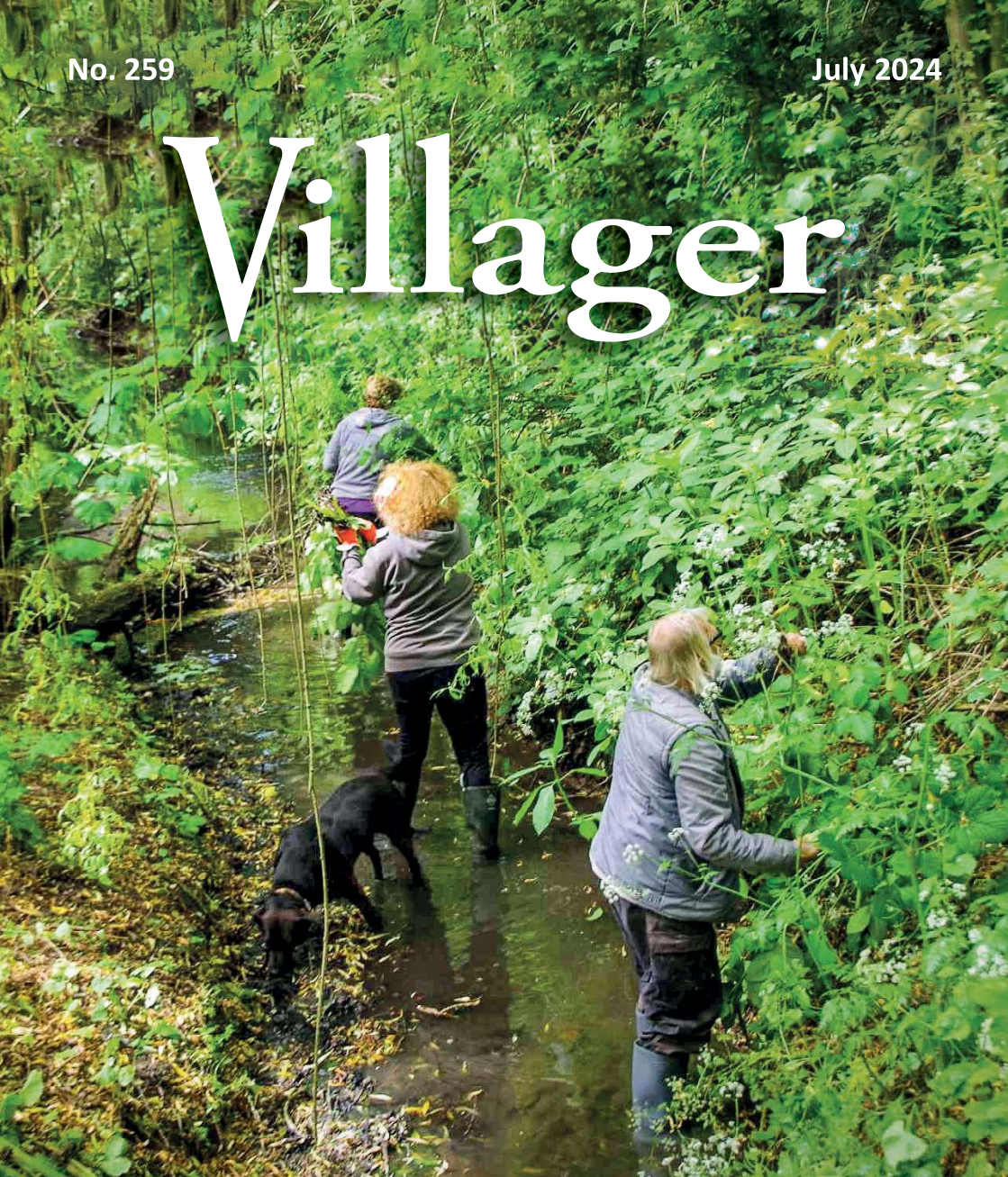


Villager



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THE Villager

Magazine of The Pinner Association

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PINNER ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP RATES

£7 per household (2 members), £5 (concession) for single person households.

Membership includes three issues of The Villager each year.

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The Pinner Association

Why we exist

Working in partnership with residents and local government, we aim to conserve and enhance the quality of life in Pinner, now and into the future.

What we do

We have specialist teams focused, among other things, on planning, the environment, health, transport, parking, flood protection and the High Street and other conservation areas.

We publish The Villager three times a year, in March, July and November, to keep members informed. Between editions, you can find key information on our bulletin boards at Sainsbury, Marks & Spencer, Pinner Station and the Memorial Park, as well as on our website, pinnerassociation.co.uk.

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FROM THE EDITOR

The Joys of Writing

I know that feeling of creating an original piece of work. Even though it is never quite the masterpiece that you might dream of, there is still the excitement of seeing the finished piece and knowing that no-one has ever written that combination of words in that order before.

It is therefore particularly satisfying to feature on P 42 so many great young writers from Pinner's primary schools, writing on a subject very close to their hearts, Our Planet.

