2nd and 4th Friday (7pm) of the month, Labour Party Office, 32 Woolwich Road, SE10; 2nd Saturday (11am), Charlton House, SE7; 2nd Saturday (2pm), West Greenwich House, Greenwich High Road, SE10; 4th Saturday (11 am), Ferrier Community Hall, SE3; 4th Saturday (2pm), Town Hall, Wellington Street, SE18. For more information ring 0171 219 5895

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Dishes Italian, Piesies covered, etc



For all enquiries Telephone 0181 858 2208

Even if you are not the organiser but think people in the area would like to know - PLEASE send details of activities, performances etc. in the forthcoming few months to David Scott, 110 Westcombe Park Road, telephone 853-0882 fax 333-0468,

BANK HOLIDAY FAIR

30 Aug - 1 Sept.

GREENWICH + DOCKLANDS

International Festival 1999

Ten days of summer

9 - 18 July

Box Office 0870 900 0355 (24hours)

It's hard to believe it's that time of year again but Festival season will soon be on us. There are spectacular outdoor theatre to classical concerts in historic settings, from free outdoor street performances and fireworks to jazz and popular music. This year there are two outdoor concerts at the old Royal Naval College (Greenwich University) on the 17 and 18 July.

Get your programme from the box office.

ATHLETICS

Sutcliffe Park Athletics Track

Eltham Road, Kidbrooke

Woman's Group - 7pm Thurs. evenings

Juniors - 10am Sats.

General public use - Tues., Thurs. evenings and Sat., Sun mornings

All welcome Call 859 2421 for details

BNT BIRDS NEST THEATRE

32 Deptford Church St.,

Reservations 694 2255

PETER SHAFFER'S EQUUS

3 - 30 June, 7:30pm

£5 (waged) £4 (unwaged)

Try the pre-show Thai Cuisine meal £7 (3 courses)

"Equus" is the thought-provoking story of a child psychiatrist's effort to unlock the mind of the withdrawn teenager who committed an act of sickening violence. Why did he do it? The tale is told through an interweaving of flashbacks, dreams and counselling sessions.

The BNT company is made up of local actors, designers, directors and technicians.

GLDSMITHS RAMBLING CLUB

Contact Jenny Brewer 318 2564

Sunday 6 June Bentley, Hants (Train ramble)

Sunday 20 June Otford - Eynsford, Kent

LEWISHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Fri 25 June 7:45pm The Wandsworth Museum Story by Pat Cooper

Methodist Church Hall, Albion Way, Lewisham SE13

LEWISHAM RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY

24 June 7:30pm Parry - David Coronel

St Laurence Centre, 37 Bromley Road, Catford SE6 Contact Bernard Smith 857 7078

THE QUAY PLAYERS .. PRESENT.. Viva Mexico!

A musical comedy for all the family

10 - 12 June 7:30pm

Bacon's College, Timber Pond Rd

Surrey Quays, SE16

Box office 857 3267

£6 / £4

THE BOB HOPE THEATRE

Wythfield Rd, Eltham

Box office 850 3702

16 - 19 June 8pm **Groping for Words**

By Susan Townsend

23 - 26 June 8pm

All the World's a S*T*A*G*E

Sun 27 June 7:30pm An evening of Operetta and Light Opera Favourites

Glamorous Nights

12 - 17 July Evenings 7:30pm & Sat Matinee 2:30pm

Summer Musical **The Sound of Music**

Call 852 8293, 1 Montpelier Row, Blackheath SE3

Your chance to be part of the Greenwich Passion Play 2000!

Open Information and Recruitment Session Saturday 12 June 2 - 4pm near the bandstand in Greenwich Park. See page 7 for more details.

Planning for one of the biggest events for the people of Greenwich in Millennium Year is well underway - and now everyone gets the chance to join the Passion Play 2000 company! The Greenwich Passion Play is a new Miracle Play Cycle for Greenwich in the new Millennium. It will be performed in Greenwich Park on Good Friday, 21 April of the Year 2000 from 12 noon till 3pm, and the 1,000 people in the cast will perform seven Miracle Plays before joining in with the final Passion Play telling the story of the last week of Jesus' life. Miracle Play cycles began in this country in the Middle Ages as a way of bringing familiar stories out of the churches and onto the streets. They were brash, exciting and festive, used language which pulled no punches, and were paid for by local trades and crafts companies. York has its own cycle, and so do Coventry and Wakefield - but Greenwich doesn't, yet!

All that is about to change, as a cycle is being created which will endure long beyond the Year 2000. Seven community groups will be devising the Miracle Plays in a series of workshops with director John Doyle from the end of the summer. John has devised the framework for the plays, selected the miracles, and written the script for the Passion Play itself. There are plans to record the performance and publish the play - and it's hoped that a tradition of regularly performing the cycle will be continued into the new Millennium.

