



Editor's Note

Welcome to the September 2019 issue of the Gazette.

The regular Councillors' Notes is followed by a linked item from Ian Leggatt on Costain's legacy. We then have a very interesting piece from Janet Sharpe about Croydon's little known Art Collection followed by an announcement of the opening of the new Garden Room at St John's Church.

Wendy Parr tells us why she joined Rotary and Jessica Blake offers another tale of the trials and tribulations of her 'Wendy' with modern technology. Next, if you are thinking of an autumnal day out, David Huntley recommends Portsmouth Harbour.

We have a lot of history this month. The first is the story of the Old Selsdonians told by Lindsay Patacchiola. Julia Titova reflects on her childhood and tells us about another of our much loved local green spaces that is under threat from development, then Des continues his saga with more about his schooldays in the 50s. Finally we have the second of Ray Rowsell's memories of WW11.

Next, Bill Gale announces his proposal for a short story competition. I hope that this will inspire you to have a go. Entries will be published in the December issue and a Christmas theme is encouraged.

We have a report on the August cake sale at Selsdon Centre for the Retired and in Nature Notes this month Ted Forsyth tells us about buds and leaves.

Lots of letters too this month!!

Regards,

Heather

🌀 SUBMISSIONS FOR THE OCTOBER 2019 EDITION SHOULD BE WITH THE EDITOR NO LATER THAN 20TH SEPTEMBER 🌀

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SRA NEWS 'n' VIEWS

Transport

The review of buses in Croydon has led to an increase in the 130 bus service from 3 per hour to 4 per hour. A bonus for Palace fans travelling to home games!

Fairfield Halls

As you read this, the long awaited opening by Dame Judi Dench should have happened and a full programme of events should be available on the website.

Don't Mess with Croydon Campaign

You can report anything online through the App or phone 02086047000 or email flytip@croydon.gov.uk

If you are a resident, a local business or organisation and would like to organise a community clean up in your area you can find out more by downloading the Clean and Green Street Champion guide or by emailing champions@croydon.gov.uk

Polling Stations

A review is being held as to how many polling stations are needed across the borough. Proposals include: amending boundaries so some addresses come under other districts and polling stations, creating new polling stations, and merging two polling stations.

The consultation period ended 2nd September but I am sure our councillors will keep us up to date. The changes are due to come into effect by 1st February 2020.

Hopefully the committee and I were able to chat with you at the Selsdon Wood Fair and picnic on 7th September and don't forget it's not too late to hand the brown envelopes in to any of the committee or to the Selsdon Centre for the Retired.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers who help distribute the Gazette. Without them you would not be reading this and if anyone can help with its delivery either regularly or holiday cover please contact Wendy (details inside front cover).

Sheila Childs, Chair

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COUNCILLORS' NOTES

Zebra Crossing on Farley Road

In a previous Gazette, I explained plans to introduce a Zebra Crossing on Farley Road. These plans were proceeding but there has now been a short delay due to the need to do a redesign of the crossing. Whilst it will remain in the previously proposed position it is necessary that it is positioned on a speed table due to the speed with which vehicles currently travel. If all goes according to plan, the Zebra Crossing will be built in October.

High Street

Planning has started on the creation of a Selsdon Community Plan. This will be a long-term community-led vision for the area defined by the two Selsdon Wards so

will include both Addington and Forestdale. It will include the High Street and other parts of Selsdon. The plan will identify the community's priorities for investing in services and facilities to ensure the Selsdon area evolves in a way that aligns with the wishes of local people. The document will be a reference for the council when making investment decisions and future policy but it will also hopefully identify quick-wins that can show a more immediate impact.

There will be opportunities in the Autumn for local residents to contribute via various means, including drop-in discussions. The aim is for a first draft of the plan to be published in Spring 2020.

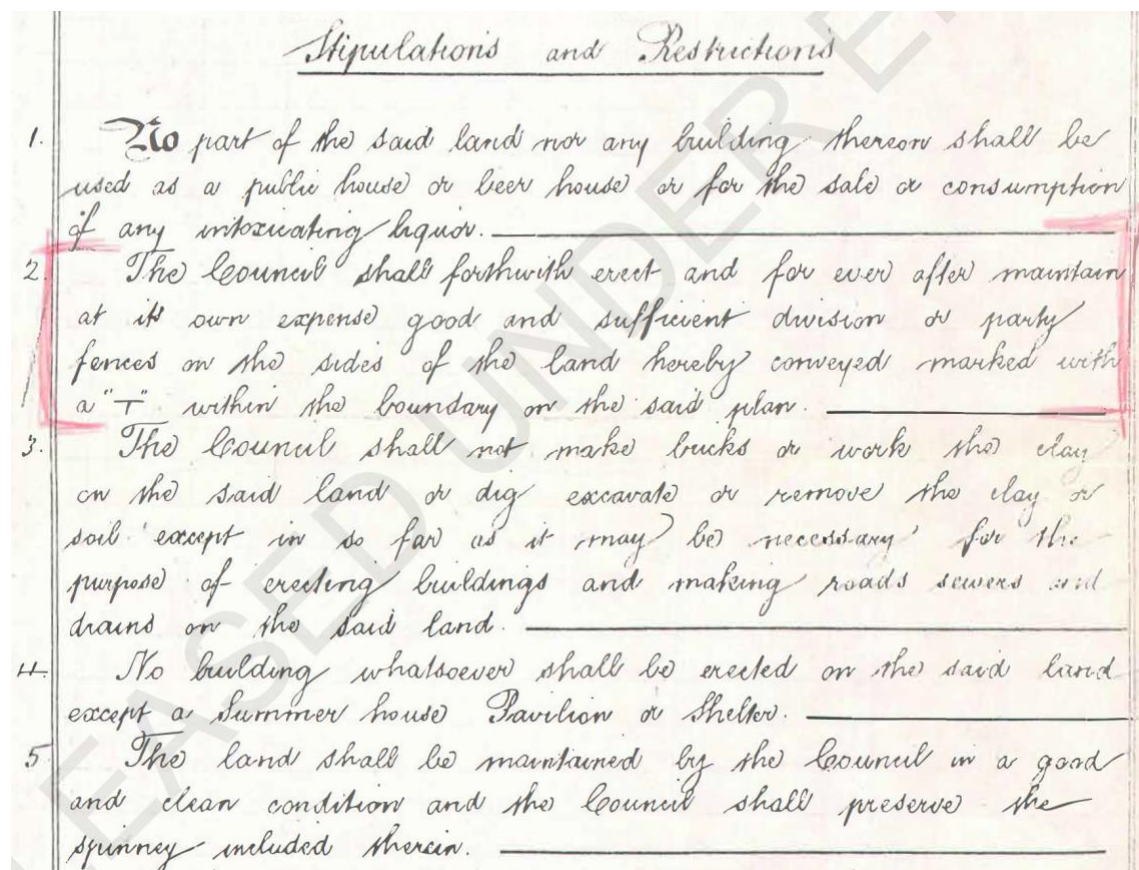
Having a Community Plan will put Selsdon in a stronger position with any potential future bids for funding.

Building on Green Spaces

In June, in response to Council plans to build on green spaces in Selsdon, Cllr Helen Pollard set up a petition objecting to the plans. There is strong opposition to the plans for the Council's wholly-owned subsidiary company 'Brick By Brick' to build on green spaces in Monks Hill and other areas in Selsdon and the petition quickly picked up support and nearly 1500 people have signed so far. (It is on Change.org – search for 'Selsdon'.)