I was also glad to receive from Nower Hill student Matylda Kormanska a response to a challenge that I had set, to justify her generation's use of mobile phones. It's an interesting, challenging and energetic piece, original and showing great promise.

The Power of the Press?

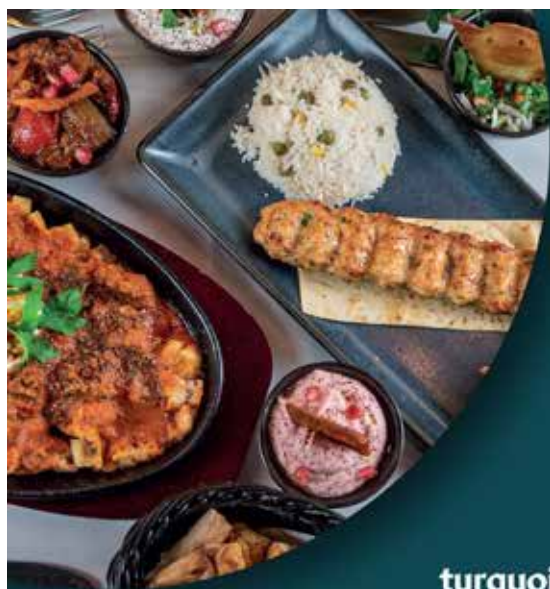
I had planned one last blast about potholes this month. However, just before we went to press, the fairground ride that was West End Lane was hastily filled in. It looks like a temporary job, but, at least, it is now possible to drive along that road without thuds, crashes and bumps announcing the end of my suspension (and that of my car, too).

Did they get wind of my diatribe? It's flattering, though unrealistic, to think so. Though Eavesdropper's comments about High View may have been effective in fixing that surface, so who knows...?



Chat GPT

Being a curious fellow (others might say nosy) and reading about people using AI to write their theses, I decided to test its capabilities. Could this brave new world ease the burden of your Editor or even replace him? So, I briefed Chat GPT to write an interview with our highly talented local writer, Paul Mendelson. I am far from being a Luddite, but I was delighted to find that the result was bland, uninvolved, devoid of any insight or humour or originality. I'm sure that it will get better, but so far, Humans 1, AI 0.



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An English Tradition

I was explaining to a foreign visitor recently that it is an English tradition that it always rains on bank holidays. She looked rather askance; I clearly confirmed her view that the British have a vast repository of strange ideas, myths and legends.

By way of proof, spotted in the park on our inevitably washed-out Spring Bank Holiday, a small group of goslings, impervious to the rain, if slightly bewildered, and well-guarded by Mum or Dad (I'm afraid my skills do not stretch to identifying the gender of Canada Geese).



Two new additions this time, by the way. You will find starting on P 9, reports of what the Pinner Association is currently working on. And, on P 82, there's a list of upcoming events. If you have anything that you would like us to publicise, do let me know at editor@pinnerassociation.co.uk

The End of an Era

In this edition, we say farewell to Eavesdropper, who has entertained us with his (yes, we can now reveal Eavesdropper's gender) offbeat views of the world for a full hundred editions. Our thanks to him for the many entertaining and informative stories that he has shared over the years and, if you want further clues to his identity, read his valedictory column on P 15.

Editor

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

As I start my first View from the Chair, I am so conscious of the honour that I have to follow in the shoes of my predecessors, and what a great responsibility it is.

A recent report commissioned by the Editor found that the Pinner Association is well-connected, active, well-funded and quite decisive in its actions and has a strong track record of actions designed to enhance the community.

We are very good at what we do, but many people do not know about us, as we seek to champion the causes which make Pinner such a nice place to live. Our membership is biased towards older members of the Pinner community and remains quite static. Our challenge is to make the Association more relevant to the new communities in Pinner and ensure that we are seen as being useful and inclusive to all.

Our prime communication vehicle is *The Villager*, published three times a year. It is a paper-based vehicle in a digital age, with long lead times. This makes it a challenge to share up-to-date information on some current issues.

We also have the challenge that many of our younger target audience are time-poor, and, after the family, they have limited opportunity to consider local issues. Our skill has to be to maintain and increase the current audience for *The Villager*, but yet find ways to show our relevance to the younger community.

We need to be more visible about the work we do in standing up for issues which affect our community, such as planning, highways and parking and the state of the roads.

We also need to push for investment in Pinner, so that, in the evenings, it has a livelier local economy, rather than at present, where, with certain notable exceptions, the afternoon trade drops off, leaving all the coffee shops scrabbling for business.

In this issue of *The Villager*, you will see the young talent of Pinner, as we publish the prize-winning poems penned by students in three local schools.



*John Hinkley and Paul A Mendelson
with prize winners at Pinner Wood School*

The results are amazing, and we will certainly be repeating such initiatives.