Many of the groups taking part have signed up already, but now John, actor Ben Thomas and project administrator Susan Edwards are looking for

e-mail da.j.scott@cwcom.net. We will be happy to include descriptions of events that are likely to be of interest to readers in the community. We also want to hear local views of events that have taken place.

individuals to take part as well. They will be holding an open session in the park - you'll find them near the bandstand - on Saturday 12 June from 2pm-4pm for anyone who is interested in joining a play or helping in any way.

To take part you need enthusiasm, energy, and to know that you'll be in Greenwich next year on April 21 - the beginning of the Easter weekend. You don't need experience, special musical or dramatic skills or religious belief. The stories underpin the culture and literature of many communities and belong to everyone - already Anglican, Catholic, Jewish, gospel and secular community groups are taking part.

It costs nothing to join the cast, and is a chance to help shape a work of theatre which could last just as long as the mediaeval cycles have - and longer. For more information about the open session and the Passion Play project itself - or if you'd like to take part but can't make the session - phone Greenwich BETA (Blackheath and East Greenwich Trust for the Arts) based at St. George's Vicarage on 858 3006 or Susan Edwards on 0171 639 4413.

ST JOHN'S

During Re-ordering, - you will have seen the contractors equipment etc outside the church - services have been relocated. Sunday 8am Communion and 6pm. Services will be in the Memorial Hall on the Vicarage Avenue, just down St John's Park on the right. The main Services at 10:30am Sundays will be held at Blackheath Bluecoats School - Old Dover Road. The venues for special evening services are as announced.

The church office (Margaret Parsons) 10am to 5pm and Tuesday 7pm-7:30pm for enquiries about Baptisms, Weddings, etc. During re-ordering is in 2 Reynolds Place, Blackheath SE3 8SX. Telephone /fax /ansaphone 0181 -305-0520, e-mail st.johns1@virgin.net

COWBOY BARN DANCE

- COME IN COSTUME

St John's Church

Saturday 26 June 7.30pm - 11pm

Blackheath Bluecoat school

Tickets: £10 adults, £5 children, available from Church Office, Michele Doherty, Carolyn Cartwright, Tessa Coppard

GREENWICH WALKS

Led by the Greenwich Tour Guides Association, tel 858-6169. Contact Gill for information and advanced booking on the walks 305 0067. Two regular walks every day, 12:15pm and 2:30pm starting from Tourist Information Centre, Greenwich Church Street.

Peps Hereabouts 19 Aug

Longitude & The History of Time 17 July & 11 Sept

Another Greenwich - Ghosts & the supernatural 17 July & 11 Sept

Cromwellian Greenwich 3 Sept (anniversary of his death in 1658)

Peps Hereabouts Thurs 19 Aug

Docks & Dome Sat 3 July, 25 Sept

Blackheath Past & Present 6 June, 8 Aug, 19 Sept

Walk the Line 2 Sept

Shooters Hill Sun 27 June

Eltham - An Historic Town? 16 June & 1 Sept

Riverside Woolwich 4 September

Women of Greenwich Sat 12 June

Ghosts, Ghouls & Hauntings Fri 18 June & Sat 25 Sept

A Summer Dark Side Fri 25 June, 30 July & 27 Aug

Plumstead Common Sat 10 July & Sun 25 July

Charlton Village Sat 21 Aug

Junior Poetry Safari Thurs 26 Aug (holiday special)

World Heritage Site Sat 18 Sept

Walks last between one and a half and two hours, most cost £4 per person (concessions £3) Accompanied

BLACKHEATH HALLS

23 Lee Road tel. 463 0100

Rock, Pop & Blues

Sun 20 June 8pm The Australian Pink Floyd Show

Fri 25 June 8:30pm Sherman Robertson plus Mo' Indigo

Wed 14 July 8pm London Adventist Chorale led by Ken Burton

Jazz

Fri 18 June 8:30pm The Jazz Connection

Sun 11 July 8pm Chris Barber's Jazz & Blues Band with Paul Jones

Thurs 8 July 7pm Eddie Parker's Mister Vertigo

Fri 23 July 8:30pm Kermesse - Music from the streets of the World

Folk & Roots

Sat 10 July 8.30pm Ivor Cutler

Classical

Fri 2 July 8pm City of London Sinfonia

Emma Johnson, Clarinet;

Matthew Taylor, Conductor

Fri 30 July 8pm e2K (Ensemble 2000)

Participation

Thurs 8 July 7pm IMPR-Integrated Music, Projects, 'Developing Musical Communities'

Mon 12 July 2:30pm Chicago Children's Choir

Fri 16 July 7:30pm Collaborations

Fri 23 - Sun 25 July Glasgow 1999, UK City of Architecture & Design

UP THE CREEK

302 Creek Rd. SE10, Reservations 858 4581

Shows start - Fridays & Sundays 9pm, Saturdays - 8.30pm

A Benefit night of music and comedy

for Laurelbrook MHE Resource Centre, more information Sukie Green at Stress Management 691 0262, Sukey Firth 858 8633 & 0966 150 014

Music: Kirsty MacColl, Glen Tilbrook, Chris Holland

Comedy: Nick Wilty, Steve Bowditch

Compere: Malcolm Hardee

Reservations 858 4581

Tickets £8 / £6 concessions

MILLENNIUM DOME

The World's Biggest Dome - Final Countdown

June Millennium Pier completed.