The issue was debated in a Council meeting on 15th July but the Labour Council Administration gave no indication they will change their plans.

Cllr Pollard put in a number of Freedom of Information requests to establish what covenants apply to the pieces of land that are earmarked for development. The responses from the requests have revealed that two of the spaces have covenants that say the Council should not build on the land. The covenants both date from the 1930s when the pieces of land were transferred from the land owner to the Council. Here is an extract from the one for Foxearth Spinney:



The relevant text is “No building whatsoever shall be erected on the said land except a Summer house Pavilion or Shelter.”

The Covenant relating to the land adjacent to 124 Croham Valley Road is here:

(d) The Corporation shall at all times maintain the land hereby conveyed as an open space free from buildings of all kinds and shall keep the same neat and tidy and diligently attend to the upkeep of all trees shrubs and other plants for the time being thereon.

Cllr Pollard has asked Brick By Brick to confirm they will not build on either of these two sites but they say they are still looking into the feasibility of development.

We will continue to support residents in objecting to these developments and hope we succeed in ensuring the Council sticks to the covenants.

Meet Your Councillors

The Selsdon Team of Councillors will be holding surgeries in the Selsdon Centre (next to Sainsbury's) on the first Saturday of the month from 10am – 11.15am (except August).

If you have any issues you wish to discuss with your councillor please come to the surgery or get in touch by email:

Helen.pollard@croydon.gov.uk

Robert.ward@croydon.gov.uk

Stuart.millson@croydon.gov.uk

Andy.stranack@croydon.gov.uk

PLANNING APPLICATIONS June 2019

19/03446/HSE – Roselea Cottage, Ballards Farm Road, Croydon, CR0 5RL - Construction of front porch extension

19/02860/HSE – 56 Ballards Way, South Croydon, CR2 7JL - Alterations, erection of a two storey side extension

19/03332/HSE -57 Selsdon Park Road, South Croydon, CR2 8JF- Single storey side and rear extension

19/03091/HSE -126 Littleheath Road, South Croydon, CR2 7SE - Construction of a single storey rear extension

19/02967/LP – 126 Littleheath Road, South Croydon, CR2 7SE - Construction of a 3m single storey rear extension with 2 rooflights

19/03075/HSE – 13 Upper Selsdon Road, South Croydon, CR2 8DD - Erection of a single storey rear conservatory to existing single storey rear extension

19/02905/HSE – 73 Chestnut Grove, South Croydon, CR2 7LL - Erection of front porch, single storey rear and side extension. Loft extension and conversion to habitable use with rear dormer and front and rear rooflights.

19/03020/GPDO – 13 Upper Selsdon Road, South Croydon, CR2 8DD - Erection of single storey rear extension projecting out 5.797 metres from the original rear wall with a maximum height of 3.19m.

19/02876/HSE – 22 Ballards Way, South Croydon, CR2 7JL - Loft conversion and erection of a rear dormer

19/02725/FUL – 55 Crest Road, South Croydon, CR2 7JR - Erection of a single/two storey dwelling at the rear of the existing garden, with associated vehicle access off Croham Valley Road, parking and landscaping.

19/02799/HSE – 27 Crest Road, South Croydon, CR2 7JR - Rear dormer loft extension

19/03503/HSE – 40 Crest Road, South Croydon, CR2 7JQ - Single storey rear extension and conversion of existing integral garage to habitable accommodation

19/03443/HSE – 75 Farley Road, South Croydon, CR2 7NG - Application for retrospective planning permission for the erection of a porch and alterations to the existing garage roof

19/03367/HSE – 91 Croham Valley Road, South Croydon, CR2 7JJ - Construction of a single storey front, side and rear extension

19/03161/FUL – 17 Ballards Way, South Croydon, CR2 7JP - Creation of 1 No. new three-storey house adjacent to No.17 Ballards Way

19/03525/LP – 150m Littleheath Road, South Croydon, CR2 7SF - Demolition of existing garage and erection of single storey side extension

19/03657/FUL – 5 Kingsway Avenue, South Croydon, CR2 8NF - Erection of 2 bed dwelling, provision of parking, cycle and refuse storage, associated alterations

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COSTAINS LEGACY

Above, you will have read of our Councillors' efforts to establish whether any covenants are attached to certain green and open spaces within Selsdon and the results of Freedom of Information (FoI) requests to Croydon Council and details of the conveyance document relating to **Foxearth Spinney**. This conveyance was made in 1933 between the personal representative of Mr W. P. Costain (deceased) and Richard Costain and Sons Ltd to The Coulsdon and Purley Urban District Council. At that time The Spinney was within the Parish of Sanderstead in the County of Surrey. William Percy Costain had died in March 1929 and Maud May Costain (widow) was his sole Executor.

Costain were originally a house builder in the Liverpool area. When housing sites there became more difficult to source William Percy Costain, son of Richard, came to the London area in the early 20s and purchased the Walton Heath Land Company which appeared to hold much land in Selsdon acquired from, amongst others, the Greville and Goschen families. A new Costain company, Richard Costain and Sons Ltd, was created. They built extensively in Selsdon in the late 20s / early 30s and their houses were originally priced at around £450. Some of you may be lucky enough to have the original title deeds to your house which will contain similar covenants to those found in the Foxearth Spinney document.

Queenhill Road Playspace was given to Coulsdon and Purley Urban District Council on 11th February 1936 by Richard Costain Ltd in memory of William Percy Costain and the land was expressly gifted “in trust for the use thereof by the public for the purposes of a public recreation ground”. The land comprised 2 acres connected to Queenhill Road by a narrow single track which now also leads to Selsdon Tennis Club. The gifted land was then a miniature golf course. Now only a few trees and benches inhabit the predominantly grassed field.

Ian Leggatt (with thanks to Helen Pollard for copy of the Conveyancing documents)

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ART TO VIEW IN CROYDON

Did you know that the ‘Croydon Art Collection’ kept by the Council has over 2,000 works, including paintings, prints, drawings and sketches, dating from the 17th century to the present day? The collection began in the 1890s, when many works were given as gifts to the Council to decorate the new Croydon municipal buildings. Donations came from local people, officials of the borough and local artists, including William Ford Stanley and James Cooper. The collection contains many works depicting local scenes. In the 1960s artists from the Croydon School of Art donated work to the borough’s education department; as a result the collection has some significant pieces by contemporary artists including Bridget Riley. The archive now holds works originally displayed in The Stanley Halls and the Fairfield Halls.



The Art collection when not on display or loan is stored in secure archives at the Croydon Clocktower which can be viewed in small groups by appointment. I’ve been and found it very interesting. The most frequently requested painting is ‘The Gamekeeper’s Daughter’ by Valentine Cameron Prinsep (1838-1904). Some of these Croydon artworks are easily available to view online at ‘artuk.org’ search for ‘Croydon Art Collection’. Most of the collection, however, is stored in boxes and therefore less accessible but ultimately it is hoped that all the works will be professionally photographed and available to view online.

I have heard that the archive of theatre history from the Fairfield is also currently being catalogued by some of the former volunteer Fairfield stewards.

The Museum of Croydon which oversees the Art Collection is currently showing artefacts from the Windrush generation and works by current Thornton Heath artist ‘PINS’. In the Riesco gallery are the remains/bones of an Anglo Saxon person (sex as yet unknown) found in 2014 in a garden in Riddlesdown as well as the ‘remains’ of the pottery collection. As you will remember some of the most valuable pieces of the Riesco collection, were sold by the Council against the wishes of the people of Croydon. The Arts Council England’s (ACE) Accreditation panel then removed Croydon Museum’s Accreditation status, effective from December 2013.