We are about to welcome in the summer season of band concerts, starting on July 28th, and, thanks to Julie's skills, we have booked four bands, all playing on the grass by the lake in front of Daisy's (see Upcoming Events on P.81).

These concerts are free, but there will be the usual bucket collection, as well as contactless payment, to help defray the bands' expenses. More information about the bands and the start times and performance dates are available on the Pinner Association website under *Events*.

In other news, we worked with the Pinner Business Club to help them promote their Midsummer D'lights, which took place in Bridge Street on June 21st. We are also working with the Heath Robinson Museum, who are putting on an open-air production of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* on August Bank Holiday Sunday 25th of August in the Memorial Park. More details from heathrobinsonmuseum.org/whats-on.

Dear members, we value your support and if you feel there are matters that we should cover in future issues, please do let us know.

John Hinkley, Chair@pinnerassociation.co.uk

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Enquiries have revealed that the new weekend charges at Pinner Station Car Park were not introduced by TfL. The land is leased by them to Sainsbury's, who contract the parking in this and their own car park to Euro Car Parks. The PA is therefore contacting Sainsbury's to have the free parking at weekends restored, and any fines paid in respect of breaches of Euro Car Parks' regulations resulting from lack of notice and inadequate or non-existent signage repaid to those whose appeals have been unsuccessful.

POLICE

Pinner Safer Neighbourhood Team has had considerable success in keeping levels of burglary and car-related theft relatively low, a creditable achievement in the light of their numbers being halved during the Boris Johnson mayoralty. However, recently, when provided with the identity of a car suspected of supplying drugs in the High View area, police suggested that it would be dealt with by a word with the car owner. The

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PA intends at the next Safer Neighbourhood Panel to ascertain whether police priority is to arrest drug suppliers or to move the problem to another location. If the latter, we shall lobby for an increase in police numbers.

PLANNING

We have two tasks:

- Searching for all planning applications in Pinner and Pinner South Wards and considering whether any comment on an application is required to maintain the essential character of Pinner through appropriate development.
- Responding to consultations on proposals that would substantially affect planning policies. This year has already seen two such consultations.

The Government consulted on proposals to greatly increase the already generous 'Permitted Development Rights' for householders which would include:

- allowing an increase in the depth permitted for two-storey rear extensions from 3 metres to 4 metres
- removing existing limitations on the volume of any additional roof space created
- changing the current permitted development right to extend a residential property upwards by one or two storeys from being applicable only to those properties built after July 1948 to include those built after 1930 or earlier.

These proposals could result in a significant change in character in mature suburban areas such as Pinner and your Association's submitted response was strongly against most of the proposed changes. We have also lobbied our MP, David Simmonds, about these proposals and he expressed his support for our objections.

The other consultation conducted this year has been on the "Draft London Borough of Harrow New Local Plan". This important document contains the proposed planning policies for the borough up to 2041, with 299 pages of detailed information. We wrote a response which was principally in favour of many of the proposed policies, which aim to protect suburban areas and green spaces of the borough from unsuitable development. However, we expressed our concern that the policies included the 'densification' of suburban residential areas and removed the protection that areas such as Pinner had gained against development on garden land. This is only the initial consultation on the Local Plan, and your Association will use the further opportunities to comment, including the examination in public, as the process continues.



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by



Andrew Pearce

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ENVIRONMENT

Our £500 award from Squires Garden Centre is to help rejuvenate the planting in the Peace Garden, and the results can be seen already.

Nine big plastic bags of pine needles and soil were stolen from the ground under the pine trees in the South-East corner of the Memorial Park. The culprit left when confronted. The heist was reported, with the registration number of the Mercedes, but the incident will not be followed up by the police.

The Verden memorial tree at Tookes Green has been renewed with the same variety of white flowering cherry, *Prunus avium Plena*. The original tree did not thrive and was replaced by the contractor free of charge.

Pigeons breeding above WH Smith have been thwarted by re-glazing the broken first floor windows. We hope that pigeon-feeding in the park will be thwarted by a duck food dispenser near the lake.

TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY ISSUES

The main issue affecting Pinner residents is the state of some of our major roads, especially major through roads such as West End Lane and Cannon Lane. Many roads have been resurfaced and when it is done it seems to accentuate the defects in the remaining roads.

We can understand that the Council does not have the funding to do all the roads at the same time. The Council is, however, promising to publish a timetable of when the road repairs will take place. This has been promised before and is long overdue, but, when published, will give residents an idea of when roads will be resurfaced.

We are still awaiting definitive information on a solution to the junction of the Uxbridge Road and Blythwood Rd/Waxwell Lane, where a fatality took place in July 2022. So far, no definite solution to the issues has been published.

Discussions on Marsh Road Cycle lanes are ongoing, so far without any conclusion.



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A PINNER DIARY

As I write, Spring has finally truly sprung after months of cold and wet, but what is really weird is how far ahead, in that context, everything is. We have had ducklings in the Memorial Park in March, while roses and Welsh poppies were in bloom in April, when half our garden was still under water. At this rate, by the time we get to September everything will have been and gone.

