

# The Hampton Society

The residents' association of Hampton, est.1956 Autumn Newsletter 2021



## Charity Bookshop Re-Opens

▲ Members of the Society committee, partners and friends enjoy a coffee and a read beside the Book Shop on Ashley Road by Hampton station

**“Drink good coffee, read good books” is the message on the board between Nemo’s café and the little bookshop in front of Hampton station. It’s advice that’s hard to resist, especially if you’ve a wait between trains.**

Sit at one of the café’s three gaily-painted tables, open a book and lose yourself in it until the next train’s announced, What’s not to like? You don’t even have to board the train. But you have enjoyed a slice of our local ‘café society’.

The Book Shop next door, meanwhile, has been making the most of Covid. While we all distanced from one another it was closed for eight months as long-forgotten furnishings like the original bookstall blinds, shelves and even the boarded floor were cleaned and reassembled.

The little shop on Ashley Road was once the WH Smith station bookstall, its blinds facing onto the station platform. Now refurbished, they grace the wall behind the counter and its large plastic anti-Covid screen.

From the late 1970s, Joy McKay ran the shop on charity lines with volunteers. Joy retired in 2015, succeeded by existing volunteers James and Sally Bell. Today, they and their 20 or so helpers try to keep the shop open from Monday to Saturday. But hours are necessarily flexible: 10.00am to 4.00pm weekdays, 10.30am to 2.00pm on Saturdays.

So which charities benefit from these donated books, both hardback and paperback, as well as children’s books? Small local charities, often suggested by the volunteers themselves, receive sums varying from £100 to £500. Recipients range from Radio West Middlesex (a hospital station); Richmond Talking Newspaper; the Hygiene Bank (sanitary products); Richmond Christmas Lunches (children leaving care); and Hearing Dogs – ten of them have been sponsored to date.

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▲ Volunteer Angela Smith at the shop counter in front of the original blinds



The refurbished shop front ▲

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## Notes from the Chair

I hope you have all managed to make something of the summer and even get away somewhere special. Wherever you've been, I hope you agree that however hard it is for your holiday to come to an end, at least returning to the leafy lanes of Hampton is always a consolation.

### *The Future of the High Street*

I represented the Society in a recent 'Community Conversation' hosted by the council. The online Zoom event was led by Paul Clement, an independent specialist in local shops. He highlighted that, contrary to popular belief, Covid-19 has not killed off the high street. If anything, interest in shopping locally has been restored as we have avoided bigger shopping areas.

The greatest challenge to our shopkeepers is maintaining this interest and creating a 'want', now that the 'need' has been significantly reduced. Diversity of offers is also a challenge. Although there is a predominance of certain types of retailer in Hampton, we do at least have a fine butcher, several grocers and general stores, an off licence, a bicycle sales and servicing shop, carpets, beds and gifts alongside services such as hairdressers, dry cleaners, dentists and chemists.

I hope you continue to make the most of our local shops if you are already customers. If you've not, I would encourage you to have a look around and see what's on offer. Visit their website [www.hamptonvillage.org.uk/index.php/directory](http://www.hamptonvillage.org.uk/index.php/directory).

### *Destination venue*

A recurring theme of the high street discussion was the need for a 'destination venue' for people to head to, but in doing so, to also take notice of all the other fine shops the village has to offer. The recent trend of pavement dining has offered the opportunity for us to not only 'take five', but take notice of our surroundings as we are socialising.

In addition to this, the Hampton Hub, Ashley Road which used to be the Metropolitan Water Board club, is setting itself up as Hampton's 'go-to' live music and comedy venue. They are hosting a variety of fantastic bands, a couple that you might have caught at the Hampton Pool Summer Picnic Concerts, as well as comedy nights featuring stars of TV and radio. Have a look at the line-up over the next few months at [hamptonhub.co.uk/whats-on](http://hamptonhub.co.uk/whats-on).



### *Mast down (for now)*

We objected to the siting of an 18 metre 5G mobile phone mast that was proposed for the corner of Oldfield Road and Station Road, beside the childrens' play area. Sylvia, of our planning sub-group, highlighted the application and in consultation with Iacopo, our resident architect and deputy chair of the Society, we decided that this was not appropriate. Along with the potential risk to traffic and pedestrian accidents on a busy junction it would also be in the middle of a conservation area. The council have thrown the application out - taking into account many other residents' views.

However, I hope that a suitable site for the mast is found as opposing improved mobile coverage completely would be detrimental to the community in the long term and would run the risk of Hampton becoming a mobile black-spot.

### *Christmas Celebrations*

All being well, a step towards a normal Christmas will take place on Sunday 4 December. More details will be available through the [hamptonvillage.org.uk](http://hamptonvillage.org.uk) website in due course, but The Hampton Society intend to return with a stall where we hope to see as many new and familiar faces as possible.