As they stated at the time “It is of great importance that the public retain their trust in museums to look after the collections held in their name.” As a result of the panel’s ruling Croydon was excluded from the Accreditation scheme for five years and they will have to prove they have changed before they can reapply.

On this note, does anyone remember the large abstract/reclining figure statue that used to live in Queen's Gardens that resembled a Henry Moore? I have heard that this very large statue was removed for 'safe keeping' but it has gone missing and no-one knows where! If this is in fact true then presumably this was sold or stolen. Perhaps it would now be appropriate for this statue to be reported as stolen and then if it ever appears for sale in the future the truth will come out! If you know please tell and put the record straight.

However whatever has happened in the past (and we have a right to be angry about this) the Museum's staff are very enthusiastic and dedicated and proud of the items held. Most exhibitions are free so take the opportunity to view! Let's show we care. The Museum of Croydon is particularly interested in collecting oral history which sets it apart from many others. They are always collecting and you may have something to share.

Croydon's art isn't just from the past. You may have noticed the commissioned street art in Croydon which livens up many a concrete or brick wall in the centre of Croydon. Most notably, near Croydon Post Office, the superb Winston Churchill image in words by New York artist David Hollier.

New art is always being produced and maybe some of this is, or could be, coming from you! I'm sure there must be many art groups and craft groups and individuals working and creating in Croydon. Perhaps you would like to share your 'art story', we could collate for another article? If so, please get in touch.

Janet Sharp

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ST JOHN'S SELSDON - GARDEN ROOM OFFICIALLY OPEN!

We are delighted to announce that the Garden Room was officially opened on Sunday 16 June 2019 by Rt Rev Jonathan Clark, Bishop of Croydon. The Deputy Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Maddie Henson, and a large gathering of friends and supporters enjoyed an uplifting community Songs of Praise followed by the official opening when Bishop Jonathan cut the ribbon and blessed the new room.

The opening ceremony was followed by Afternoon Tea with cake cutting by Bishop Jonathan and an opportunity for guests to enjoy refreshments as well as view the new room, take a look at the Book of Dedications from donors (all of whom were invited to the opening ceremony) and visit the display showing the many and various events and fundraising activities St John's has enjoyed while raising money for the project.



This project has only been possible because of the generous support of the whole community, in making donations and supporting and running fundraising events. We are also very grateful to have received generous funding from Viridor Credits, Garfield Weston Foundation, Allchurches Trust, City of London Corporation's charitable funder, City Bridge Trust and Croydon Council. We are also grateful to the Diocese of Southwark for their support.

The Garden Room provides a pleasant, quality built, modern and fully accessible facility to meet local needs within the whole community. The room is sited on the south western side of the church overlooking the Garden of Remembrance and is easily accessible directly from the main church building but can also be closed off as a separate space with an external door from the garden. The room provides a purpose-built refreshment hub and fully accessible toilet facilities including a baby changing area. There is also improved access into and around the whole church building.

The project is community focused for the use of groups and individuals within the Selsdon area in addition to church groups.

If you would like more information about the Garden Room please contact our Parish Administrator on 07958 682103 or bookingsstjohns@gmail.com

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WHY I JOINED ROTARY

Following my recent retirement, I wanted to do something worthwhile with my life and give back something to others; something to repay the help I had been given when I was young. I also wanted to meet new like-minded friends, where we could contribute our time to make a difference to our local community or support a worthwhile charity.

A friend asked me to help at a Rotary event. I really enjoyed the welcome and camaraderie of the event and liked the impact we had on the invited guests. I thought I would like to do more and so I asked how I could become a member. I haven't looked back since. For me, Rotary is a group of friends who club together to raise money for deserving causes that none of us would be able to do on our own, and we have a great time while doing it.

Now I have the opportunity to meet once a week and help plan the next events and suggest some of my own. There's no obligation to help at every event but I feel like I have missed out on a good time if I am unable to join in to help. We all have so much fun.

Some of the members have also been trained to drive minibuses which can carry people in wheelchairs so those who cannot normally get out are able to attend some of the organised events.

Now I have been a member I want to continue for 2 reasons. The first is the way the Club is dedicated to raising money for charitable causes, and the second is that it is also dedicated to looking after all its members.

Come along to our Craft Fair 26th October

If you would like more information about this event or about joining Rotary then please visit our face book page www.facebook.com/rotarycroydonsouth/ or our website www.rotarysandersteadandselsdon.com

or Email:-Secretary@rotarysandersteadandselsdon.com

Wendy Parr

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WENDY BUYS A BURGER

“You know, Wendy”, said her cousin Brian as they were driving home from visiting his mother, “It is ages since I had a burger, so do you fancy calling in to the next service station and buying one for lunch?”

“Why yes, that sounds like a great idea to me. I must admit I haven’t eaten one for a year or two,” she replied, and began to look for signs for the next service station on the motorway.

Within ten minutes they had arrived and pulled into a parking space, and wandered into the main building, and there was the sign for burgers. Only things looked a little different since last time either of them had bought a burger, because now there were big glass fronted boards with short queues of people waiting to use them.

They looked at one another, laughed and decided to try and see if they could be like all these younger people, busily selecting their meals. A board soon became free and they walked over to it. Up close they could see it had pictures of various combinations of burgers on it. “Humm, let me see”, murmured Brian as he gazed a little dazedly at the screen.

“Shall we select these burgers together Brian?” asked Wendy gazing at the screen in a bewildered manner. “It all looks rather complicated to me”.

Suddenly they spotted the picture of a “Classic Burger” with its fries and a cola. “I’ll have that meal,” said Brian with relief, “only it looks as if we will have to order separately as I cannot see how to order a second one”. He attempted to run his finger up and down the screen to roll it on. He managed to get to the end via an arrow he suddenly spotted low down on the screen, and with some relief he paid by his credit card and his order printed out.

“Oh dear,” thought Wendy, “it’s my turn now”. Her cousin waited patiently while she put the right screen back on. “Trouble is Brian, I would like a burger “Classic” like you, but I would prefer lemonade to cola, and I am not sure which button to press!”

She put her finger on the screen and tried to roll it on, then remembered the arrow and as she ran through the choice of screens she spotted that she could alter the cola to lemonade and with a great sense of relief she too ordered a “Classic”, but with lemonade, pressed for the end, entered her credit card and received her order printout with relief and also a sense of accomplishment.

They then walked to the counter but were advised to sit down and their meal would be brought to them when their number was called; so, they found a table and sat to wait for their meals. They each clutched their meal receipts in their hands. Well they waited and waited and in the end Wendy was so fed up that she took both her and Brian’s receipts to the counter and asked where their meals were.

“We have been calling your numbers for some minutes”, the manager replied but you didn’t respond”.

“Where are the numbers?” queried Wendy with a sense of misgiving.

“At the moment both receipt numbers are covered by your thumb,” responded the cheeky young man at the counter.

Wendy blushed and decided that in future she would buy a sandwich.

Jessica Blake

SIGHTSEEING AND HISTORY – A GREAT DAY (OR TWO) **AT PORTSMOUTH HARBOUR**

A good place to start on arrival at Portsmouth Harbour is a trip up the Spinnaker Tower. This will give you a 400-foot high overview of Portsmouth, the Solent, Gosport, the Isle of Wight, and the city. You can sit down with light refreshments as you take it all in, but for that interlude you must book a table in advance. Close-by is a shoes-off glass floor through which you can view your immediate surroundings! You can prepay admission to the Tower on line, and also to the Dockyard – but on separate web sites. Concessions apply for seniors, children, and families.