As hinted in the last Diary, High View eventually got its postponed resurfacing in March, and very handsome it looks too. We are now wondering which will be the first utility to feel the urge to ruin it. However, the bright new paint serves to highlight the number of residents' parking bays opposite each other, necessitating the need for passing vehicles to give way and creating a further potential hazard. Perhaps it's a subtle way of introducing a 20 mph speed limit without the expense of signage or speed bumps.

Talking of Council expenditure, the annual leaflet explaining which holes our Council Taxes disappear down has a puzzling anomaly. On Page 2, the Council Leader writes that Adult Social Care accounts for over two-thirds of spending, while the pie chart and text on Pages 4-5 state and illustrate 48%, which, when I took the 11-plus 70 years ago, equated to just under half. What have I missed? Clearly, as the next government will, the Council has inherited a financial situation demanding that money has to be found somewhere, which may explain why we are being asked to buy a tree for the princely sum of £195 plus a further £100 for having it watered.

Which brings us neatly to Affinity Water, who in March sent their usual bill, this time estimated because, allegedly, the site of our meter was overgrown, despite yours truly, an 81-year-old with spinal stenosis, being able to read it without undue difficulty. They requested an appointment to come again and read it, which duly happened a month later. They then sent a second bill for the derisory sum of £7.23, despite the first overestimated bill having been paid as soon as received. On being phoned and asked why they should waste their time and mine by doing this after already having been overpaid, all the lady could reply was "it's just the way we do it".

A tribute now to Pauline Ibbotson, who passed away in April. Pauline was for many years a Collector and Area Leader for our Association, one of our largely unsung army, who collected our subs in much larger numbers in the days before Direct Debit and online transfers. She was also an active supporter of several local groups, speaking at the Travel Club of her experiences teaching in Latin America and elsewhere, as well as contributing delicious cakes for many years for the Parish Church afternoon teas.



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Pauline had also taught for a year in the spectacular hilltop town of Ragusa in Sicily, which she had urged us to visit, so it was a bizarre coincidence that, shortly after she died, it was while visiting Ragusa on holiday that our mobile phone buzzed with a text from the Pinn Medical Centre inviting us to participate in the latest Covid vaccination programme, starting on 22 April. Five more similar texts followed, almost daily, so up I trailed to the Centre on return, only to be told that jabs were fully booked until 4 May. Luckily Angies pharmacy was offering a walk-in service, and we were duly jabbed in a few minutes. The episode rather begs the question why, when pharmacies have the capacity to do instant jabs with no pre-booking or waiting,

hard pressed surgeries should use valuable time and resources chasing and vaccinating people who probably need no prodding anyway.

Congratulations to our team of Peace Garden volunteers on winning a £500 voucher in a Competition called 'Love Where You Live 2024', organised by Squires Garden Centre in Stanmore. Aiming to assist community gardening projects locally, the competition attracted 80 applicants, from whom just seven winners were selected. Team leader Christine Cox has modestly deflected credit to Brenda Jakes, who wrote the winning application, and we all look forward to seeing the results of their planting this summer.

As intimated at the foot of the last Diary, the time has come for Eavesdropper to retire his single typing index finger after 100 consecutive editions under four editors, the first of whom, Henry Rockwell, recently celebrated his own century. My thanks to all of them for their patience and tolerance, especially posthumously to Cynthia, who put up with me for 26 years and Phil, who resisted the temptation to run me out for 99. The clue to my real-life identity can be found on Page 3, under the title of President, which means that I will now have to break the habits of a lifetime and behave with tact and gravitas.

Back in 1991, when Eavesdropper succeeded The Walrus, recording life in Pinner was very different. We had two long paragraphs about flourishing local groups, and the Ruislip and Pinner Travel Club had to close membership at 250 to avoid overcrowding the Village Hall. Although it and Pinner Local History Society still continue, the competition from the likes of TripAdvisor has made attracting younger members much

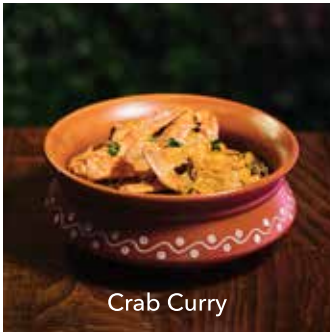


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harder. Pinner Philatelic Society still battles on too, but it is seriously scary to read how the Parish Church no longer has elections for the Parochial Church Council, because not enough people stand for election, and our Association itself regularly fails to fill its 10 Committee places. So, to all of our readers, please join local groups of whatever interest or persuasion. They do not run themselves, and if we all retreat within our four walls, and our only human contact is through our keyboards, then, to quote Private Frazer, we're all doomed.

The July 1991 Diary also chronicled the centenary of Barclay's Bank in Pinner. Pity it disappeared 20 years short of its sesquicentenary, as have all Pinner's other banks. It is easy to say, "use it or lose it", but we did use it and still lost it, something none of us saw coming 32 years ago.