July Tickets go on sale to the public.

Central show technical rehearsals begin.

August Finish testing show equipment.

Central area and zone finishes complete.

Sept Park and Ride/Park and Sail sites available.

Trade tickets go on sale.

October Millennium Transit operational.

Test operation period begins.

November Content installation complete.

December River services operational.

Three Days Of Previews, Free To Greenwich Residents.

New Year's Eve Opening ceremony

Rates

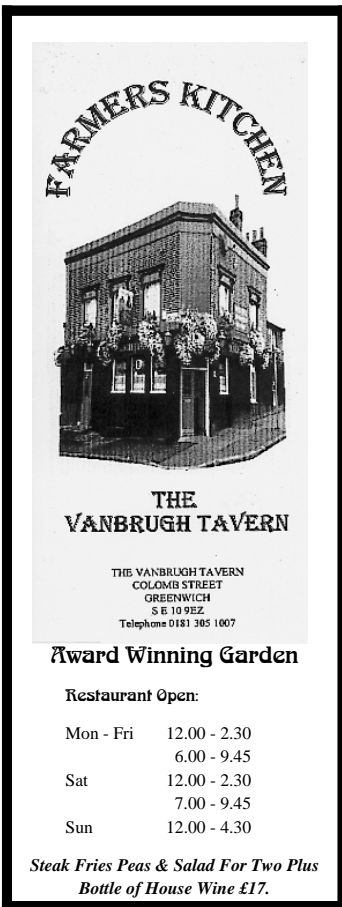
Adult £20.00, Senior Citizens £18.00, JSA40 holders £12.00

Children under 5 Free ages 5 to 15 inc. & Student card holders £16.50

'Family Five' ticket (2 adults + up to 3 children or 1 adult + up to 4 children) £57.00

Senior Citizens Groups of 15 or more £12.00 each

Group adults rate (15 or more) £17.50 each



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	6.00 - 9.45
Sat	12.00 - 2.30
	7.00 - 9.45
Sun	12.00 - 4.30

Steak Fries Peas & Salad For Two Plus Bottle of House Wine £17.

Environment Matters

All enquiries/comments with regard to the editorial on this page should be addressed to Dave Riddle, Chair of the Environment Committee:
0181 858 4111

The Dangerous Triangle

Work is now complete on the Westcombe Hill Triangle. There have, unsurprisingly, already been complaints from residents about the layout and the unnecessary space taken up by the 'tree islands'. The northernmost island also causes a problem because it has been constructed at least a foot further into the main Westcombe Hill carriageway than the lines marking the carriageway indicates. With cars parked on the opposite side of Westcombe Hill, this provides an extremely dangerous outcrop at a key point in the road alignment. There is potential for a serious accident if the curb were hit at speed by a car coming down the Hill. It has also made it impossible for two 108 buses to pass, let alone two of the new double-decker buses that are soon to be using this road.

At the time Westcombe News went to print there was some indication that this construction error has been noted and work to remedy the situation may be in progress.

Peninsula cinema gets go ahead

Evidence shows, as originally suspected, the council is stuck with honouring the original planning application for the Peninsula. From the minutes and agenda items received from recent council planning meetings, they show that as long ago as 1996 permission was given to develop all of the old British Gas peninsula site.

The cinema development was prevented from going ahead earlier this year by a problem with the floor area specified for the building. This has been a dispute between the developer and the council. A racked seating area will be subject to a specific planning agreement - such that it cannot ever be incorporated into the overall usable floor area - in the building. The revised application has now been agreed and the development will proceed after all.

Accessing the Dome After a number of previously missed deadlines, a small section of the Jubilee Line extension from North Greenwich to Stratford was finally opened on 14 May.

For those of you who have not yet made the trip down to the Peninsula, to see what's going on around the Dome, the site is pretty remote and could only be reached by foot or bicycle. In recent months the 108 bus route has been diverted into the site. Now, though, the formal

opening of the Peninsula site to the public has meant the 108 runs more frequent trips and additional services have been provided by the 472 bus from Woolwich and the 188 bus from Greenwich. Even taxis are now permitted to visit.

However, there is no provision for private cars either to park or, more surprisingly, to partake of the promised "park-and-ride" option that had been much touted. The latter travel alternative has apparently been completely abandoned at the request of Transport Minister Glenda Jackson, in an attempt to keep the number of cars around North Greenwich station and the Dome down to an absolute minimum.

Westcombe News has been told by station staff that the line is only open during weekdays and is closed at the weekend until the opening of Phase 2 from North Greenwich to London Bridge which is planned for early September.