The main ‘sight’ covers much of the entire historic Naval Dockyard. The rest of the naval area – not open to the public-- remains a modern Royal Navy base. On our visit, the new Aircraft Carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth II, was docked awaiting a transatlantic exercise; and during the sightseeing boat-tour we had an excellent view of this behemoth – and other modern naval vessels.

The historic Dockyard requires at least a whole day to see around: you will go into some of the famous battleships of history, also the interesting Royal Navy museum - with lots of push-button displays, mini-movies and the like. Elsewhere in the Dockyard are the working factories where apprentices still learn specialised shipbuilding trades. There are also several eateries and information desks within the dockyard and its exhibits. All exhibits are disability-compliant, though one of two of the very lowest decks of the older ships are not.

Most famous is HMS *Victory*, Nelson’s flagship of Trafalgar fame – you see how the sailors lived and ate – and they slept alongside their canons! Video screens re-enact life, the battle, and other aspects of naval activity from centuries ago till World War II. HMS *Warrior* built in 1861 was the first steel battleship ever, and was accepted as the world’s most powerful. Till then battleships had been built of wood, and thus were easily set on fire by an enemy.

Tickets are available for *any three attractions* or for *all attractions for one year*. The latter is good value and offers you a guidebook, also free entry even if you stay overnight in Portsmouth, or if you need any subsequent visit to see everything that interests you. Some exhibits and displays are time-consuming, for example the submarine museum is across the harbour at Gosport and requires an included boat ride, as does the Explosion Museum. Just visiting HMS *Victory alone* takes almost an hour to see around everything, assisted by a loaned audio-guide and mini-movies.

The Mary Rose, a famous ship recently raised from centuries of mud cover, is close to HMS *Victory*, but requires separate ticketing. It is the only attraction not included in the Dockyard admission as it is financed by a separate organisation.

Getting there

You may choose to stop the night; Portsmouth is well supplied with B&B’s and a new Premier Inn is going up right opposite the Dockyard gates. All the Naval Dockyard attractions and also the Spinnaker Tower are very close to Portsmouth Harbour Station - only a short walk in fact; however these attractions are NOT close to downtown Portsmouth.

By Car - Portsmouth is about 80 miles from London, and about the same from Croydon, check if your hotel has parking. There are ‘park and ride’ facilities just *before* Portsmouth city; see <https://parkandride.portsmouth.gov.uk/>. Limited short-term shopping-mall parking underground is available near the Spinnaker Tower; but

long-term parking does not appear available anywhere close to the sights. There is a drop-off point but no waiting!

By Train - The hourly train (22 minutes past the hour) from East Croydon direct to Portsmouth Harbour has been speeded-up considerably, and now takes only about 75 minutes. By advance-booking on www.TheTrainline.com I paid just £5 each way, and for my grandson I paid just £2 more! The 'walk-up & buy' off-peak adult return ticket from East Croydon is in the £30-34 return range, a bit less on certain trains; children half price; however all railcard discounts apply.

David Huntley

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OLD SELSDONIANS – OUR STORY

They say you should start a story from the beginning and so this is what I shall do here.....

In August 1949 I was born in the front bedroom of 84 Foxearth Road, Selsdon, some two years after my brother, Russell, was also born in the same room. My grandparents, who lived at 32 Foxearth Road had helped my parents to buy 84 as a way of keeping them close to their son, Arthur Kent and his family as we, the grandchildren, came along. I had an elder sister, Denise, who was born in Edinburgh just after the end of the second world war. Another sister born some 11 years after me, took a different path with her education from the rest of us. However, the three older siblings all attended Selsdon Primary School which was very convenient as the back entrance to the school in Foxearth Road was almost opposite the house.

As a family, we outgrew 84 Foxearth Road and my parents bought a house in Littleheath Road (at the bottom end towards South Croydon) so our walk to school now took some approximately 20 minutes up the hill (perhaps longer in the snow!).

My father's sister, Margaret Kent, never married and stayed in the original family home at 32 Foxearth Road after my grandparents passed away, later becoming at one point the longest residing resident in Selsdon.



Tony Atkinson David Woodin Barry Finch Wendy Godfrey
Philip Cosham Cyril Watmore Tessa Philpott Lindsay Kent
Colin Gibson Mervyn Huggett Leslye Rosamund

Selsdon Primary School Reunion 7th November 2003

Fast forward to 2003 Many years later, I noticed an article in the Croydon Advertiser inviting past pupils from Selsdon Primary School, which included our year group to attend a School Reunion on 7th November 2003. I was still in touch with three or four “old” school friends from Selsdon and contacted them to see if they would like to attend. Our curiosity got the better of us and we all decided to go. It was a wonderful evening with photos of many events with past pupils who had attended there during that period. There was such an ease of conversation between our year group, in spite of the intervening years; the boys reminisced about their woodworking days and we girls about our housekeeping classes and every subject and teacher in between!

We were one of the last few ex-pupils to leave that evening and clearly one evening was not enough to cover all those years! It was then discussed that we should all get together again and Barry Finch and his wife Jenny invited us to their house in Selsdon and to use their Summer House in their beautiful garden to continue with our stories! This started on 23rd September 2006 has now become an annual event which we all look forward to, with participants bringing an array of food and drink to each gathering. Carole (nee Crawley), comes back from Australia to England each year and we are careful to arrange our reunions around her dates. Barry and Jenny’s garden is full of fruit trees and bushes, not to mention an assortment of vegetables and produce which is generously offered up to us at the reunions. Mervyn Huggett, a STEM Ambassador, is always very enthusiastic to bring along entertainment, usually in the form of some fascinating science project, while others contribute with garden games etc. I baked a 60s birthday cake a decade ago to mark all of our 60th birthdays.

In 2009 Merv and Carole were both accepted to take part in Antony Gormley’s “One and Other” art project in which 2,400 people had an hour each for 100 days on the fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square, London. August saw Merv on the plinth build then trigger an amazing contraption which included a rabbit, weather station, rolling balls, popping balloons filled with coloured paint and a large model of the Angel of the North. Carole’s slot was in September when she orchestrated a cricket match from the top of the plinth with Australia and England playing for the Ashes in the square, with many of the public later asking if they could join in!

So this year we all had our 70th birthdays some 65 years since we started together as infants at Selsdon School. I suggested that we might all like to do something different to mark the beginning of this decade and Carole suggested staying at Keble College at Oxford University over one weekend and she enquired about and booked the accommodation for us all. This we did on the weekend beginning 19th July this year. Merv kindly travelled up over a weekend in advance with his wife Sandra to sort out the lay of the land and parking facilities and booked a guided walking tour and restaurants to eat at for the two nights. We also took a boat trip and an open top bus ride around Oxford on the morning of our departure. The weekend was full of much laughter, leg pulling and great company.



Whilst our group has diminished a little over the years, for one reason or another, other members of our group still include Tessa, David, Philip and more recently, James; they have all played a part in making our reunions such a pleasure and success, and some of them still live in Selsdon today. In between times Cyril offers up his lock-keeper's cottage in Cheshire to any of the group should they wish to stay and some of us have taken him up on this on a number of occasions. Our "Old Selsdonians" are a very special group of people, who all support each other in many ways and their kindness and generosity of spirit is something to cherish.