Oddly, something the July 1991 Diary hinted at that did come to pass was the increase in large birds in Pinner. As small bird numbers were declining, it made a joking reference to vultures and ospreys, little realising that we would see Red Kites swooping on discarded lamb bones in our back gardens.

My last bit of unseemly nostalgia to 1991 looks back at the first of the many puns the Diary has inflicted upon readers, when the closure of a classical CD shop, whose proprietor's wife ran the nearby Old Village Bakery, prompted the thought that it was a short walk from Nibelung to Nibbling. Most of them I confess now to being rather ashamed of, but when the tunnel under the Pinner Station tracks was replaced by the monstrous edifice we now have to use, I did feel that 'Bridge of Size' captured its essence.

Enough of this self-indulgence. Our six-week lead time from writing to publication does not lend itself to journalistic scoops, but in 2006 a chance encounter with Boris Johnson in Mexico City Airport and a subsequent television interview afforded the opportunity in the November Diary to record our then future Prime Minister's tenuous relationship with what is usually described as the truth. So, once at least, you did read it here first.

Eavesdropper

CREATIVE PINNER

PAUL A MENDELSON



Paul A Mendelson is often to be seen in the coffee shops around Pinner, earplugs in, focused on his laptop screen. He is a Pinner-based writer of novels for adults and children as well as of several hugely popular television series. The fact that he was born in the North-East of England, educated primarily in Glasgow and then studied law at Cambridge shows how lives often develop a seemingly random path of their own. As we drink coffee at Daisy's in the Park, sitting outside for the first time this year, Paul explains how he came to be where he is today.

He graduated from Cambridge with a first in Law and did the usual 'milk round' of interviews. It was quickly clear that Queen's Park School in Glasgow did not qualify as one of the 'right' schools for his father to have attended. "And then," he adds, with a raise of the eyebrow, "there was the matter of my name." The major firms did not offer him a place, but he was able to find a position in a very small city law firm. Within months, this led to a case at the Old Bailey and then at the Royal Courts of Justice, which later was the inspiration of his debut novel *In the Matter of Isabel*.

Paul quickly realised that he was investing far too much emotional energy in the case and saw that this was likely to become an inescapable pattern. He therefore decided to leave law and look at a career in advertising. He joined Ogilvy, Benson & Mather, one of the great names of that era. Although the initial plan was for him to work in account management, a placement in the creative department brought out his writing skills and he became a copywriter. His neighbour in the next office was Salman Rushdie, working on Amex (*That'll do nicely*) and the UK Milk Marketing Board (*Naughty but nice*). They used to tease him about his ambition to be a novelist.



Paul's clients at several major agencies included Don't Drink and Drive, Heinz Spaghetti, Austin Rover, Black & Decker and The Observer. Much of his work involved creating television commercials, many in partnership with big-name film directors. Nic Roeg (*Don't Look Now, The Man who Fell to Earth, Performance*) directed his Heinz ads and, during a lull in filming, Paul mentioned that he had an idea for a TV series. Roeg introduced him to the great Verity Lambert, the first ever producer of 'Doctor Who'. The result of this was *May to December*, which many of us remember, particularly as it was set in Pinner. This ran for six series, skilfully directed by Sydney Lotterby. Based on this success, Paul was asked by Verity Lambert for another idea. He resubmitted an earlier proposal, originally regarded by the BBC as being too ethnic, and this time it was accepted and filmed as the ghostly Jewish-mother series, *So Haunt Me*.



Further success followed with *My Hero*, which ran for five series with the wonderfully eccentric Ardal O'Hanlon, and with James Dreyfus in the final series. Paul's newest children's book, *Henry the Half-Time Hero*, picks up on the theme of the rather confused extra-terrestrial, in this case from the point-of-view of his spasmodically-powered son. This follows two previous children's books, *Losing Arthur* and *The Funnies*, both of which your editor thoroughly enjoyed, despite being well out of the target age group.

Many of Paul's novels and scripts have won competitions or have been optioned by Hollywood, but it's a long and winding process towards becoming a film ready for distribution. Meanwhile, Paul can be seen in one of Pinner's coffee bars, creating imaginary and often very funny alternative worlds.

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TALKING SHOPS

PINNER GREEN

Having neglected Pinner Green for a while we thought we'd focus on some of the local businesses there before moving on to the centre of the village.



We start at **13, Pinner Green** where **FLETCHERS** has changed hands. Husband and wife team Rosh and Priyanka have taken over, completed a makeover and produced a new menu. But don't panic, fish and chips are still to the fore (just look at their clever logo). We'll let them settle in properly and report back next time.

Talking of long-standing eating establishments, many of our readers will have fond memories of La Giralda at 66-68 Pinner Green (even if the gazpacho was always cold!). It's great to report that bathroom showroom **BATHE INDIGO** have moved in. It is run by friends Umesh Bhudia and Mitz Vaghji, who met when they both worked at Wickes' Head Office in Harrow, having started aged 17 at the Colindale and Borehamwood stores respectively. Umesh was a marketing manager, while Mitz was a commercial buyer in the bathroom department.