Kind regards, **William Redfern**, Chair

## Obituary

### Tom Hill

Tom Hill, the husband of Rosemary – who organises Hampton Society events along with Alice Fordham – has died aged 90.



Handsome and distinguished looking until the end, he was a familiar figure supporting our social events.

Tom was a civil and structural engineer and much of his work involved solving problems in buildings for local authorities and private clients. He put his training to practical use in building his own detached four-bedroom house in Ealing. A keen swimmer at Hampton Pool, in earlier years he had been an enthusiastic cyclist, riding from home to the former Yugoslavia and also to Brittany.

The Hills used to live at Ivy House on High Street by the triangle. They discovered that wartime Engima-code breaking and computer genius Alan Turing had also resided there between 1947 and 1949 when working for NPL. In 2001, they marked his stay with a blue plaque, erected by Tom on the front wall of the house (pictured above with Rosemary and Turing biographer Andrew Hodges). **MW THIS**

## News

### Building a Head of Steam



Member **Lionel Beer** has asked me to mention the activities down at the Hampton and Kempton Waterworks Railway. **Webb Locos Ltd** has been created to build a replica of one of the three Kerr Stuart steam locomotives that once ran on the Metropolitan Water Board's light railway between 1915 and 1947, carrying coal from barges at Hampton Wharf to the pumping stations at the Hampton and Kempton Water Treatment Works that provided clean drinking water for London. 'Sunbury' is pictured above.

If you would like to support their efforts, please visit [webblocos.co.uk](http://webblocos.co.uk).

*\*National Physical Laboratory*





▲ Diana Armfield and Chris Le Cluse point out Arts Richmond's competition winning drawing

## Inspired Drawing Wins Top Prize

**Returning home after his first Covid jab at the Greenwood Centre, Chris Le Cluse felt inspired to make a pencil drawing. Genuinely inspired it turns out, as his effort won first prize in Arts Richmond's annual drawing competition this year.**

Depicting the view of the Shepperton railway line from the bridge at Holly Road in Hampton Hill, the picture beat 64 drawings submitted by 26 artists. He was awarded his prize by Diana Armfield, who set up the prestigious competition in memory of her husband Bernard Dunston. Chris has earned a high commendation in the event before, but this time he hit the jackpot. He says "I thought the competition was of a high standard this year, and I was quite surprised to win".

Worthing-born Chris entered a career in commercial art after a spell at West Sussex College of Art following frustrating art lessons at school "where we were told to draw cabbages or lamps". Encouraged by the work of industrial scenes painter Terence Cuneo, notably his *How to Draw Tanks*, his was an end-of-war childhood where such interests would have been characteristic.



▲ The winning drawing by Chris Le Cluse

His first job was as a junior artist with the duplicating machine manufacturer Gestetner. Future employers included the shirtmaker Van Heusen; Saxone; Lilley & Skinner; and the American cosmetics company Revlon. Building up his portfolio of designs for exhibition stands and special displays he was soon accepting commissions from the City of London Corporation. One of these was a poster commemorating the 1981 Royal Wedding using his drawings of well-known London buildings.

Now aged 79, and one of our members, Chris belongs to London Urban Sketchers, a group who meet monthly to draw interesting London landmarks like Leadenhall Market, Spitalfields and the O2 Arena. When Richmond Theatre needed some pictorial authority for their production of 'The Pitmen Painters' who do you think they turned to? Chris of course. **MW THS**

## About your committee

The committee is the governing body of The Hampton Society. It consists of elected officers and up to six committee members. We meet four times a year to discuss current issues that affect the community to see where we can make a contribution. We also organise talks, visits and events for our members.

Any member of the Society is eligible to join the committee and can stand for election at our Annual General Meeting in April or be co-opted during the year. If you are interested in joining the committee and playing a part in the Society and Hampton's development, please contact the secretary below.

### Committee members

#### Chair

William Redfern 020 8286 7071

#### Deputy chair

Iacopo Sassi 07761 670911

#### Secretary

Lesley Cesenek 07540 342813

#### Treasurer

Brian Brignall 020 8979 9499

#### Membership

Linda Brignall 020 8979 9499

#### Newsletter editor

Maura Waters 020 8979 9654

#### Planning

Sylvia Bridge Le Cluse 020 8941 4450

#### Event organisers

Alice Fordham 020 8979 3543

Rosemary Hill 020 8973 3604

Contact us at [enquiries](mailto:enquiries@thehamptonsociety.org.uk)

[@thehamptonsociety.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@thehamptonsociety.org.uk)

## Update on Membership

**Over 93% of our members now pay by annual Standing Order**

We would really appreciate it if you do not currently pay by Standing Order to consider doing so when you come to renew your membership.

A warm welcome to our new members .