In spite of the lovely weekend in Oxford, we have all decided we would still like to have another reunion this year, back at Barry and Jenny's, as usual, before the Summer leaves us. Here's to the next decade!

Lindsay Patacchiola (nee Kent)

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## **ALL SPACES GREAT AND SMALL**

It is not a secret that many people think very fondly of their childhood. Some recall the time spent with family members, youthful and carefree summer days with their friends and their first high school romance. For most, those memories are very tightly tied to the place where those events occurred, and I am not an exception.

I have spent the majority of my childhood and adolescent years living on Foxearth Road, Selsdon. Those who have lived in the area for as long as I have, or perhaps longer, will easily be able to recall the great changes that have occurred here in recent years. For example, the new birch trees that were planted on the roadside around ten years ago have since grown massively, although still not quite compensating for the decrease in air quality following the boom in road traffic in the area, but that would have to be a whole other article.

As many of you will be aware, a much greater change is about to take place on Foxearth Road, the construction of an 18-unit, several-storey block of apartments on Foxearth Spinney, the green opposite the entrance to Littleheath Woods. Like the majority of local residents, I am well aware of the detrimental impact this building will have on the area.

Foxearth Spinney has remained mostly untouched for many decades, and as a result boasts around 20 mature trees, the loss of which will be very noticeable in the local environment. This inconspicuous green, which may go unnoticed in the general rush of our daily lives, provides an essential habitat for local flora and fauna. Tiny and almost invisible, these creatures contribute to a flourishing, vibrant and biodiverse ecosystem. The wildflowers that bloom here in the summer months are vital to aid the survival of endangered species, such as bees. The removal of this green space will greatly impact the ecosystem of the neighbouring Littleheath Woods and will devastate this wildlife community (including foxes, squirrels, tens of species of birds and hundreds of insect species) that rely on it for their shelter and food in our increasingly urban environment.

The construction of the apartment block on Foxearth Road will further worsen traffic conditions in Selsdon. Already, it is difficult (and increasingly dangerous) to drive here during rush hour, which further threatens local children walking to the nearby Selsdon Primary School. The escalating flow of traffic that will arise from a greater

population density on Foxearth Road will also negatively impact the air quality in all of Selsdon. Air pollution is already reaching dangerous levels in many parts of Croydon and we must do more to ensure it is kept to a minimum by not removing mature trees and not building on outdoor green spaces such as Foxearth Spinney.

We all understand the urgent need to produce more high-quality housing as demand for homes, particularly in London, soars. But why must we build on areas that are an oasis for local wildlife? Instead, we should be focusing on building homes in brownfield sites, areas that have previously been occupied by buildings. It has been over five years since the Royal Mail sorting office building next to East Croydon was vacated. While planning permission for over 200 flats has been obtained since 2015, why has nothing been done to build them?

My final argument is not as strong. I have so many memories associated with Foxearth Spinney. For years, I walked past it; first to primary school, then to secondary school and sixth form, and finally, it was the trees on the green that waved me goodbye as I journeyed away from my family home and into the real world. I can only hope that they do not wave goodbye forever. Let's preserve Foxearth Spinney so that future generations may think of it just as fondly, and not view it just as another ordinary building.

**Julia Titova**

*Editor's Note - Articles about threats to our local green spaces seem to be coming in more frequently. If you have concerns about this do please lobby your local Councillors - see contact details on p5.*

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## **SOME DIFFERENT SCHOOL DAYS CIRCA 1950**

When one of my grandsons went to our local primary school, I got involved in running cross country training which culminated each year in the Croydon primary school championships. As a result of this, I later got invited to accompany the Year 6 boys and girls on the annual week's visit, originally to Holland, and in later years to Normandy. Always a most enjoyable and educational week's holiday for me! If you want to know about William the Conqueror and the Bayeux Tapestry, or The Airborne Divisions' landings at Pegasus Bridge and the artificial "Mulberry" harbour at Arromanches, then I'm the person to ask!

However the most moving experience was always the visit to the war graves at Normandy, where each child laid a poppy they had made, at a grave of their choice. And there are thousands to choose from!

***The Latin engraving on the Memorial arch is so apt. It translates as:  
"We, once conquered by William, have now set free the Conqueror's native land"***



But when I went to Selsdon Primary school in the mid-1940s, school visits just did not happen. However there is always an exception to any rule, and I was lucky enough to benefit from just one such exception. This was when I was an eight year old in Class C, and where do you think we went on this special school outing? My old Hooky, stomping ground – Selsdon Wood!

It was one of those bright sunny mornings in late November. On that particular day it was an exceptionally thick frost. So much so that it was the inspiration for our class outing. Our lady teacher, whose name escapes me, took us on a walk along the Addington Rd, past the smelly pig farm, and down the wooded footpath to Selsdon Wood. It was a great walk, not just because it was a morning out of the classroom, but also because of the beautiful, crystalline patterns of the frost on everything. Whilst I cannot remember the teacher's name I have never forgotten that magical walk through our local, frozen countryside.

And another outing. A couple of years later when I was probably in Class A at Selsdon Primary, I got chosen to represent our school at the inter school sports. These were being held at the R.A.F. sports field at Kenley Aerodrome (it was still a military aerodrome then). Also in my class and chosen to represent our school, was Tania Belli who lived in Kingsway Ave. She was a very good runner.

In the absence of a bus to Sanderstead, our party of budding athletes and accompanying teachers walked from the school to Sanderstead Pond. From there we caught the green, Country bus, the 403, to Hamsey Green.



At Hamsey Green we walked along Tithe Pit Shaw Lane, cut across the common down to Whyteleafe, then up the long, steep climb of Whyteleafe Hill, to eventually arrive at the aerodrome sports field at Kenley. Of course we had to do the same thing in reverse going home!

I don't remember anything about the sports meeting, but after all that walking I obviously didn't do very well in my race, but I think Tania did. Now Tania was not the only sporty member of her family. Phil Munton in his memories of old Selsdon, makes mention of Tania's oldest brother, Bernie (there were at least 4 brothers and an older sister named Sonia). Phil mentioned Bernie Belli being in the Selsdon cricket club, captained by my next door neighbour, Mr Noakes. But Bernie was not just a cricketer, he was Selsdon C.C.'s equivalent of Ian Botham, being a top ranking bowler and batsman for many years until his eyesight caused his retirement from the game.

Moving on to more recent times, the 403, green Country bus, is still running on the same route, Warlingham to West Croydon, except that it is now a red bus. There used to be a Country bus garage known as the Chelsham garage, at Warlingham, except that the site is now the Sainsbury's supermarket along the Limpsfield Road.

Not much remains to remind me of the world, as I knew it as a school boy in Selsdon, during the 1940s and 50s. With the re-union dinner of Old Boys and Girls of Selsdon School being held in October, I hope that some of my reminiscences will jog a few memories of attendees to liven up the conversations!

**Des Donohoe** can be contacted at [des.oldselsdon@gmail.com](mailto:des.oldselsdon@gmail.com)

## WAR TIME MEMORIES

It is a week and a day since General Eisenhower announced on the radio the commencement of D-Day in Normandy. It was apparent that firm beachheads had been established. The Ministry of Information had strict control of news reports, but we relied much on informal feedback from other sources to supplement this particular information.

