

THE Kensington MAGAZINE

February 2014



ROMANCE IN KENSINGTON

THE Kensington MAGAZINE

Front Cover:

Illustration of part of the mural alongside the walkway from the Stable Yard to the Iris garden in Holland Park by Mao Wen Biao. (wbmao2006@yahoo.co.uk)
With kind permission from RBKC.



Lucy Elliott, Editor

For the first time in seven years we have succumbed to ‘Valentines’: in this edition Jenny takes us on romantic perambulations around W8, and Sarah explores the poets who lived in Kensington and wrote romantic poetry about the area. Plenty of our clients are offering different ways to celebrate the occasion so do try them out.

We would like to wish Isera a very successful future in journalism and we welcome local resident Raphaella Thomas who joins us as our new intern. Raphaella has written about two gentlemen who used to live in Edwardes Square in the 1930s and who met up for the first time since then, just before Christmas. A fascinating account of social history.

We hope you enjoy this edition with its nod to the commercialism of Valentine’s Day. Lucy

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GET IN TOUCH

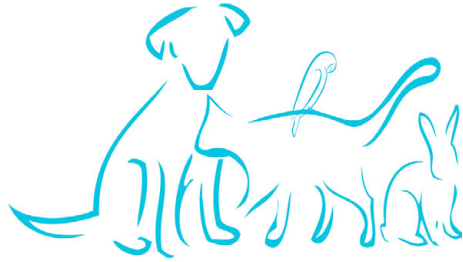
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Read by 34,500 residents and businesses each month. The magazine is also available at Sainsbury’s Local, Virgin, RBKC Library, Waitrose, Waterstones, Marks & Spencers, St Mary Abbots, the Copthorne Tara Hotel, The Royal Garden Hotel, The Milestone Hotel, Peter Jones in Sloane Square and many other smaller outlets in W8.

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ROMANTIC WALKS IN KENSINGTON

Probably the least romantic day of the year is Valentine's Day. So turn your back on the commercial hype and take your loved one on a romantic stroll instead. Local resident Jenny Davis-Peccoud suggests five cannot-fail perambulations on your doorstep.

The Sunken Garden

Next to the hubbub of Kensington Palace, you'll find an oasis of calm and seclusion. Created in 1908, the Sunken Garden was restored to its full glory in the past few years. An ornamental pond, gurgling fountains and classic flower beds should be enough to turn even the most practical of heads to romance. But throw in the Cradle Walk, an arched arbour with viewpoints onto the central sunken garden just big enough for two, and you've got it made. Champagne tea at The Orangery before or after will not go amiss.

Kensington Square

The oldest in London, this garden square was laid out in 1685. While the central garden is private, an evening stroll around the perimeter will leave you feeling like it's all just for you. On the inside, mature trees provide the atmosphere, with secluded benches creating the feeling of intimacy. On the outside, beautiful mansions in a mix of styles (Edwardian, Arts and Crafts...) whisper stories of loves gone-by. Young Street, Thackeray Street, Kensington Court and Stanford Road can extend your walk, with tea or a cocktail at The Milestone or Royal Garden Hotel to cap it off.

Holland Street and alleyways

Holland Street itself is a delight, minimal traffic, beautiful houses, interesting shop windows. Combine a saunter here with an exploration of the adjacent alleyways, and you can't go wrong for a romantic outing. Kensington Church Walk is lined with raised front gardens on one side and unique boutiques on the others. Peering in the window of Hornets or examining the detail of the shop-front mural provide intimate opportunities to stand close, heads together, hands clasped. Drayson Mews is another hidden world, with cobblestones and you-can-almost-imagine gas lamps setting the right mood. Tea at Pilosophy [*sic*] partway through?

Hillgate Village

Colourful houses form the perfect backdrop for this charming constitutional. Developed in the 1850s and 60s, Hillgate Village was previously a working class area, renamed and gentrified

in the past 30 years. "Your favourite house" is a fun game to keep you and your companion entertained. Bright pink, purple or turquoise? The tall, thin one at the end of Hillgate Place, the brick one on the corner of Hillgate Street and Hillgate Place, or the old fire station? Just 7 streets but plenty to take in along the way. A pint at The Hillgate or dinner at Malabar can make the evening.



Top: Example of pastel coloured houses in Hillgate Village. Below: Tiled wall, Holland Park
(Images: Lucy Elliott)

Holland Park

This one is almost too obvious to need an entry, but too good not to have one. A turn around the Kyoto Garden? A stroll through the Arboretum and Oak Enclosure? A trail through the Lord Holland Enclosure? A dip into the Dutch Garden? The park has something to suit every taste, including secluded paths and evocative ruins. Coming in from the north entrance or the small entry off Campden Hill are more intimate ways of starting than the great south avenue. For big spenders, dinner at The Belvedere is a fine way to round off your rambling.

SKI protection with style

My initial attempt at skiing was when I was 15 and as such knew everything about the world. At the time the most important thing was looking great and trying to attract the attention of all the good looking girls at the resort. This led me to spending a three weeks wages which I had carefully saved working as a garage attendant and grabbing the coolest looking set of ski boots I could find (they were bright blue and had flames surging up the side) without having even remotely thought about how they fit or if they were even appropriate for me.

This predictably led to all the fun of a broken ankle, a lot of hopping and enough pain to put me off skiing and exercise in general for several years.