Response to Reader's Letter

Following the letter in the last issue of Westcombe News, the Environment Committee reports that they approached Councillor Alex Grant for a statement on why Greenwich councillors did not attend the planning meeting held by developers on the 'New Crystal Palace' at the Clarendon Hotel. Councillor Grant has responded and stresses that there was no question of a 'conspiracy' on the part of Greenwich Council. The meeting had simply been announced by flyers and posters around Blackheath Station at very short notice. Letters had not been sent to organisations or individuals likely to be involved in any decision-making.

The debate continues to rage around the proposals for a 'Crystal Palace' on Blackheath - see Neighbourhood Views for more letters expressing concern.

Local man peeks inside Dome

Few residents of Westcombe Park have been inside the Millennium Dome and, as it is a constant in our skyline, curiosity is setting in. We cannot help wondering what it looks like inside and whether it will be finished on time. Local resident Gerry Amies made a trip to the Dome last month to discuss working with the team responsible for the power distribution of the lighting for the Millennium Exhibition. He has worked in London and abroad as a theatre production electrician, liaising between the lighting designer and lighting hire company during the production of a new show.

Here are some of his impressions of the most talked-about building since Canary Wharf.

"I went to the Dome to talk business but my first impression was one of incredible vastness. The sheer scale of the project was impressive and in contrast to the inauspicious entrance along the Blackwall Tunnel slip road.

"Despite the rough appearance of the land around the Dome, there is no doubt that security is a big issue. If you don't have a pass they won't let you in and a colleague had to do some very sweet talking having forgotten his pass. The Dome site office was not - as you might expect with less than six months building time left - a den of chaos, it's buzzed with highly orchestrated energy. Dome constructors and fitters purposefully moved around the office.

"We were told to put on hard hats, ushered through another security gate and stepped inside the Dome. It is huge. Trucks and building equipment were dwarfed by the air conditioning tower and the guy ropes of the mighty yellow masts. It was airy and light inside and the roof, so far above, seemed to form an artificial sky. At this stage the exhibition areas and zones were very much in embryonic form. Not too many clues yet to the marvellous spectacle which will greet visitors in 2000, although they were marked out ready for construction around the outside wall. Where no doubt something grand like a marbled floor will rest one day, a maze of service ducts ran to and from the exhibition areas of the Dome. The central performance area was taking shape surrounded by lighting towers and intriguing barely formed buildings. One already established feature of the Dome is the spectacular view that will greet every new visitor."

Party in the park is off

It may be a relief to hear that there will not be a party in Greenwich Park this Millennium eve. A licence has been refused, it was revealed at the last Greenwich Pubwatch meeting, due to health and safety concerns.

The manager of Greenwich Park, Joe Woodcock, said that the uneven and undulating topography of the park led to worries about the safety of people being in the park on a cold winter's night.

There had been speculation that up to 50,000 people might attend the party, with the entertainment to include music from the London Symphony Orchestra. It was, however, reported at the same meeting that another party, an all-ticket bash for up to 20,000 people, could be held in the Maritime Museum and / or the college in Romney Road. The Naval College, it is also rumoured, will be holding a corporate hospitality event with around 2,000 people attending.

While the Government is considering whether to allow a 36-hour 'drinking spree' over the Millennium eve, during which pubs and other licensed premises will be able to sell alcohol, Greenwich pubs may shut down. Local landlords are contemplating ticket-only evenings and even closing down altogether because of security concerns during the celebrations.

At the Greenwich Pubwatch meeting there was no decision on the closing of the centre of Greenwich during this period.

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Traffic calming or harming?

As the thickly painted markings start to carve up our roadsides, Westcombe News asked residents for their reactions to the traffic calming measures.

"The lines were marked last week. Already it has become apparent that there are too few parking bays. Some residents have been forced to park on yellow lines."
Coleraine Road

"I can see more and more residents lowering the kerbs in front of their homes and turning their front gardens into a parking forecourt. At night they can place another car on the yellow line outside their house. If enough people do this the look of the neighbourhood will suffer I think."
Foyle Road

"Necessary otherwise it's chaos. Though I'm not sure why they have more than one zone in the area. And, I didn't realise they would be charging us after a year. This wasn't mentioned in the leaflet put through my door."
Vanburgh Hill

"Cars have been allowed to park so close to the road junctions that spotting oncoming traffic is extremely difficult. When I reported this to the Council they were unhelpful and insisted it was too late to make any changes. If an official made the effort to visit Lasseter Place they would see we clearly have a problem."
Lasseter Place

"I cannot see the new measures making much difference to the number of parking spaces available. Having to pay to park, if this comes about, will be the big issue to effect residents."
Humber Road

"We have been led to believe that Mycenae House has been appointed a venue for the selling of additional parking permits - subject to confirmation. We will, also, have to see whether parking becomes a problem for us. We have 15 spaces available to Mycenae House, Woodlands Gallery and the Local Mistory Museum on the forecourt within the premises. We won't be acting on suggestions of some class users to turn the grassland into a carpark. Most classes last under two hours and evening classes start after 7pm so we are optimistic that parking won't be too much of a problem."
Director, Mycenae House