Both wanted to set up their own business, so, when they realised their skill sets were a perfect match, they created an online bathroom business. While it is very successful, it is a low value/high volume sector, and they wanted to tap into the more lucrative mid- to high-end in a real showroom. Bathe Indigo is a design and supply service which is entirely customer-focused. The suppliers (or partners) in the showroom have been carefully selected, with excellent after-care service a key requirement. Behind the scenes there are 'presentation rooms' where customers can meet in total privacy, if they wish.

Finally, I'm sure you're eager to learn about the name: 'Bathe' = Immerse yourself in water and 'Indigo' signifies Creation and Compassion. I'm sure Umesh and Mitz will be providing creative bathroom solutions for many years to come!

As we move towards the traffic lights, a quick stop at **PINNER GREEN DENTAL** at 8, Pinner Green for our appointment at 2.30. The owner, Dr Ravi Ganatra, who grew up in Northwood, qualified as a dentist in 2007 after a 5-year University degree course at Barts and Royal London. He then spent 11 years as an Associate in a dental practice in Maida Vale. But he wanted his own practice, and the pull of the Northwood area was always there. So, imagine his joy when he managed to acquire the long-established



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UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT * REFURBISHED STORE

Pinner Green Dental on Uxbridge Road (next to the new flats) from Dr Weinbaum in 2018.



Ravi was keen to expand and develop the practice, but his plans were thwarted by a protracted planning application process. In fact, it was like pulling teeth! And then Covid intervened. Still convinced there was a gap in the market for a bigger practice, Ravi turned his attention to finding new premises and was fortunate that the old Upholsterer property became available. Fast-forward to April 2023, and the gleaming new practice opened with its four surgeries (including a dedicated hygienist's surgery) and an advanced X-Ray scanner.

The new surgery (and new Associate dentist) allowed Ravi and the team to provide an enhanced service on top of routine general dentistry, including Implant surgery (Ravi's speciality), Invisalign (straightening teeth to you and me), tooth whitening, restorative dentistry (crowns & bridges) and specialist surgery, such as wisdom teeth.

Ravi points out that a lot of dental issues such as decay and gum disease are silent. So, if you haven't been to a dentist in the last 2 years, book an appointment with Dr Ravi now! If you need a reference, speak to one of the dozens of patients from Maida Vale who now visit Pinner Green, including one family who have moved to Florence and still make the trip to Pinner! Or trust FMC, who made Pinner Green Dental one of the finalists in the South-East Practice of the Year at the 2023 Dentistry Awards.

Sticking with the health sector, a quick stop at **MEDIVET** on the corner. I'm sure many of our readers know about the harrowing events of a Saturday morning in February, when a car ploughed into the shop at 5.00am. Miraculously, nobody (human or animal) was injured. Owner Reeta reports that they were able to carry on the practice without a single lost day. Now comes the news that Medivet are expanding into the former Print Shop next door, so we'll pay a visit when their refurbishment is complete.

Incidentally, if you are reading this, it means that The Villager's long-term printer, Lee from the Print Shop has settled into his new premises in Tolpits Lane, Watford, under the name CREOPRINT. Congratulations Lee and good luck!

MOVING INTO PINNER PROPER

You may have noticed in one of the national newspapers in early April an article declaring Blackburn, Lancashire, as the vape capital of the UK. Apparently, they have

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27 vape retailers for a population of about 120,000 people. With only 3 such outlets in Pinner, even with a third of that population, pro rata we are lagging a long way behind. But older readers will recall Blackburn also featured in The Beatles 'A Day in the Life' on the Sgt. Pepper album. According to Messrs. Lennon & McCartney, there are 4,000 holes there too. I wonder if they were referring to potholes, because I reckon that we could give Blackburn a run for their money on that score.

Talking of albums, the more eagle-eyed among you will have noticed the classic vinyl record covers in the window next to David Charles Estate Office at 39A, High Street. **Paul Ripley**, who operates his mortgage and insurance broking business from there, is beginning to realise his dream of opening a vinyl record café and is gradually building up the stock for his new endeavour. His poster is asking for people to sell/donate their old vinyl collection. He reckons he needs 10,000 to get started and premises large enough to house them with space left over for the coffee shop, where you will be able to listen to any discs of interest. So, if Sgt. Pepper is gathering dust in your loft, you know where to go.

Staying with the album theme for a moment, we could move on to Fleetwood Mac, as rumours have been circulating. Top of the charts, so to speak, must be the post on one of the better-known social media platforms, which declared that Tesco Express are to take over The Oddfellows pub. The 'news' spread fast, until everyone realised the date: April 1st.

Strong rumours persist of a yoga/pilates studio opening in the old **Harris & Hoole** at 33, Bridge St. Water servicing problems are delaying signatures but more next time, we hope.