The call of the mountains however can't be resisted forever and with ski season in full swing I decided to give it another whirl with the hopes of not having to come home in a cast or bandages. Being substantially older now than when I was 15 and With the news of Schumacher's injuries and the deaths caused by the recent avalanches, I decided to do some actual research on getting the a right gear this time.

As fellow Kensingtonians we are incredibly lucky to have not just one but three really good ski shops on our very own High Street. I chose to go to Altimus on the recommendation of a my personal trainer who had been to see their in-store podiatrist. Altimus are a combination footwear, equipment, clothing and foot-care specialists, They made me realize that there a lot more to choosing your ski equipment than whether or not it has flames flashing up the side. Rather than simply buying a pair of ski-boots,

heading to the slopes and hoping for the best I decided to throw myself on Altimus' experience and get the best advice.

They showed me a fantastic range of helmets with pull down visors (very James Bond), they impressed me with Ski goggles with built in head up displays and interactive GPS, and WOW'ed me with their exploding avalanche bags. But what really took my breath away was their biomechanical assessment of my feet knees and hips. They carried out a thorough assessment which helped in choosing not only my new ski boots but my next pair of running trainers. By the end of the assessment (which was free!!) I had discovered that my neck pain was probably biomechanical in nature and this led me to making an appointment with Jeremy Burton at the in-store clinic who is the Altimus osteopath.

Considering that any skiing holiday takes a huge chunk of

anybody's savings, it made sense to put in the extra time to avoid having torn ligaments that keep you out of work and adding even more zeroes on to your holiday bill. As it was I was equipped, enthused and ready to show the mountains who was boss but I had an extra surprise thrown in (No, I didn't have flames stencilled on the side I'm afraid). When I bought my pair of ski-boots Altimus gives me a free ski-lesson at the indoor Ski-Plex's slope in Chiswick that would normally cost £70.

After my visit to Altimus, I realised that almost everything I remembered about skiing was not only wrong but borderline dangerous. The free Ski lesson enabled me to get a good feel of the boots themselves, and the exhaustive biomechanical assessment has given me confidence that I will be performing as best as i can. Thanks to Altimus I'm able to finally be king of the mountain. Now all I need is a bright red ski-suit covered in go-faster stripes....

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Review: Johnny Irish Kensington Veterinary Practice

By Raphaella Thomas



For those of us who think the season of love should extend to more platonic forms, it's worth devoting a thought to our furry friends, our pets.

With that, help is at hand in the form of Johnny Irish who has recently opened up his veterinary practice in Kensington Church Street. His third practice in a 20 year career, Johnny decided to set up shop in Kensington due to it not only being an area lacking vets but also, he says, 'having the nicest clients in all the places I've worked'. As a fellow resident himself, living just around the corner from the practice, he is able to personally attend to emergency out-of-hour calls.

Johnny's work with animals started the moment he graduated from Cambridge in 1994 and worked in the army as a vet, generally caring for the guard and sniffer dogs as well as running a practice for soldiers' pets. Over his stint in the army he was posted in various locations from Northern Ireland to Hong Kong to Bosnia. (He even has the rare privilege of being the very last UK vet in Hong Kong before the handover!)

His Practice boasts many facilities including two consultation rooms, a full dental service, a surgery, advanced x-ray machines and high grade blood analysis technology that allows for in-house results within half-an-hour. And as if that weren't enough, Johnny's many years of experience have given him a knack for recognizing strange maladies even when the regular diagnostic criteria have yet to show up - as evidenced with a recent feline patient who swallowed a large rubber disc that would not show up on the x-ray. Brought to Johnny with chronic vomiting, the cat seemed unresponsive to treatment and after several days Johnny theorized



Johnny Irish
(Image Lucy Elliott)

the cause was more likely an unwelcome-foreign-object than a mysterious virus.

One quick surgery later and the cat was free to return to its regular (hopefully disc free) lifestyle. And after running 2 practices is it any surprise that Johnny knows his business?

So when it comes to caring for your pet, visit Johnny's practice. From cats to dogs to rabbits to hamsters to the more exotic species such as python or chameleon, Johnny doesn't discriminate. "If they can fit through the door I'll see them."

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History of Kensington: In honour of St Valentine's Day:

Kensington Poets

By Sarah Goldsmith

While Joseph Addison (1672-1719) was arguably the first poet in residence in the borough, his religious and metaphysical poems do not contain specific references to Kensington. However, influenced by Addison and part of his literary coterie, Thomas Tickell (1685-1740) published "Kensington Garden" in 1722 which imagined a battle between fairy worlds resulting in Kensington Gardens as the ruins left behind: "Where Kensington, high o'er the neighb'ring lands/Midst greens and sweets, a Regal fabric, stands/And sees each spring, luxuriant in her bowers/A snow of blossoms, and a wilde of flowers,/The Dames of Britain oft in crowds repair/To gravel walks, and unpolluted air." An epic poem in the Alexander Pope tradition, while the imagery could be termed romantic, the subtext was Whig politics. Samuel Johnson summarized Tickell as a contemporary who "cannot be refused a high place among the minor poets."

During the Victorian era, Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) wrote one of the most famous poems about Kensington in his "Lines Written in Kensington Gardens." Like most Victorian poets, Arnold employs his surroundings as a mirror to his innermost thoughts and feelings. A modern reader could well understand "Calm soul of all things! Make it mine/To feel, amid the city's jar,/ That there abides a peace of thine,/Man did not make, and cannot mar."