"Greenwich and Blackheath residents should not be overly concerned about illegal parking by visitors to the Dome exhibition. Many of the tickets to the Dome will be sold as part of a package with transport included. Those tickets sold to individuals will carry travel instructions making it clear that no parking is available in Greenwich. The Millennium Experience traffic strategy is aimed at encouraging visitors to use public transport."
Inspector Richards, Greenwich Police

Readers Letters

On 19 May Ralph Murphy sent the following letter to local authority official Brian Hansan at Peggy Middleton House

Dear Sir
I am writing to ask you to reconsider the issue of traffic calming and parking on the north side of Westcombe Park Road between the junction of Mycenae and Glenluce before the present yellow line exercise is completed and whilst there is scope for amendment (the lines are still broken in this section). As you know, at present the only parking envisaged between these two points is on the south side. My concerns were put forward by others during discussions at Kidbrooke House but have not been acted upon. They are as follows:

- The Mycenae to Westcombe Hill length of Westcombe Park Road is notorious for speeding; the island at Mycenae and Westcombe has been knocked down several times, cars have demolished walls in the block and not too long ago a speedster hit three cars in this section.

- We petitioned for traffic calming measures but this request has been ignored; in the absence of measures, parking on both sides encourages traffic to slow down; conversely, south side parking only, by opening the road, encourages the irresponsible to drive faster...it is the reverse of traffic calming.

- Present parking proposals effectively halve the amount of parking available in this block; this means that both residents and customers of the Westcombe Hill shops will certainly suffer; the competition for space is likely to become conflictive - particularly when exacerbated by visitors of residents. I have no choice but to park in the street as my driveway is too steep to handle a normal saloon. This was not what we had in mind when traffic calming measures were introduced as a solution to the unwanted consequences of the Millennium Exhibition.

It has been argued that single line parking relieves congestion for the bus service. Beyond the sensible move of yellow-lining the area between Westcombe Hill and Glenluce Road where the buses turn, I cannot see what is special about the Glenluce to Mycenae section to merit such treatment. It cannot be the width of the road as this is identical to other stretches further west. The section approaching Vanburgh mini roundabout is both narrow and has a curve, yet has parking on both sides.

I look forward to hearing from you as I believe that my views are shared not only by neighbours but also shopowners. Many of us are upset that serious calming has not been introduced in this road. Even the limited measures, that received overwhelming support through a petition, to the Westerly end of Westcombe Park Road have not been introduced. I understand that buses have problems with sleeping policemen but why not install the lozenge device which is negotiable by bus but which slows down speedsters? Then you can reinstate double side parking. There is time to do both before the Millennium hordes are upon us.

Yours sincerely
Ralph Murphy, Westcombe Park Road

Dear Sirs,
I believe I was one of the gullible who believed that the planned parking restrictions were FOR THE BENEFIT OF RESIDENTS in the area. The restrictions were to ensure residents were still able to park during the Millennium ensuring those going to the Dome did not overwhelm the area with their cars. Instead the Council appear to have used the occasion to SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE the number of vehicles that can be parked. As it is, most residents found parking unduly restrictive PRIOR to these new restrictions. Why are they doing this? Why did they spin the line that these restrictions were to be in the residents' interests? Is it in the residents' interest as to not to be able to park outside their own house?

It looks as if our Councillors were not looking after our interests. Is it time for the residents to mount a single issue campaign to look after our interests or will our Councillors do something about it? In the proximity of 100 to 112 Westcombe Park Road there are grossly insufficient parking bays allowed in the current imposition of parking restrictions. Following the installation of the parking restrictions there are only two parking areas (3 bays outside nos. 104 to 108) and (4 bays outside no. 112) away. There is no parking permitted on the north side of the street. The demand for the use of these few bays will substantially exceed their size. These bays are expected to serve:
* houses 100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 89, 93 plus
* the apartments at No. 87 / 55 Mycenae, plus
* visitors to the above household, plus
* any surplus from the Care Apartments / Nursing home at 112, including staff plus
* the frequent parking by the owners, employees and customers of the shops on Westcombe Hill round the corner.
This is clearly ridiculous.

In addition to the above we are concerned that the lack of parking bays on the North side of the street will encourage motorists to speed even faster down this stretch of road making crossing the road particularly dangerous.
Who else in the Westcombe Area are angry at they way these restrictions have been put into place?
Yours sincerely, David A. Scott

Dear Editor
On Thursday 20 May was my father's funeral, flowers were arriving and one of my brothers was arranging them out on the driveway.

You can imagine our horror when workmen arrived to start burning off the old paint in the road to make way for the new yellow and white lines. Having met them on a couple of previous occasions when they had been working in the road, I asked if it was possible for them to hold off until after the funeral.

The chap in charge was straight on his mobile phone to ask his bosses if it was, under the circumstances, acceptable if they could come back the next day to do the job - and it was. The workmen were particularly understanding and helpful. So on behalf of my mother, Camilla and the rest of the family a big THANKYOU to the Beach workforce.
Jennifer Moloney, Westcombe Hill

Dear Editor
I was interested to read the letter from M A Qavi in the May issue of Westcombe News, about the idea of a 'Crystal Palace' on Blackheath.