Newsletter production:  
Edited by Maura Waters.  
Designed and produced by William Redfern  
[www.williamredfern.co.uk](http://www.williamredfern.co.uk) 020 8286 7071.

# Drop In at Local Computer Class

**If Covid has taught us one thing during the past 18 months, it is to value our relationships with others. When we couldn't see people face-to-face, we could always call them up on the computer.**

If we had one that is, or if we knew how to use it if we did. Help is at hand.

**Age UK Richmond** first set up a computer course at the Baptist church in Beards Hill, Hampton, in 2013. Now it has spread to various locations, the latest being the Methodist Church in Percy Road. From early August, every Tuesday morning between 10.30am to 12.30pm, any local resident aged over 50 can bring their laptop, tablet or mobile phone and gain valuable advice from tutors Derek, Richard or Maria and helpers Chris and Geoff. For a cup of tea or coffee and a £1 fee they could sort out your problem, give valuable advice and send you on your way rejoicing. All that may be needed is a prompt or two.



Alternatively, choose a one-to-one private lesson at £10 an hour or a set of three sessions booked in advance for £25. If you'd prefer not to leave home, a tutor can provide this service at an hourly fee of £15. There's even a car park there too.

Interested? If so, call **Wellbeing Services** co-ordinator Carol Horne on **020 8744 1965** or email [carol.horne@ageukrichmond.org.uk](mailto:carol.horne@ageukrichmond.org.uk). MW **THS**

# Charity Bookshop Re-Opens

*continued from front page*

Sally explains "Even relatively small sums can make a difference. So can the number of volunteers who can keep us open for longer hours. For many of them the two-hour slot works but we can always do with more."

Meanwhile a body calling itself 'Friends of the Bookshop' have introduced 'Adopt a Shelf' for books based on specific subjects. So far there are three of them, more ideas welcome.

Contact **Sally Bell** at [sally@B1creative.com](mailto:sally@B1creative.com) or phone **07590 537826**. MW **THS**

## News

# New Book on Hampton

**The Borough of Twickenham Local History Society (BOTLHS) has just published a new book on the history of Hampton written by John Sheaf.**

## Obituary

# Joan Heath

**With Joan's death on 25 August aged 103, Hampton has lost a most remarkable resident who has contributed enormously to the community over the past 60 years.**

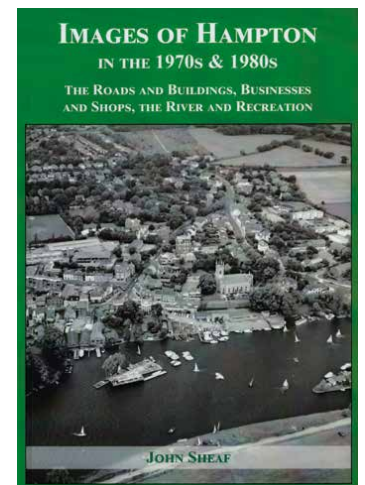


She was a member and active supporter of numerous organisations, including the Hampton Residents' Association (as The Hampton Society was then known), which she and her late husband Gerald joined in 1958, only two years after its founding. She was much involved with the preservation and care of Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare and, in recognition of this, a party in her honour was held there each year between her 90th and 100th birthdays, and each year a celebratory ode was written to mark the occasion. The verse reproduced below was performed on her 100th birthday and provides a simplified summary of her life and achievements. **Bill Weisblatt THS**

## Joan – *On Getting On a Bit*

*'Twas late in 1917  
When Joan appeared upon the scene:  
Not many people know that Joan  
Started life in a town called Stone,  
(Stone not set in a silver sea,  
As far from the sea as it could be)  
There she went to school and flourished,  
By literature and music nourished.  
Then Reading, for a year or three,  
And there picked up a French degree.  
Then started her distinguished life,  
As teacher, councillor, friend – and wife,  
Became a guide at Hampton Court,  
And many planning battles fought.  
The passing years left not a trace  
On mind or energy – or face.  
Don't trust a woman, said the sage,  
Prepared to tell you her real age;  
These days you reach three score and ten,  
Then start the counting once again.  
When Joan had reached the magic 'ton'  
(She never thought her life was done;  
Life still included lots of fun)  
She did a simple mental sum,  
And said, "The best is yet to come".*

21 November 2017



**Images of Hampton in the 1970s & 1980s – The Roads and Buildings, Businesses and Shops, the River and Recreation** includes many pictures from that time period, with a separate section for each main road and the effects of the 1987 Hurricane as well as the building of the Nurserylands.

The book has over 140 historic photographs, with many pictures in colour, and twelve maps.

Available from: *The Jolly Coopers; Hampton Cellar; Syzygy; Ruby's;* and [botlhs.co.uk](http://botlhs.co.uk) website.