It wasn't until the early 20th century that Kensington really made its mark on the poetry world. Before and after World War I, T.S. Eliot (1888-1965), James Joyce (1882-1941), Ezra Pound (1885-1972), Robert Frost (1874-1963), and Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967) were all in residence around the same time in the borough. Long-time resident T.S. Eliot's "Four Quartets" were to be titled the "Kensington Quartets." Eliot's seminal work, "The Waste Land," was edited by and dedicated to Ezra Pound, who lived at 10 Church Walk from 1909 until 1914.



Matthew Arnold
(Image: www.google.co.uk)



T S Eliot
(Image: www.bartleby.com)

Kensington Gardens provides the setting for his poem "The Garden." Frost came to London to try to make a name for himself as a poet.

Through acquaintances, he received an "At home sometimes" card from Pound, though Frost was careful in later years to dispel the notion that Pound "discovered" him, he did owe a great deal to Pound's early mentorship. Sassoon, a Great War poet, lived in Kensington at Campden Hill Square from 1925 until 1932. Joyce's time in Kensington was more limited; Joyce was here for only four months after finding his time in "Campden Grave" [*sic*] a bit dull!



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Review: Elegant Tea at The Milestone Hotel

by Jeanne Keyser



Classic Afternoon Tea at The Milestone Hotel (image kind courtesy of The Milestone Hotel)

In the bleak mid-Winter...

How better to spent a wet, cold Monday (or any) afternoon in the comfort and luxury of the unique and comfortable lounge of a classic English hotel, taking afternoon tea ... and in our case, a Champagne Tea.

I had arranged to meet a dear friend, Herbert, a very well-travelled antique collector. I had suggested the venue since it was one of the few hotels he had not visited but knew of.

We arrived cold and windblown but with the warm and welcoming greeting, soon warmed up. We were escorted to the exact table in the window I had requested when booked, overlooking Kensington Gardens, on the ground floor - all deep cushioned seats with a roaring fire. It felt as if we were welcome visitors to an English country house. The Tea sumptuous with delicate finger sandwiches, gorgeous cakes on a towering china cake stand and a choice of teas served in individual tea pots. And needless to say, fine bone china cups and plates. We indulged, wanting to try everything, but just could not.

Our Champagne was served in very tall elegant flutes - what more could we want? Well, we were then served delicious warm scones with jam and dollops of thick cream. We had to force ourselves to eat them but who could resist? We sat and enjoyed our Champagne in a warm glow, wanting to stay there forever.

In this day and age of hotels, public houses etc. losing their identity and character, what a delight and pleasure to find a hotel unspoilt and retaining its original English country house ambience. No annoying 'musak', just a quiet tinkling piano in the evening, reminiscent of an earlier age.

Price of the Tea (and Champagne) was extremely reasonable. An inexpensive way to spoil yourself - or someone you love - and enjoy a little luxury on a cold wintry afternoon.

My friend Herbert, used to comfort and luxury, was extremely impressed. We plan to visit again soon. Also, to try the elegant restaurant. We shall book well in advance. We just cannot wait.

(Editor's Note: This article was submitted by Jeanne, unsolicited by either The Kensington Magazine or The Milestone Hotel)

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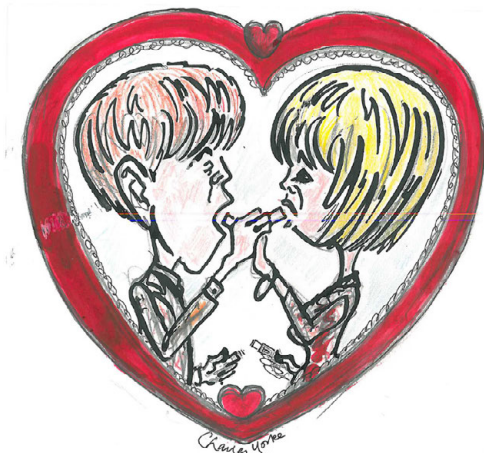
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If Wrigleys be the Food of Love, Chew on...

By Maria Perry



“Lucy, I want to write about chewing gum. Over a million pieces are currently defacing the pavements of Kensington. Julia thinks there should be a 'Spitting Tax.'”

“That's alright, but add something about love and Valentine's Day. Remember it's February.”
“Love-Valentine's-Day-and-chewing gum? That's a challenge!”

Needless to say I took it up, while giggling neighbours competed to invent a link between such subjects. Let me explain, however, that several months ago RBKC's line-painting machine leaked, leaving a stain of epic proportions in Dukes Lane. Fierce letters poured forth from grand persons (At least two were Old Etonians) to RBKC, who provided a water-spraying machine. It had little effect. Then while renewing my Parking Permit in person, I loudly ridiculed the folly of expecting a water-machine to remove weatherproof paint. ‘Why don't you take a form?’ said the lovely ladies at Reception. Armed with this powerful new weapon, I spilled out the Perry prose in a vituperative manner. I rather think I likened Dukes Lane to a Post-War slum!

The effect was magic. A phone call from the Council assured me most courteously that I was absolutely right to have complained. ‘Thank you so much for informing us' and some days later

Antonio, the Portuguese street cleaning executive, arrived with a different machine. After five hours labour, he had removed most of the paint. He also provided the chewing-gum statistic, begging almost tearfully, that I might ‘do something' about that too.