I am sorry that I and other Greenwich councillors were unable to attend the annual meeting of the Blackheath Joint Working Party on 5 March (in my case, I was holding my advice surgery that night). It is a group we normally attend, and the maintenance and preservation of Blackheath is something we take very seriously.

Dave Picton (the other councillor for Vanburgh) and I are totally opposed to Ray Hall's daft proposal for a 'Crystal Palace' on Circus Field. The land is owned by Greenwich, and is safeguarded by law against development. If Mr Hall were to put in an application (of which there has been no sign), it would certainly be unsuccessful. Gavin Moore (councillor for the Lewisham side of the heath) has said that the Crystal Palace would be built "over his dead body." Our corpses would not be far off.

On another issue, there is sadly a London-wide spate of graffiti at the moment and it is difficult for us to keep up. Apart from prosecution of those found responsible (which is rare) and vigilance in reporting graffiti and having it removed, I believe the only real solution is through discretionary youth work. In the past this has been successful at getting young people to channel their creative energies in other directions - murals, animation, and so on. We are trying to get more of this done in the borough.
Councillor Alex Grant, Vanburgh Ward, Greenwich Council

Dear Editor
I do not usually write these letters always hoping 'they', whoever they may be, know more about the idea than I do. But I am so appalled that the new Crystal Palace idea ever saw the light of day.

We do not need more damage to the heath plus the extra traffic it would cause. Why did they not put a Crystal Palace at Crystal Palace instead of the monstrosity they are hoping to build there? I am sure there wouldn't have been any objection to that. No, I suppose they knew they wouldn't stand a chance against the 'crowd' hoping to do that.

The greed of these companies who have no care about the local chaos of traffic, which is horrific at times, or even the damage to the environment. They must be stopped!
B E Manuel, Beaconsfield Road

Dear Editor
Re: Crystal Palace on Blackheath
I hope I may reassure Mr Qavi (May edition of Westcombe News) over plans by a local architect, Mr Raymond Hall, to build a replica Crystal Palace on Blackheath.

Following representations to both Greenwich and Lewisham Councils, as well as to Ichthus, the evangelical association with which Mr Hall has links, we are informed that this utterly daft and almost certainly illegal proposal has finally been withdrawn. In defence of the local authorities, I would say that at no stage did either Greenwich or Lewisham planning officers indicate that they would approve this scheme, which was condemned in writing by all the relevant local Councillors. In the event, no valid planning application was ever submitted to either borough by Mr Hall, so the whole thing remains academic. We hope this is now the end of the matter. Mr Hall's decision to go public with his private fantasy has cost this Society dear in terms of hours lost in fielding phone calls from distraught residents, in attending meetings and dealing with the press and other media.

On the matter of the Blackheath Joint Working Party, Mr Qavi will doubtless be relieved to know that the Westcombe society is ably represented and remains actively involved.

Gina Raggett, Secretary, The Blackheath Society

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Gina Raggett Secretary The Blackheath Society

Dear Editor
SE3 area has a major shortage of recycling facilities, with no location to deposit glass, paper and cans on the same site. Greenwich Council is keen to provide these facilities but needs the support of residents. Anyone who would like recycling facilities in their area please get in touch with: Jill Warren, Recycling and Special Projects Assistant, Greenwich Environment and Consumer Services, Riverside House, Woolwich High Street, London SE18 6DN.

Philip Clemo, Vanburgh Park
Westcombe News has been told that there are some recycling provisions in the area. There are bins near Blackheath Post Office and also in Bramshot Avenue, on the other side of the A102 (M). Other readers have commented that Asda in Charlton and Lewisham's Tesco are good sites to offload materials for recycling. Both sites have bins for glass, cans, papers, magazines and clothes, although you have to use transport to get there!

Pubs, Bars & Taverns challenge looks at a football favourite

More and more people seem to head to the pub to watch the football these days (or, as 'football widows' put it, use the football as a good reason to head to the pub) in evenings and Sunday afternoons. HARDY'S on Trafalgar Road, which boasts three TV screens, is a particularly good venue, as ticketless Charlton fans from last season can testify. The front end of the pub is like a noisy cinema as drinkers crowd around the huge screen.

From the outside Hardy's looks like a true Irish Pub, and it's certainly popular with racing punters, but youngsters flock there as do old men with their dogs and parishioners of St Joseph's in Pelton Road. Little has changed at Hardy's in the past 15 years or so. The landlord and his wife, who come from Sligo, know what works. Guinness is by far the most popular drink followed by lager, but real ale buffs can get a guest ale from the barrel at £1.85 a pint which rarely fails to impress - Burtonwood, Smiles and Ushers have been among the best. It's a friendly pub, with a quiz on Wednesday nights with good lunchtime snacks.

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All hands on decking

Westcombe Park has more than its fair share of gardens on sloping sites. Some gardeners see gradients as a problem, others see it as an opportunity, but we all like to see how different they can be.