On that Wednesday morning, colleagues in the office who lived in East London, reported that a German bomber had been shot down near the railway at Bethnal Green. (We were later to learn that this was one of the first flying bombs to fall in England.) In Selsdon, this was surprising as our nocturnal dreams had not been interrupted by any enemy action. One conclusion was that a lone German bomber may have flown up the Thames Estuary and that the siren at Selsdon Triangle was not required to operate.

The next night, Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June, was interrupted by the wailing of sirens. Aircraft were flying low overhead and the anti-aircraft guns were in full spate. My father exclaimed with joy that we had hit one of the aircraft, which was on fire. As time went on, it became clear that something was amiss. The sound of the aircraft engine was completely different to what we were used to. To my ears, it sounded more like that of an ancient motorbike with a defective exhaust! The aircraft were also travelling extremely low, probably only about two or three thousand feet. As we watched out of the bedroom window, one of these flaming aircraft crashed onto one of the smallholdings half a mile away, with a flash and a resounding explosion.

This unheralded incident lasted for about one hour, leaving us very puzzled.

\*\*\*\*\*

*I am standing on a crowded East Croydon station, awaiting the arrival of the 8am train to Victoria. The sound of the defunct motorbike engine is again heard, and we all look, fascinated, at the sky, when this little straight-winged aircraft flies over, following dead straight down the railway line. 'No pilot in that one!' exclaims one fellow traveller.*

(This was very perceptive – we did not know at the time that these bombs were unmanned.)

\*\*\*\*\*

Later that morning, the Home Secretary, Mr Herbert Morrison, announced on the radio the advent of the V1 flying bomb - later to be known as the *doodlebug* or *buzz-bomb*. Thus began some months of running this gauntlet of death whilst travelling to and from our places of work.

The response to this by the defence authorities was both immediate and impressive. A three-stage defence was put in place within a few days to counter these deadly robots. As these weapons flew in an arrow-straight line at low altitude the anti-aircraft guns were all moved to the south coast, on the clifftops, where they could start to pick off the missiles as soon as they were launched from their bases near Calais.

The second line of defence was to deploy the fastest fighter aircraft to chase them and hopefully shoot them down.

The third and final strategy was the erection of a massive balloon barrage, which was positioned all along the North Downs, from Farleigh Common to Titsey Hill. This defensive wall brought down several of these missiles.



As for the commuters in general, their aim was to show stoicism and fortitude, and not to look foolish! To cite two examples: -

*~ Having boarded the 8am train from East Croydon, I enter a carriage occupied by half a dozen staid businessmen, all of whom are reading broadsheet newspapers. Bowler hats are much in evidence. As we depart the station, we detect the ominous sound of a flying bomb getting closer. I become aware that the reading of newspapers has been put on hold, as knuckles whiten and grips tighten. The tension increases when the doodlebug engine stops. As we leave Selhurst Station, the flying bomb lands on a block of flats adjacent to the railway. There is an immediate relaxation in the carriage and someone mentions, 'That was a bit close.' Reading of the newspapers recommences without further ado.*

*~ On my return journey from work I follow the Cunning Plan I had devised in order to ensure my security. I enter a carriage at Victoria which is beneath Ebury Bridge, thus ensuring I am protected by many feet of roadway! This evening the sound of an approaching doodlebug is heard and when the engine stops, many passengers fling themselves flat on the platform. The flying bomb hits a block of flats just outside the station by the train sheds. The would-be passengers, who are lying prone on the ground, shame-facedly pick themselves up and dust themselves down, embarrassed to have made such a such an undignified spectacle of themselves.*

**Raymond Rowell**

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## **A VERY SHORT STORY COMPETITION**

We would like to run a short story competition. It can be about anything – a personal experience, fact or fiction, maybe a Christmas theme – in no more than 100 words (excluding the title). All entries should be with the editor **by 31<sup>st</sup> October** so we can publish the results in the December magazine.

The 1st prize will be a box of chocolates – so get writing! We'd especially like to hear from younger readers.

Ideally, the stories should contain something unexpected - a twist in the tale – which should surprise the reader, or raise a smile, or provoke thought! Here are two examples:

### **THE COPPER BEECH**

The man ran towards the trees, tired and thirsty. In the cool of their shade, the soft leafy ground under a beech tree offered an ideal resting place. Two branches brushing over his head kept the sun from his eyes and the evening warmth made him drowsy.

Next morning the runner's pale bloodless body was discovered by dog walkers. There were no signs of violence and they looked around for any indication of how death had occurred. They noticed the unusually bright red leaves at the end of the branches over the body – no, surely not? A copper beech? Unthinkable!

### **TAKEN BY SURPRISE**

Pyotr Ivanich is at the station for a weekend away, a gift from the Party. It clearly signifies that he is in favour and can relax, free of the fear of arrest. In the waiting

room a charming young man hails him as an old friend. Pyotr is unsure who this is, but allows himself to be drawn to one side. The young man bows respectfully to his wife: "You must forgive us; I'll keep him only *one minute*." The wife trustingly accedes and her husband is taken – into the Gulag - for ten years hard labour, or maybe forever.

**Bill Gale**

*Editor's Note - A fascinating idea! Please send your entries by email to me at [SelsdonGazette@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:SelsdonGazette@hotmail.co.uk) or by post to the address inside the front cover. A selection of the best will be published in the December issue of the Gazette where the winner will be named. Bill has offered to pay for the prize 😊*

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## **CAKE SALE AT THE SELSDON CENTRE FOR THE RETIRED**

On Friday 9th August we enjoyed a very successful Cake Sale & Raffle at the Selsdon Centre. We are very grateful to all the Staff and Volunteers who contributed by making delicious cakes and providing raffle prizes, which included a voucher from Sainsbury's.



Councillor Yvette Hopley kindly drew the raffle and was thanked by the Chairman, Alan Brookes, for arranging for funds to replace 2 of the freezers in the kitchen.

Barclays Bank in Selsdon generously sponsored this event and all these donations will help towards enabling the Centre to continue to provide valuable services to our local community.

If you would be interested in joining our team of volunteers or using the Centre for some of the many activities provided, do contact us on 0208 651 1111 - and look out for our next cake sale.

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## **NATURE NOTES**

### **BUDS AND LEAVES**

Identifying winter twigs involves examining colour, shape and positioning of buds. An obvious example is the Ash tree which is easily identified by its distinctive black buds. With other species we need to decide whether there are terminal buds, single or multiple, and whether the other buds down the twig occur singly or in pairs. The Woodland Trust has information sheets which can be downloaded, intended to encourage children to get out and discover nature. Three useful simple sheets are Twig ID (18 species), Autumn Leaf ID (12 species), and Winter Tree ID (7 species). A more comprehensive booklet is produced by the Field Studies Council – Broad-

leaved Trees and Shrubs in Winter – more than 50 pages of sketches and description of a wide range of species. There is another booklet on Winter Trees by Price & Bersweden which has photographs of 36 deciduous species showing twigs, bark, etc. There is also Kew's elaborate guide to Identification of Trees and Shrubs in Winter using Buds and Twigs.