So who are the spitters? And why such an increase in Kensington, where gum-chewing was once viewed as an unhygienic habit? The ancient Greeks chewed gum and the Mayans made it from spruce sap, but Thomas Adams is regarded as the father of modern chewing gum. In 1871 he flavoured it, marketing it as New York Gum at a penny a piece. By the early twentieth century Americans couldn't get enough of it. Later gum became associated with oral hygiene. Some dentists condoned it and here there appeared the famous advertisement about ‘the Colgate Ring of Confidence', which allegedly banished bad breath. Toothpaste sales increased, kissing prospered enormously and “bad breath was a thing of the past”. But it was probably the title of the fifties pop song, ‘Does the chewing gum lose its flavour on the bedpost overnight?’ that led to the link with Love.

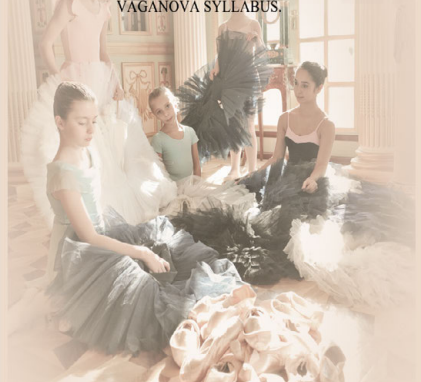
Many thanks to the two gentlemen old enough to remember the lyrics. Red roses will be appreciated on 14th.

With thanks to Charles Yorke for his illustration to accompany this article



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KENSINGTON NEWS I

BUSINESS NEWS

German cuisine chain **Kamps Bäckerei Café** is opening its second London store in the Kensington Arcade at High Street Kensington Station. Kamps specializes in fine German baking including pretzels, pastries and a wide variety of breads. See www.facebook.com/KampsUK

A new florist themed cafe has opened on Chepstow Road. **Wildflower Cafe** is an upbeat, family-friendly restaurant that offers a flowery atmosphere with a menu centred around its fresh organic produce. From lunchtime takeaway to afternoon tea to evening dining, Wildlife boasts assorted menus throughout the day. See www.wildflowercafe.co.uk or call 0207 792 9594

A new Jamaican-influenced burger restaurant has opened at 272 Portobello Road. **Boom Burger** offers a distinct Caribbean twist with loud flavours, local organic ingredients and a bar with a selection of themed drinks and cocktails. Boom Burger also offers take-away. See www.boomburger.co.uk or <https://facebook.com/boomburgers>

A new Syrian and Lebanese restaurant and deli has opened in Knightsbridge. **Yamal Alsham Prestige** offers a mix of traditional Middle Eastern cuisine as well as alternative takes on European dishes. The venue is available for private functions and offers a wide range of entertainment including live music, shishas and belly dancing. For more information visit Ewww.yamalasham.co.uk

For an alcohol-free bar experience, visit **Redemption** at Goldfinger Factory underneath Trellick Tower 13-15 Golborne Road, Ladbroke Grove. Offering a 'pure' night out, Redemption serves virgin cocktails and nutritional vegan cuisine with all remaining foods going to community kitchens and a third of the profits to charity. www.redemptionbar.com

Meursault, a new private members club has opened at the L'Etranger restaurant in Gloucester

Road. Open daily from 5pm onwards, Meursault offers a luxurious bar experience with an impressive international wine list, molecular cocktails and gourmet cuisine from L'Etranger. sasha@the-anonymous.com or georgia@the-anonymous.com

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Music, history, intrigue and passion are all bound to feature in the latest Divas & Scholars opera connoisseurship courses. From full intensive **Opera Study Days** on particular composers to the intimate, sophisticated History of Opera champagne evening series, connoisseurs and novices alike will all be enthralled with lectures by senior academics and opera-insiders as well as live performances from Nelly Miriciou and young British opera singers. www.masterclasscompany.co.uk lucy.woodruff@masterclasscompany.co.uk

CHARITY NEWS

Draycott Nursing & Care hosted their Carol Service at St Luke's Church in aid of the charity **Canine Partners**; the evening raised £7,500. Over 300 people attended and were joined by LBC Radio presenter Lisa Aziz, Outnumbered actress Claire Skinner, TV Vet Zara Boland, Made in Chelsea star Fran Newman-Young and soprano Emma Munro-Wilson.

KENSINGTON NEWS II

Friends of Trinity Hospice held its 35th annual Christmas Fair at Battersea Arts Centre, raising more than £23,000 for the charity.

Broadcaster **Huw Edwards** also recently helped **Trinity Hospice** raise £58,000 by hosting their Magnolia Dinner and Quiz in November. Events such as this are crucial in helping Trinity raise the £7,000,000 necessary every year to provide free end-of-life care to 750,000 people in central and south-west London. For more information call 020 7787 1022 or visit www.trinityhospice.org.uk/events

Two local charities dedicated to improving the lives of over 50s have announced they are combining. **Second Half** and **Open Age** will work together to promote the wellbeing of older people and fight against their isolation. From 1st April Open Age will take over the management of the Second Half Centre at St Charles Centre for Health and Wellbeing. The Second Half Foundation charity will be donating all of their existing equipment, resources and an agreed amount of funding to Open Age charity. This comes as part of a partnership to roll out centres based on the Second Half Centre template, promoting active ageing and tackling social isolation throughout London. www.openage.org.uk or www.thesecondhalfcenter.com

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Local resident **Marion Hahn** was the 2013 recipient of the **Greater London Volunteer of the Year Award** given by the charity **Riding for the Disabled**. The charity has 21 groups in Greater London, each group nominated a member for the award. The award was presented to Marion by the Regional Chairman during the group's Christmas Lunch at Cote Restaurant in Kensington Court, much to her surprise.