There are also murmurings about an Indian restaurant taking the old **La Cucina** at 52, Bridge Street. On site, friendly Brazilian builder Jago, who it seems is almost single-handedly renovating the building, can neither confirm nor deny the whispers, but he assures us we'll be the first to know when the work is eventually finished in the autumn.

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Fact, rather than fiction, is that we have or will soon have two very new restaurants up and running. Firstly, welcome to **YAKO** at 6, High Street. Specialising in the fresh coconut and spices of southern Sri Lankan cuisine, this is the first restaurant venture for owner Dash Wathudura and manager/head chef Duminda Don, although Dash has been in the airline catering business for over 20 years, operating from his factory in North Wembley, providing meals for BA,



amongst many others. Yako translates roughly as ‘mate’ or ‘chum’ and friendly is definitely a description that can be assigned to these two guys.

They have had some major hurdles to overcome since acquiring the property nearly 12 months ago. It transpired that the previous tenants had contravened various planning and building regulations by undertaking alterations to the Grade II Listed building, which Dash has had to rectify, whilst paying rent and other outgoings in the meantime. The delay and expense have been hugely frustrating.

Dash’s idea of a restaurant, and, he hopes, a chain of restaurants, came about during the Covid pandemic. The travel industry all but closed down, and with it any demand for airline food supplies. Tough times followed, as government grants available to the travel sector were not transferable to his manufacturing business, but this entrepreneur was not to be deterred and Yako is testament to his perseverance. We welcome him to Pinner. Your intrepid newshounds will road test the menu on your behalf before next time. We can be sure it won’t be ‘plane’ food.



Secondly at 173, Marsh Road, **VAGHAAR**, an Asian vegetarian establishment is close to completing a total refit of the old Sakee. Some readers may be familiar with the Kenton branch and have already sampled their varied cuisine. If not, you can rely on your amateur restaurant critics with the ever-expanding waistlines to experiment for you.

It's good to see, just along from there, that the Thai restaurant is being brought back to life. Apparently, the chef has bought it and hopes to open soon.



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Last time we promised to revisit **IDEAL FISH BAR** at 102, Marsh Road, to meet the new owner. Ever true to our word, we called to find Abdul Wahid frying away. Abdul moved to the UK from his native Afghanistan 24 years ago, a few years after the Ideal Fish Bar was first established. He has worked in a number of F&B outlets, including as Catering Manager in pubs in Manchester and London Bridge for Mitchells & Butlers. It was here that he learnt all about the British love of Fish and Chips – did you know that it was one of the few foods not subject to rationing during the Wars? He also spent time as Head Chef at Piccolo’s Italian restaurant in Sheffield. That experience led him to opening a pizza takeaway in Old Street, which he still owns.

Then, in 2023, the opportunity to acquire the Ideal Fish Bar arose, and in September he started working alongside previous owner Chris. Abdul completed the purchase of the business in January ’24 and was determined to carry on exactly as before: same menu, same prices, same suppliers, same opening times. Not surprisingly, 95% of the business is Fish & Chips (of which 90% is cod). The potatoes arrive from Bury St Edmunds in 25kg bags, and he goes through 60 a week- that’s a lot of chips! The Lunchtime Special at £6.95 remains VERY popular.

Let’s leave the final word to the new Chairman of The Pinner Association, John Hinkley, who relies on Ideal Fish Bar for his Friday night treat. “The quality is as good as ever!” he says.



Another catering newcomer is **ESQUIRES** in the old HSBC, part of a chain of 63 outlets in Britain, but feeling like an independent. We met Tom Parke, Head of Property Management, on site, prior to the grand opening. Things had been delayed, firstly by the battle to dismantle and remove the old safe which was surrounded by 21 inches of steel and concrete and, latterly, by a wait for planning permission for the shop front. But all’s good now and another mission for next time is to introduce ourselves to the new franchisee, to hear about all the freshly cooked food and super breakfasts they have on offer.

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As touched on last November, **KPSR, accountants** are now firmly ensconced in their wonderfully restored Grade II Listed building in the old L’Orient restaurant at the top of High Street. Built in 1570 as a private house, it has been a butcher’s shop and a slaughterhouse from Cromwellian times up to the twentieth century. The accommodation has been transformed into bright and airy office space of about 325 sqm (or 3,500 sq ft in old money).

The KP is Kaleish Patel, the founder of the business 30 years ago, while S and R stand for his two sons Sach and Rishil, who have followed in his footsteps. Trained at PWC, the boys have great ambitions for the future and have expanded their services to include all types of tax planning. Keeping it in the family, Sach’s wife is a lawyer and can provide legal advice on wills and such, and there are plans afoot to hold open days, where prospective clients can come in to get a better understanding of what help and advice they can expect.