Once the leaves start to appear with the approach of spring it is obvious that leaf shape varies with the tree species. Roughly based on the shape of a circle or ellipse of different sizes we have Hazel, Elm, (the leaves of these two species look very similar but Hazel's are smooth and those of the Elm are rough like sandpaper), Lime, Goat Willow, Alder, Spindle, Apple, Hornbeam, Dogwood and Birch. Hawthorn and Midland Thorn both have leaves whose edges are indented (more deeply on the common Hawthorn), while Blackthorn and Buckthorn edges are either smooth or finely serrated. Both Wild Cherry and Bird Cherry have very finely toothed edges on oval leaves with the Wild Cherry leaf longer than that of the Bird Cherry. Horse Chestnut leaves are distinctive and have five to seven "fingers" – the buds are the equally familiar "sticky buds". Sweet Chestnut leaves are long and glossy and have a toothed edge. Both Pedunculate (English) Oak and Sessile Oak have deeply indented edges but the English Oak leaf has no stalk (but the acorn hangs from a longish stalk or peduncle) and the Sessile Oak leaf hangs from a long stalk (and the acorn has virtually no stalk. i.e. It is sessile). Turkey Oak leaves are deeply lobed and the acorn cup is covered in many coarse hair-like growths. Holly and Laurel both have thick waxy leaves which are retained through the winter. Unlike most other trees the leaf stalk of the Ash divides into multiple opposite-paired leaflets (pinnate), as do the leaves of Rowan and Elder. Conifers have leaves which are reduced to a needle shape.

The above descriptions are rather vague so a good field guide is necessary to get an ID. Try Collins complete guide to British Trees (photographic) or the Collins Tree Guide which is based on artwork.

Many trees tend to hybridise to some extent, e.g. Hawthorn and Midland Thorn, Silver Birch and Downy Birch, and have other trends which mix up the genetics, so the characteristics of an individual tree might not be "pure" and it might not be possible to be certain of the species identity.

***Ted Forsyth***

## WHAT'S ON

You will find here information of events that are taking place in our area that may not have been mentioned elsewhere in the Gazette.

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**POP-UP CEILIDH** - at the Selsdon Hall - 28<sup>th</sup> September 7.30pm - email for info - [kingsfolkceilidh@gmail.com](mailto:kingsfolkceilidh@gmail.com)

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### THE CROYDON SYMPHONIC BAND

The Croydon Symphonic Band resumed rehearsals this month for their 47<sup>th</sup> season and welcome all woodwind, brass and percussion players of all standards to its rehearsals in West Croydon on Wednesday evenings at 8pm. In addition to performing regularly at Sanderstead United Reformed Church, the Band will be presenting their winter concert in the newly refurbished Phoenix Concert Hall at Fairfield on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020. Further details are on the Bands website [www.csb.org.uk](http://www.csb.org.uk) or by calling Sue Reeves on 0208 657 8591.

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giving  
nature  
a home

### THE RSPB CROYDON LOCAL GROUP

#### **Monthly Illustrated Wildlife Talks in South Croydon**

Whitgift Sports Club, Croham Manor Road - off Croham Road. South Croydon, CR2 7BG. Second Monday of each month, 2pm and again at 8pm. Admission £4. Everyone is welcome, not just RSPB members. Free refreshments. A selection of RSPB goods, nuts & seeds are on sale. Parking limited on site but free in adjacent roads. 64 & 433 buses stop nearby in Croham Road.

**Monday Oct 14<sup>th</sup> 2019: "Hedgehog Update"**. At the time of **Pat Morris's** original research in the 1970's little was known about hedgehogs. His book on the subject became the longest running mammal book still in publication. The future well-being of the hedgehog is threatened like never before, so it is a real pleasure to have Dr Pat back in Croydon to update us on the plight of this most lovable mammal.

For more information contact John Davis on 020-8640 4578 or see [www.rspb.org.uk/groups/croydon](http://www.rspb.org.uk/groups/croydon)

**Note: on request we give illustrated bird talks to local organisations.**

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### FRIENDS OF SELSDON WOOD

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October @ 10am - 'Fungus Hunt' with FSW**

*Meet in Selsdon Wood car park, Old Farleigh Road.*

*To make enquiries or to check the above, see the Walks and Workday pages of the website [www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk](http://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk)*

*Or phone 020-8657 0423 or e-mail: [selsdonwood@gmail.com](mailto:selsdonwood@gmail.com)*

Selsdon Wood is owned by the National Trust and we have our own page on their website at <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/selsdon-wood>

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### FRIENDS OF LITTLEHEATH WOODS

Join the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society and Friends of Littleheath Woods for a Fungus Foray on Sunday October 27<sup>th</sup> @10am. This will be led by Dr Jane McLauchlin and Malcolm Jennings. Meet at the junction of Queenhill and Littleheath Roads.

More information including maps can be found at [www.folw.co.uk](http://www.folw.co.uk).

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### **SELSDON PRIMARY SCHOOL REUNION**

If you, your parents or grandparents attended Selsdon Primary school between 1939-1946, we invite you to attend this year's reunion of the 'Wartime Children'. This lunchtime reunion will be held on:

**Wednesday, 16 October 2019 at Farleigh Golf Club, Old Farleigh Road, Warlingham, CR6 9PE** - From noon onwards – lunch to be served at 12.30pm

This annual event is becoming more popular. Starting a few years ago with just half-a-dozen or so, last year it attracted over 30 ex-pupils, despite the passing years! The last seventy years passed like a flash as fond childhood reminiscences were exchanged. A stoic generation indeed.

For those wishing to attend this year's event, a menu will be sent to you nearer the time so you can order your dining requirements beforehand.

For more information please contact Jill Maynard

Email: [jill.m.maynard@gmail.com](mailto:jill.m.maynard@gmail.com) Phone: 020 8657 3858

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### **SOUL SYMPHONY CHOIR**

Thank you everyone who came to support us in our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Choir Festival, that raised money for Croydon Youth Zone, Legacy. Croydon Youth Zone 'Legacy' will make a real difference in the lives of thousands of young people. It will offer young people aged between 8 to 19, and up to 25 for those with additional needs, somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to, seven days a week.

Soul Symphony Choir are always looking for new members to join our choir. Our next term starts Tuesday 10 September and you are welcome to join us or come on any following Tuesday. Everyone is welcome, any age, whether you are a seasoned pro or have never sung before! We are a friendly bunch of people from all walks of life, and there is a strong 'family' vibe among the choir members who will make you feel very welcome!

Soul Symphony offers some great opportunities and experiences, and has raised thousands of pounds through fundraising concerts for charities and causes. We enjoy giving back to our community so you'll be playing your special part in our mission to inspire positive change to peoples' lives.

If you would like any further details or to book Soul Symphony Choir you can either come to a Tuesday session or contact us via email [info@soulsymphony.co.uk](mailto:info@soulsymphony.co.uk) or website [www.soulsymphony.co.uk](http://www.soulsymphony.co.uk).

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### **SELSDON TENNIS CLUB – 21A QUEENHILL ROAD**

New members are always made welcome at Selsdon Tennis Club where we cater for all ages including Tots and all standards e.g. Beginners, Improvers, Intermediate and Advanced. We are a family friendly club, and have a special rate for parents

joining with their children. If you join now we are offering a 50% discount on our very competitive fees!

#### **Club Overview:**

- Weekend and Mid-week sessions
- Surrey league matches and friendly Inter-club matches
- Two tournaments per year and social activities
- Handicap Tournament Final in June and Championship Final in September
- Saturday morning sessions with coaching
- Tournaments
- Individual coaching available
- Use of courts outside club sessions
- Table tennis

#### **Facilities:**

- 5 All Weather Courts
- 2 Floodlit Courts
- Unlimited use of courts outside club sessions
- Clubhouse
- Table Tennis
- Practice Fence
- Car parking

For more information contact David on 0752 3880644 or go to our web page <http://www.selsdon-tennis-club-ltd.co.uk/> or via e-mail [info@selsdon-tennis-club-ltd.co](mailto:info@selsdon-tennis-club-ltd.co)

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#### **SELSDON FLOWER CLUB**

We are a small friendly club who meet on certain Wednesday afternoons at 2pm at the rear of St. John the Divine Church, Selsdon. Subscription £25 per annum. We have demonstrations, workshops and practices.