The Troubadour is delighted to receive the **Cafe of the Year Award 2014** from Les Routiers. It is well timed to celebrate this year's 60th Anniversary. Last autumn the club hosted legendary performers Ronnie Wood and Mick Taylor for an unforgettable private gig. Since 1954 it has hosted countless music artists in

their rise to fame and continues to serve as an incubator for future live music talent.

Rickman Estate Agents offered the opportunity to pupils of St Barnabas & St Phillips Primary School to submit a drawing representing a typical scene of 'January & February' with the winner taking pride of place on the front cover of the January edition of their property magazine, distributed around the local area of the school. The winner was Jessica from Year 6. Three others were chosen as runner-ups - their illustrations were displayed for all to see, in the window of Rickmans.

James Roxby-Brown, aged 16, from Kensington, has been accepted for professional dance training at one of Europe's premier schools for dance training and education: Central School of Ballet in Clerkenwell. One of only 39 pupils accepted on this three year degree course, James joined his brother Jack, who is currently in his final year at CSB.

Local Chelsea "banker by day, artist by night" **Shivani Mathur** held a commemoration at the Contemporary Arts Society to celebrate the completion of a hundred paintings. Shivani, painter of a Faberge egg in 2012, first learned about colours while re-arranging saris in her mother's cupboard. Her style of painting encompasses her work with numbers representing her profession as a trader. www.shivani-mathur.com.

And lastly, for Valentine'sVictoria 4 Albert
This great royal love story started in Kensington Palace on 18 May 1836 when Princess Victoria first caught sight of her cousin Albert; she wrote in her diary that he was "extremely handsome". It would not be until 1839 that they met again, when as Queen, protocol demanded that Victoria take the initiative and propose. She and Prince Albert had nine children and lived happily together until his death from typhoid in 1861. The Victoria Revealed exhibition at Kensington Palace explores the highlights of Queen Victoria's life as a wife, mother and Queen. Find out more at www.hrp.org.uk/KensingtonPalace

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BOOK REVIEW by Elizabeth Reid

The Tower

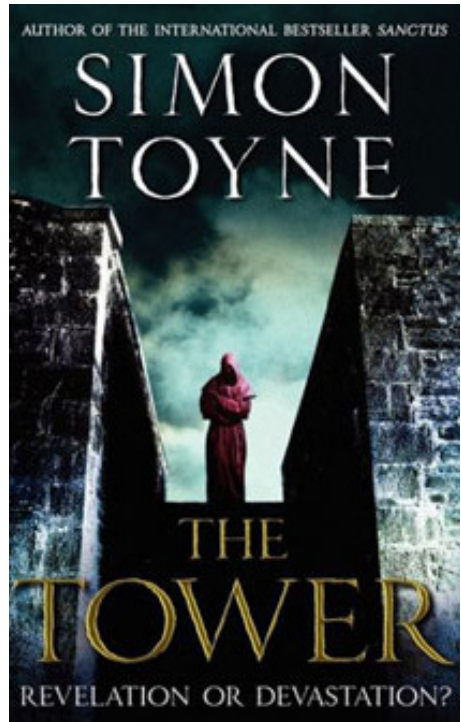
By Simon Toyne (Harper Collins £7.99)

In 2011, British writer, Simon Toyne published his debut novel, Sanctus. It was an immediate success and was followed by The Key in 2012 and The Tower in 2013. Together these novels form the Sanctus Trilogy. I have only read the final instalment, The Tower, and can confirm that it stands alone, there is no need to have read the earlier novels to understand the story or the characters.

Trainee FBI agent, Joe Shepherd, is summoned to the Assistant Director's office at Quantico and assigned to a mission concerning national security. A virus has infected the computers controlling NASA's Hubble telescope, turning its gaze away from the stars and towards earth. The computers are frozen so that this change cannot be rectified and a haunting message has appeared on the computer screens: "Mankind must look no further". Is this a warning or a threat? Why, how and who has interfered with NASA's space programme? Shepherd's background in theoretical cosmology has singled him out for this assignment.

Whilst the FBI begins its investigations in America, a different problem has arisen in Turkey. A plague of Biblical proportions has broken out. Initially affecting a reclusive sect of monks living within the Citadel (a mountain within the ancient and aptly named city of Ruin), it has spread to the local community. No antidote is yet available because nobody has survived the illness. Is this outbreak connected to the sabotage of the space programme?

Whilst these events unfold, all over the world people from different communities are feeling the urge to return home. It is as if the homing instinct that drives birds on their migrations has been re-ignited in the human race. In the Iraqi desert, engineers, doctors and scientists are drawn to a remote oasis where their particular skills are needed. This community is run by the girlfriend of one of the plague victims; a mere coincidence or is there a link?



There is a strong sense that something is about to happen. Do these seemingly separate incidents point to the dawn of a new era or the end of days?

I chose this book because it marries elements that have always intrigued me: a cyber attack, an order of secretive monks, a pandemic, a woman left to fend for herself and a trainee FBI investigator who must join all the dots to save mankind. This type of scenario could easily descend into farce, but the author is too inventive to allow that to happen. He has created a set of facts, characters and situations that are just close enough to reality to make his tale believable and the result satisfying. No wonder it has been named as a Sunday Times bestseller. I can't wait to read the first two books in the series.