Last June some of you may have visited a garden in Mycenae Road. It was opened to the public for one day as part of the National Gardens Scheme, the proceeds going to charity. The garden is 60 foot square save for a corner taken by the house, and looking out back the ground slopes upwards. If you were one of these people on that sunny day, you may recall the expanse of decking, the lawn and of course the impressive planting. One year on it looks very different. The house itself was built many years ago for the owners of the nearby Halstead Garage, who lived there right up until 1991 when the present owners moved in. This is the second radical landscape change in less than eight years.

Except for a small stretch by the kitchen, the decking is gone and there is not a blade of grass in sight. In a period of just the past six weeks the timber and lawn has yielded to tasteful paving slabs with gravel in between to allow plants to eventually meander.

Why the dramatic change? Some of you may have Blackheath gravel, others Charlton sand, but the soil here is heavy clay, and whilst the decking worked, the lawn became cracked in the drought and a soggy mess in the wet...so it had to go! And what a difference it makes. The several levels are still there, and replacing the lawn has created a second spacious seating area, the original one still accessed by the half-timbered steps. Down by the garage there is now a gravel bed to deal with the drainage problem that existed in the sump.

As for the plants, the bonus of the clay is that, once they get going, plants can really take off as testified by the Cotinus. Many plants had to be moved, but the don't seem to have objected. The air is heavy with the scent of jasmine, which surrounds the walls. On the back wall alone there are no less than ten varieties of clematis flowering at different times of the year, and there are yet more varieties dotted around, as well as six sorts of climbing rose, some already in bloom. In all, there are about 500 plants thriving here due to the much improved soil in the borders.

Because of the upheaval the garden was not ready to be entered in this year's Yellow Book, but it will be open for the afternoon on Sunday 20th June from 2-5pm. For details call 858 5201. You won't be disappointed.

Leslie Eastwood

Tree Survey 2000

With help from Westcombe News readers who have filled in gaps, it has been possible to set out a current plan of the Westcombe area, showing buildings and roads to a scale of 1:1250 - adequate in that it shows enough detail but so far only a rough massing of tree positions provided by the aerial views. The next step is to decide whether enough time can be found to record tree positions, size and species so that they can be added to the drawing by the

beginning of the year 2000. Before then, Greenwich Council will have completed its own survey of trees in streets throughout the borough and this can be consulted together with existing records of Tree Preservation Orders. However, that will cover only a fraction of all the trees in the Westcombe area. Ideally we would like to identify and record them all but it could take thousands of hours and some places, such as the steeply sloping woodland south-east of Maze Hill station, will have to be left in outline. In any case, there are several options: to record position and size but not the species seems half-hearted, to include the species we have to decide how far to go - just the english name can be stated (oak, ash, sycamore, lime) or sub-divisions of this (common lime, broad leaved lime and so on) and to be complete, its botanical name should also be given (*Tilia vulgaris*). Some owners have already offered access to garden spaces but as there are roughly three thousand spaces, large and small, with trees in them it would be helpful to get more comments from readers. Please send your suggestions to We would be particularly interested to know if any teachers would be willing and able to use part of this tree survey as a field project.



Well Bean plants trees for well being

Well Bean, the health food shop in Old Dover Road has joined forces with Bioforce, manufacturers and suppliers of fresh herb tinctures and the Tree Council to raise money locally to fund the planting of medicinal trees such as horse chestnut, willow and hawthorn in the Thames Chase Community Forest. Well Bean have been presented with a specially engraved plaque to mark their contribution to the fundraising efforts.

The Tree Council, a national charity, works to create greater awareness of the importance of trees in our environment. Bioforce agree that as well as providing the air we breathe, a habitat for wildlife and food trees also supply a wide variety of our natural medicines and they must be safeguarded for future generations.

The fundraising was done through the sale of a unique classical CD compilation, *Classic Harmony*. It will be donated to the Tree Council for every copy sold. There are still a limited number available. Call Bioforce on 01294 204713 for details.

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Jewish Japes For June

When an old woman died, her three sons learned that she had left all her property to charity, except for her goats. Her eldest son was to give one goat to the rabbi and then inherit one third of the remaining goats for himself. The second son also had to give one goat to the rabbi and then take one third of the remaining goats for himself. The third son too gave one to the rabbi and took one third of the remainder himself. The old woman had said that the sons should divide whatever was left equally between them and this they did. How many goats did she have?

When the old woman's sister died the following year and following the example of her sister, left all her property to charity, except for her goats which she left to her own three sons. The eldest son was to inherit one half of her goats, the second son got one third, and the youngest son one ninth of the goats. This woman had 17 goats. How could these three sons respect their mother's last wishes without the help of the village butcher? The brothers went to the rabbi to ask his advice. How did he solve the problem?

Answer (please turn page)

The first old woman had 25 goats. As for her sister's three sons: the rabbi showed how a generous spirit could help. He gave them one of his goats so they had 18 to divide: the eldest then took nine, the second took six, and the youngest took two. "But since nine plus six plus two equals 17 goats, shall I keep my goat after all?" said the rabbi. "I don't see what your problem was!"