- |              |                                                 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 11 September | Practice - Parallel                             |
| 25 September | Workshop in Church - Helen Lishmund - Pedestals |
| 09 October   | Practice - Autumn Box                           |
| 23 October   | Demo - Halloween - Christine Milburn            |

Please contact the Secretary, Maureen Browning on 020 8651 5821 for more details

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#### **MUSIC EVENTS FROM THE PHOENIX COLLECTIVE – SAVE THE DATES!**

- Do you write songs? Are you a singer or choir leader who would like some help arranging a piece to sing? If so, put this date in your diary! The Selsdon-based Phoenix Collective are excited to announce a visit by American a cappella expert Chris Rupp (founder of the NBC Sing-Off winners, Home Free), on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Chris will be available to work with individuals or groups on aspects of song-writing and a cappella arranging. Why not give a session with him as a gift to a family or friend who is a keen musician? The sessions will take place in Selsdon, so right on your doorstep!
- Are you a primary class teacher wanting to learn how to teach music? Are you a primary music specialist looking to refresh your practice with new ideas and insights? If so, come to the 'Music in the Primary Classroom' course on 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>

October 2019! This is hosted by Selsdon resident Cyrilla Rowsell (author of the Jolly Music series) and Gerard Klaassens, a creative music educator from The Netherlands. The venue for this weekend course will be St John's Primary School in Shirley Church Road.

More details to follow but SAVE THE DATES NOW! [www.thephoenixcollective.co.uk](http://www.thephoenixcollective.co.uk)

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*We welcome your letters so do please get in touch if you have something to share with Selsdon residents.*

*Please remember to state your name, address, contact number, and publication anonymity requirements in all correspondence to the Editor. Anonymity can be granted on request, but anonymously sent letters/e-mails will not be published.*

**Heather Govier, Editor**

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**June 24<sup>th</sup>**

Dear Heather,

I was entertained by Des Donohoe's article in the June issue on pages 21 to 24 - and even more by his photograph of the policeman on the motorbike with comments. I used to own one of the LE Velocette bikes and rode it for a number of years with great satisfaction in my youthful days. These bikes were deceptive: they were water-cooled with a radiator at the front and were very quiet. This gave an illusion of low power but this was not so. I rode mine to work in London daily for many years and toured round Britain for holidays usually at 50 to 60 mph. They were proper motorbikes and could go fast even with a passenger. Of course, the policeman would have ridden his slowly locally giving the illusion of peace and tranquillity perhaps, as Des recalls.

Best wishes to you all, however you travel!

**Ken Harman**

~~

**June 24<sup>th</sup>**

Dear Selsdon Gazette

I wanted to get in touch with regard to the Selsdon garage site article. I live directly opposite the garage and though I would like this to be developed it leaves me very concerned that the development is being discussed as 43 flats.

The high street is becoming more and more congested with traffic resulting in a negative impact on the quality of living in Selsdon.

On a Sunday it's becoming virtually impossible to drive down the high street due to the influx of visitors and those attending the two churches. This is not just making it more difficult for those that live on the high street who do not have parking but also is

having a massive effect on the level of air pollution in addition to noise pollution for the local residents.

I dread to think of the impact of having 43 flats all adding to this congestion would be. Cars are already at log jam near Aldi on most days and this area is becoming a hot spot for accidents.

This small road has Aldi and Iceland trucks unloading, buses stopping at numerous bus stops and non-stop traffic already!

Surely there has to be more thought put into this development then simply adding more flats to make it more profitable!

Please think about the quality of life of local residents and young families!

Kind regards

**Matthew Demain**

~~

**24<sup>th</sup> June**

Dear Heather,

**Saga of the blue wheelie bin.**

There has been almost a year of emails, letters and phone calls to the Croydon Council asking for them to remove the said bin from my property. I am now pleased to say it has been exported to Rother Valley where it will be used to assist the production of this year's Christmas dinners. I attach a picture of its new friends.



The end.

**D. Redrupp**

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**15<sup>th</sup> August**

Dear Heather,

Greetings from southern California.

David Hughes (Maryland) brought to my attention a couple of inaccuracies in the July Gazette (pages 31-32) that you may wish to correct in the September issue, especially the date of D-Day!

Although my memory from that era is fairly good, I could never pinpoint the date of the 'Sundale Bomb' so I contacted the late Ted Frith in 2014 and he set me straight. Both Raymond and I are indebted to him for accurate dating in our respective reminiscences. The blast from the explosion did enough damage to make our house (131) uninhabitable and we moved in with friends at 101 Benhurst Gardens until the end of the war.

**Editor's Note** - *There was a typo in the title of the article - D-Day was, of course in 1944 not 1945 - and the Sundale Avenue bombing was on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1944, with the 10<sup>th</sup> May bombing hitting Arundel and Norfolk Avenues.*

My enjoyment of the Gazette continues and I look forward eagerly to reading each issue to see who has written from afar about their former years in Selsdon. I trust that the current residents don't mind these reminiscences too much?



Des's piece about his schooldays was of particular interest because his experiences mirrored mine, even to playing truant, although I only did it once! It's as if we were on parallel courses but separated by four years. In 1940 I joined Miss Smith's class, subsequently enjoyed being taught by Miss Chubb and Mrs Beach, ending with Miss Mead in Group A. I remember several teachers but it's these ladies, and Miss Almond, that stand out in my mind.

I've rambled on enough ..... please keep up the good work!

***Sincerely, Michael J Fox***

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**16<sup>th</sup> August**

Dear Editor,

Are you aware of the proposed introduction of emission-based charges for residents and business parking permits? It's understood that the proposals are driven by the Air Quality Plan aimed at improving the air quality for all which is commendable; however, you might want to look at the site as consultation will be on-going as the project will continue into 2020.

The Croydon website is: <https://getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/project/566>

***Kind regards Vanessa Hosford***

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**16<sup>th</sup> August**

**16 Steps Youth Club reunion**

Who or what was the 16 steps youth club?

The 16 steps was formed by a group of young people in 1957 who attended St. John's Church. We congregated in the Church Hall after evensong, in the days before colour television, mobile phones and computers. The club took its name from the number of steps leading up to the Chapman room in the Church Hall.

Over the years there have been many reunions but now, it is felt that, as we are all getting older we should try and meet again one last time, on September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019.

Do you remember Brian Huggett, Angela Strevens, Jill Tyrell, Norman Bray, Bill Howe?

Were you a member or did you attend St. John's Church in the 1950s and 60s? Or perhaps you know of someone who was?

If so please get in touch with me and I will send all the details. [bcsayers@yahoo.com](mailto:bcsayers@yahoo.com)

***Brian Sayers*** - telephone 01883 623051

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**19<sup>th</sup> August**

Greetings from THE GOLDEN ARK MICROPUB where you can enjoy more than 65 beers , 10 gins, wines and a range of spirits and refreshing drinks.

We love dogs, we love people and want to give a huge THANKS to our regulars and all those beer lovers who have enjoyed a pint or two at The Golden Ark.

See you soon! ***Maria and Matt***, THE GOLDEN ARK MICROPUB, SELSDO