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La Caffettiera - Kensington Church St.

Review by Ffiona

The excuses furnished by Christmas and the New Year to “spoil” ourselves have all been exhausted. January is staring us in the face accompanied by the usual resolutions to eat more sensibly and abstain from anything stronger than a cup of cleansing green tea. However, the damp, dark days of Winter make such promises hard to keep; this is precisely when our souls cry out for comfort food and demand that we give in to temptation. In such circumstances a good local café can provide solace. On Kensington Church Street, La Caffettiera exists to satisfy every craving possible: sweet, savory and caffeine driven, here is the antidote to post-holiday blues.

La Caffettiera is a cross between Aladdin’s cave and the Tardis. From the outside it appears to be too small to offer much choice, but step inside and you enter an emporium of Italian food and drink served by two Italians who are passionate about their work. Massimo Malluzzo and Rino Eramo have between them over 35 years of catering experience and aim to bring to the borough, “The real Italian taste of food served by real Italian people.”

The daily menu is cooked fresh and includes homemade dishes such as: lasagne, chicken escalope or spezzatino (roasted diced chicken), meatballs (pure beef in tomato sauce), oven baked salmon, cod or haddock, together with roasted vegetables, potatoes or salad. It is available to eat in or take away. In addition there is a range of mouthwatering Panini to try; these are delicious and sell out quickly! My current favourite is the bresaola, goat’s cheese and tomato salad served warm. I can also recommend the Tuscan salami with fennel. Enjoyed with a cup of piping hot, pure Arabica coffee there is no better way to refuel for a busy afternoon.

Here too you can stock up on all the staples you may need to create your own taste of Italy. The walls are lined with different pasta, rice, sauces, oils and vinegars as well as traditional Italian biscuits, cakes and sweets. On top of the counter



you will find jars filled with biscotti di pasta di mandorla; packed with almonds, they are made to be enjoyed with a cup of espresso coffee.

In addition to running their café, Massimo and Rino also offer an outside catering service. This is a well developed part of their business and clients include Oscar de la Renta and Mulberry. They offer a wide selection of finger foods to create a colourful and flavoursome buffet for any event. Do ask for a sample menu to see the selection available.

La Caffettiera is open Mondays-Saturdays from 7am-7pm and on Sundays from 8am-6pm. Whether you are looking for a quick snack or a meal to take away, this wonderful cafe offers the answer to your needs.

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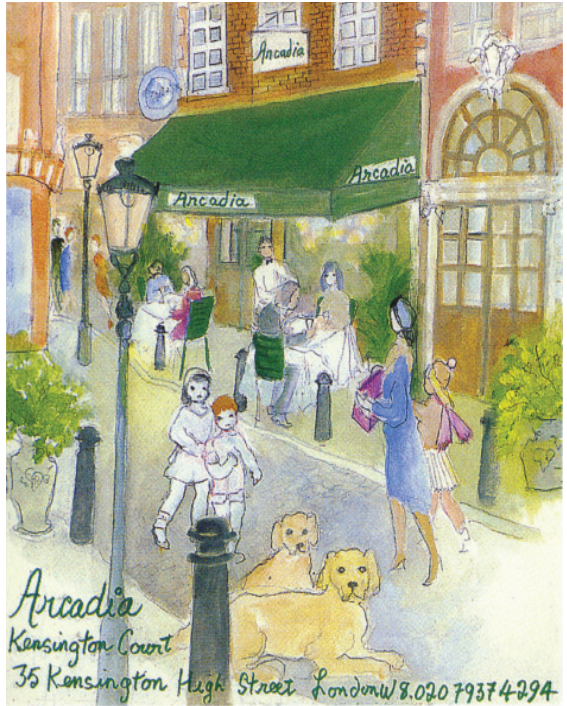
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Memories of Childhood revisited in Edwardes Square

by **Raphaella Thomas**

To most, 31 and 32 Edwardes Square are mere door numbers. But for David Lawson and Sir John Sainty, two elderly gents who haven't met for almost 7 decades, it's a little more significant. To them this was once home.

Both were hardly more than infants when they left the square and the very event that brought them here today is long forgotten. A series of photographs from 1938 depict a scene of Edwardes Square with a magnificent white pony pulling the garden roller across the lawns as several children ride atop. Sir John was one of the children, David's late brother Peter another. (Age 2 then, David would have been too young to ride the pony.) It was through this they were reunited – David offered the photographs to Carrie Thomas, one of the writers of London's Hidden Jewel (a book encompassing the rich history of the square) to aid their promotional campaign and by sheer luck Carrie recognized Sir John's name as he'd happened to find the book at Scarsdale Dental Practice and had been so taken with it that he sought Carrie out to acquire a copy for himself.

The roller still remains, now attached to a mini-tractor specially for the occasion. The two gents pose for new photographs that may perhaps feature in a future history book. Indeed, the subject comes up during lunch at The Scarsdale. "Why do people say they aren't interested in history? History is right here with us!" Sir John laments. "Yes, they take these things for granted." David nods as they peruse the photographs.

Despite Sir John not being able to piece every detail together he is glad to be able to revisit the past through fragments such as photographs and notes, "So your book has sort of filled a gap in my life" he tells Carrie. As the pair discuss their respective backgrounds, they can't help mourning the simple follies of time slipping through their fingers. "The difficulty with my father's album is that nothing's marked." David sighs as he thinks of the treasure trove of records he's been left that are devalued by the lack of essential knowledge those at the time took for granted. "Everything everybody knows isn't recorded."