The Greenwich Passion Play 2000

Will you be in Greenwich on Good Friday (21 April) of the year 2000? As reported earlier this year, director John Doyle is in the process of reworking the traditional miracle play cycles from the Middle Ages - plays which brought the stories of Jesus Christ on to the streets. The new Greenwich Millennium cycle will consist of seven miracles and a final Passion play in which the entire cast tell the story of Jesus' last week with music and spectacle. The cast of a thousand is more than half assembled - now is the time to join in if you want to be a part of this unique three-hour epic, specially created by the people of Greenwich. John Doyle will be in Greenwich Park by the bandstand on **Saturday 12 June 1999** from 2-4pm. He wants to meet any and all kinds of people, performers and helpers: you don't need to have any theatrical

or musical experience whatsoever; you don't need to be at all religious (the play assumes that the story of Jesus belongs to anyone - people of faith and of no faith); you don't need any money (it won't cost anything to take part); you do need some enthusiasm and energy and available for workshops and rehearsals from November this year. For more information, contact Greenwich BETA (Blackheath and East Greenwich Trust for the Arts) on 858 3006.

The Alexandra Players

The Players are to be congratulated on providing a most enjoyable evening. Alan Ayckbourn's play 'It Could Be Any One Of Us' keeps the interest from start to finish and, more accessible than some of this company's recent choices, attracted an appreciative crowd - a full Alexandra Hall helped to heighten the whodunnit tension. The significant contributions of each of the six characters were convincingly played: the futility of their personal disappointments and sadness set the scene both for the shocking turns and for numerous humorous moments - moments which the cast allowed us to discover, rather than forcing the fun. Despite feeling the unpleasantness of each personality, I found I sympathised with all except the victim. If that is unusual for a murder story, it encouraged us to search for some value in the lives of the suspects - of whom 'it could be any one...' The impressive set was worthy of note, not least because of the constraints of such a building - I easily imagined a bedroom, kitchen and yard though we never saw them.

Watch this space for details of the next production.

Local theatrical shows in June include:

The Anniversaries Players presenting

'THE NOSE' 2,13 June 1999

4pm at Christ Church Forum, Trafalgar Rd

A one-hour show of short folk stories from France, Israel, Afghanistan adapted for stage by Steve Fitzpatrick, David Walke and Dave Hopwood

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TALKING THERAPY

Welcome to this new column where we hope to offer an alternative and hopefully at times humorous forum for questions, experiences and discussion on alternative / complementary therapy.

There is much that therapy cannot do. Shock, horror! Whatever guise they take, therapists have an ultimate responsibility to you and your needs but not for you and your life. As a young student, I went to the doctor with a checklist of ailments. After patiently attending to my diatribe of woes, he said, "Go away and sort yourself out." I had, in the words of a dear friend, "never been so thus maligned." I was gobsmacked.

But he was right, if somewhat unsupportive. I had no intention of sorting myself out. That, surely, was his job. I felt abandoned, misunderstood and very sorry for myself. Success, I was feeling me. My journey of self-responsibility began.

Today I have the privilege of working with a female client who once perceived any form of therapy to be for people who were either sectioned or from Hampstead. We have followed a dynamic, hilarious and at times distressing path at her pace and with my guidance. Despite restrictions of a disability allowance, she got on with the job of introducing her mind to her body and getting to know herself. She is now studying massage and counselling and feels completely responsible for her own healing. Not that she doesn't still see me or has doubts, the more the merrier so far as she's concerned.

Letters, comments and discussion, humorous or otherwise, welcome.

Ruth Netherwood is a Holistic Massage and Relaxation Bodywork therapist and teacher.

Woodlands Art Gallery

New Exhibition
'Territory'

Open Now until 27 June

For those people wondering as to the state of painting now, the current exhibition at Woodlands - 'Territory' - might provide some refreshing possibilities. This show brings together the work of five figurative painters, whose work provides compelling testimony in support of painting - a medium still very much alive and kicking.

Having organised a number of exhibitions over the last few years - which met with critical acclaim and reviews in The Times and Modern Painters - the group known as 'Territory' once again promise to provide a vivid and direct response to the physical world. Territory holds strongly to the belief that painting can encounter and intelligently engage with subjects in the world, and can embody within paint and line, sensations that fuse perception and emotion validly and cogently. Bob Stone, Julian Le Bas, Jane Merfield, David Cook and Rod Harman offer a wide range of responses,

but all are powerful and vivid. A painting show that will definitely surprise its audience.
Admission Free
Open every day 11.00am-5.00pm
(Sundays 2-5pm) except Wednesdays and Bank Holidays

On Sunday 20 June a workshop will be held which will be a practical exploration of the themes and concerns of the exhibition. All are welcome - contact the gallery for further details on 0181 858 5847.

Show-pairs

2 West End Theatre tickets for the price of 1 Vouchers now available at Woodlands

The Travel advice column by Derek Small returns next issue.

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