Perhaps to those of us reading, this holds little significance, but to Sir John and David, and perhaps curious members of future generations, it is a moment not to be forgotten.



Top: David Lawson and Sir John Sainty in Edwardes Square, with the same roller as was used in their childhood in the late 1930s.

Below: Peter Dawson & Sir John Sainty (Images: Lucy Elliott and by kind courtesy David Lawson)





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GET WELL SPOON



February

Saffron and Poached Pears

Reasons to be cheerful. The exquisite combination of pear and saffron are just the start. Saffron has been traditionally used in Persian cuisine and was well known to balance the female hormones.

There is also significant interest in its powerful anti-depressant qualities; the compounds crocin and safranal are antioxidants and natural phyto SSRI's. Useful, as February can be a grey month. Just 20 strands have been shown to have a mood altering effect, lasting for 12 hours. There is robust research indicating that saffron is an effective anti-depressant without side effects, there are also scientific studies to indicate efficacy for Alzheimers, Macular Degeneration, Amnesia, OCD, and Hyperghagia (uncontrolled snacking as a result of low serotonin levels).

Ingredients

4 pears, peeled, cored and cut lengthways
150g xylitol, natural sugar from birch trees
Or 4 tbsp honey
400ml water
9 crushed cardamon pods
Big pinch of saffron
2 tbsp lemon juice

Put all the ingredients except the pears into a large shallow pan, stir to dissolve the xylitol/honey, then simmer. Add the pears, cut-side upwards, cover the pan with greaseproof paper and lid, for a slow 30 minute simmer. When cooked, remove carefully and present cut-side down with the remaining syrup drizzled over. They are also delicious sliced served cold and added to a cheeseboard.



Illustration: Aletta Ritchie Text: Victoria Kell

“True” Saffron is *Crocus Sativus*, also known as “red gold”, usually from Iran or Spain. “False” Saffron is from *Colchicum Autumnale*, which is sometimes sold as saffron, it does not have the same medicinal properties. Pears are a wonderful source of fibre, are easily digested and are rich in a flavanoid called epicatechin, an antioxidant which protects diabetics and heart health. Xylitol is also suitable for diabetics. Cardamon has properties which protect the gums, throat, lungs and digestion.

SCIENCE BITES: Clearer vision for the future

By Dr Alex Anderson

Almost two million people in the UK are suffering from sight loss, but recent medical research into potential treatments has a number of hopeful prospects.

While a bionic “Six Million Dollar Man” is not yet possible, in 2013, the Argus II Retinal Prosthesis System became the first device approved to restore some vision, particularly to those with the disease retinitis pigmentosa (where light-sensing cells in the retina degenerate). This “bionic eye” works by using a small camera on patient’s glasses to collect video images, much like the “google glass”. These images are then converted to electrical pulses and transmitted to electrodes implanted on the patient’s retina, activating the remaining cells. Although this currently only produces relatively crude vision, it should help patients become more independent.

Several scientific groups, including those at Moorfields Eye Hospital are also exploring the



Example of bionic vision
(www.singularityhub.com)

possibility of using stem cells to repair damaged vision. Clinical trials to treat several forms of macular degeneration (which affects central vision), are underway in the US and Europe. Lastly, gene therapy (where a normal copy of a damaged gene is delivered using a virus) has shown some success in clinical trials to treat a childhood form of retinitis pigmentosa.

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Tues Feb 4, Kensington Centre, Wornington Road, W10 5QQ

Thurs Feb 6, Chelsea Centre, Hortensia Road, SW10 0QS

Free 1-2-1 courses & careers advice. Each centre is hosting different subjects so please check the website for details on where to go.

Web: www.kcc.ac.uk Tel: 0207 573 5333

WORKS ON PAPER FAIR

Thursday 6th - Sunday 9th February

Popular and accessible fair that showcases an impressive range of art on paper from 15th century to present day. Over 50 leading art dealers will exhibit original drawings, watercolours, prints and photographs with all works being for sale. Science Museum SW7 www.worksonpaperfair.com

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GéNIA & Max de Wardener

PIANO SOLO RECITAL

9 February 2014 at 4 pm Tickets £12.50

The programme includes Sofia Gubaidulina's Sonata, the vibrant 'Techno Etudes' of Karen Tanaka, hypnotic minimalism of ECM's Nik Bartsch as well as new works written by GéNIA and British composer Max de Wardener. Venue: Kings Place. Contact Tel 020 7520 1490, email info@kingsplace.co.uk www.kingsplace.co.uk

LAND AND SEA II

Tuesday 11th - Friday 21st February

A mixed show about interpretations of the land and sea by a select group of gallery artists such as Gordon Bryce RSA RSW, Judy Buxton. Gareth Parry RCA & Eleri Mills RCA. Thackery Gallery est.1968 Tel: 020 7937 5883

Kensington & Chelsea Foundation

AFTERNOON TEA Wed 12th February and

Wed 12th March 3PM-5.30PM

The Kensington & Chelsea Foundation is hosting two afternoon teas at the Cadogan Hotel with speakers on 'How vital our diet is as we age' and 'How much is it worth? Ten questions that establish the value of a painting'. Please join us for tea, good company and stimulating discussion. All proceeds will benefit local charities. Venue: Cadogan Hotel, SW1 email team@thekandcfoundation.com Tel: 020 7229 5499

WALTER TULL'S SCRAPBOOK: AUTHOR TALK AND CREATIVE SCRAPBOOK WORKSHOP

17 February 11.00 - 13.30 £8

Take a tour around the museum, hear a talk and then make a scrapbook based on you or a person you admire. Recommended for children aged 8+ and those under 14 must be accompanied by adult. Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising, 2 Colville Mews, W11 2AR

FRENCH ART EVENT

17 - 24 February

A Solo Show of new work by French Colourist, Eric Bourse, ranging from landscapes and townscapes, to female nudes and wine themes. Venue: 54 The Gallery, Shepherd Market, London W1 7QX. Contact: Sue Haywood 078453 685515 or sahaywood1@hotmail.com for private view or Champagne Soiree ticket

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? LIVE 2014

Thursday 20 - Saturday 22nd Feb 9.30 - 17.30

Sponsored by Ancestry.co.uk, the show will be packed full of features designed to help every visitor successfully trace their family history and 2014 will see a special focus on the centenary of

WHAT'S ON IN AND AROUND KENSINGTON

World War One. Visitors can find out more about their ancestors from historical documents, unidentified photos, family heirlooms, interactive workshops, DNA analysis and much more; guided by over 120 exhibitors and numerous genealogy experts. Venue: London Olympia, Hammersmith Road, Hammersmith Road, Kensington W14 8UX

HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

Tuesday 25th February 6PM-7.30PM

Holland Park School is opening its doors to welcome members of its community. There will be a welcome followed by an opportunity to tour the new building. For those community organizations wishing to explore the potential of the school's facilities this is an invaluable opportunity. For requests to attend email academy@hollandparkschool.co.uk

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Thursday 27th February 12:30pm/ £4

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The Design Museum - The Story so far ...

Thursday 27th February 7PM £12.00

Sir Stuart Lipton, co-founder of Chelsfield, will talk about the development of the old Commonwealth Institute site to provide a new home for the Design Museum at the end of 2015. The Orangery, Holland Park W8 6LU. For more information visit www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org or email rhoddy.wood@virgin.net Tel: 020 7602 0304

LA BOHEME at the Royal Albert Hall

27th February - 9th March 7.30PM

Composer Puccini's popular opera filled with captivating romance and heartfelt tragedy is back. The Times has described it as "breathtaking". Directed by Francesca Zambello and accompanied by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, this opera contains some of Puccini's finest music. Royal Albert Hall 020 7838 3100

ART14 LONDON

Tuesday 28th February - Sunday 2nd March

Art14 is a global contemporary art fair with a focus on emerging and established artists. Art14 London presents over 170 galleries from 38 territories including regions such as South Africa, the Middle East and South East Asia. Venue: Olympia Grand Hall www.artfairslondon.com

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LANDSCAPE AND HORTICULTURE by Benedict Bull

Ferns



Dryopteris Erythrosora
(Image: www.rightplants4me.co.uk)

One of the best performers in the plantings that I have been making the last few years is the ferns. In fact I just finished an installation with seven different species and five genera, with five specimens of each.

They were added to an already established garden that I look after. And these grouped plantings work well in ferns. These were in two parterre beds with standard cherries above and grasses, box and hydrangea and in a garden boundary border bed with climbers and retained lox hedge at the front.

Two really important qualities of the ferns are that they grow well if it is more or less shady, wet or dry, as long as they are planted right with the crowns raised above the ground level in a well enough drained aggregate. Secondly their frondy forms are very reliable, adding a great texture in a mixed bed and they come in evergreens, and deciduous, arching and upright forms.

These qualities make them invaluable link up plants that really set off the seasonal performers

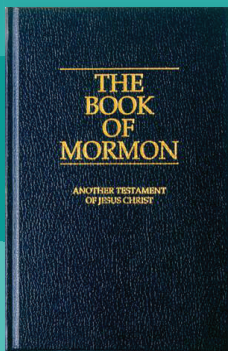
such as the grasses or more elaborate insect pollinated flowering plants when they are out. They also help us stay cheery in the thick of winter when there is lots of wet earth and not much else going on except fallen leaves.

Two specimens that seem to do very well for me in the borough are *Asplenium scolopendrium* and *Dryopteris erythrosora*. The former is available in many varieties; *Crispum* and *Aureum*, more or less dwarfed, and the robust green ones, the simple *Hart's Tongue Fern* is the best to my eyes, evergreen, and it works especially well with a mix of pinnate ferns such as *Polystichum polyblepharum*. It is the contrast it offers, as an accent plant that is invaluable.

Dryopteris erythrosora is also a great jewel, a semi evergreen fern and its fronds emerge tinted pink and the offer a brightness all through the year in the quality of their colouring. The fronds themselves are generously proportioned being bipinnate and they catch the eye illuminated almost above the bulk of mat pinnate evergreens.

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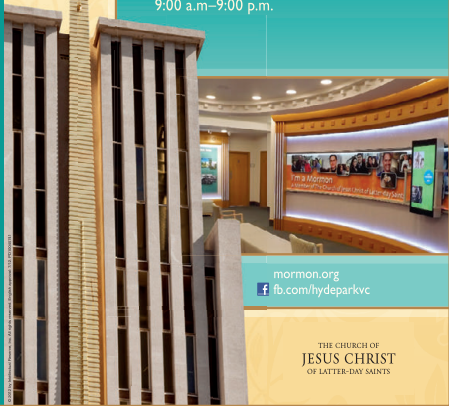


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