Not to miss out on this family affair, Mum Dina is the artistic one and was responsible for the magnificent decorations in the shop, on the lead up to last Christmas. As it is currently surplus to their space requirements, the shop has recently been let to **GOENKA JEWELS**, a specialist costume jeweller for the South Asian bride. Run by Smita Goenka since 2018, it opens by appointment only. Though the shop is hidden much of the time by four rather stark white roller blinds, Smita is hoping, with the permission of her landlord, that she can improve the display windows and signage to also attract the passers-by.

Finally, congratulations to **COLLINS & HOY**, solicitors who are celebrating the fifth anniversary of E M Collins & Co with Garside & Hoy, to form the practice based at the iconic Wakefield House, 32, Bridge St. Also known as the home of fictional solicitors Semple, Callendar & Callendar in Paul A Mendelson’s TV series *May to December*, as well as being the actual home of the William Heath Robinson family in the 1930s, the 1773 building is ideal for the merged firm to provide their legal services, which range from Family Law and Mediation, through Property to Wills, Tax and Probate.

Partner Aisling Collins told us “We are delighted to be able to practise in Pinner and to have such success here. Thank you to everyone who came to our celebration at the Heath Robinson Museum earlier this month. We were very pleased that so many local businesses were able to join us to celebrate this great milestone in the history of Collins & Hoy.”

Till next time....



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DO YOU WANT ICE WITH THAT?

A Wim Hof workshop.



The author contemplating life

Out of the blue, I received an invitation to join a workshop on the Wim Hof Method. I was intrigued. Wim Hof, the ‘Ice Man’. An opportunity to plunge into icy water as if I were an athlete after a heavy training spell – I have read of such things but after a 10-mile bike ride a shower is enough. So, I accepted.

Wim Hof is a remarkable man, ‘The Iceman’, sitting cross-legged on the snow, wearing only shorts, playing the guitar or merely contemplating ... life. In his autobiographical book, *The Wim Hof Method*, a passionate if repetitive story, he describes his early life and the development of the Method. He pursued no other career, forsaking secondary education and living on his wits and welfare, until promoting The

Method has become his occupation.

He was not then a feckless youth, but one driven by unconventional goals. His approach induces changes in his physiology that, he claims, are beneficial. His exploits came to the attention of scientists, and he has been observed, meticulously measured and analysed. Apart from his ability to sustain his core body temperature while immersed in ice for hours, results show, for example, changes in levels of inflammatory markers in his blood, substances that are associated with many acute and chronic inflammatory diseases. The changes would normally be associated with control of such conditions. In his book he claims other beneficial effects including reduction of blood pressure and pulse rate.

Studies on others followed, of course. However, they are small scale, without sufficient control and mostly on healthy men. So far, there is no good evidence of therapeutic benefit, though tests do confirm some impact on those inflammatory markers.

The Method, to be taken up daily – or at least on a frequent and regular basis - has three elements: **Breath, Cold and Mind**. Before attending the workshop, I was encouraged to try the breathing protocol and cold showers. This I did.

Breath calls for a 15-20-minute session of cycles of deep breathing, hyperventilation, aiming to ‘alkalinise’ your bloodstream by clearing carbon dioxide (CO₂) from your body. Deliberate over-breathing can reduce the normal level significantly, perhaps by 30-40%. This reduction makes your blood more alkaline. The acidity of your blood, effectively the CO₂ level, is what triggers your brain’s respiratory centre to initiate

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another breath. With alkaline blood you will comfortably not breathe for a time, a minute, maybe two, until metabolic activity restores normal levels. The Method calls for 3 or 4 cycles of 30 or 40 deep breaths, each followed by a relaxed period of not breathing for as long as feels comfortable. The relaxed period is important, an opportunity for relaxed thinking, to focus on your goals, which may or may not include immersion in iced water.

The low CO₂ level has other effects. I find that it makes me very relaxed, almost sleepy, so that it is difficult without a leader, or an app on the smartphone, to keep count of my breaths and keep going. I found resting without breathing after each cycle surprisingly emotional; tears flowed. The alkalinity also increases the sensitivity of peripheral nerve cells, so you will probably feel tingling sensations in your skin – I did – and notice twitching of muscles in your hands or feet, transient effects that pass as normality is restored.



Wim Hof

Cold calls for deliberate exposure to cold water. You aim for a gradually longer immersion, with an acknowledgement that lowering core body temperature is dangerous and to be avoided. Shorter exposure can still be beneficial. Typically, you will, after a ‘normal’ shower, set the temperature to fully cold and remain under the stream for a period of seconds or minutes before turning it off and enjoying the buzz of rewarming. Mains cold water is typically at 12 – 15°C, so not ice cold, but it will serve. The purpose of this in the Method is to exercise your cardiovascular system, to cause stress and release of adrenaline, to cause vasoconstriction in your skin circulation. This is an hormetic stress – a new term to me – that, it seems, is a challenge of the ‘what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger’ kind; each hormetic stress you undergo makes you more able meet the challenge next time. After a few days, a few showers, I was able to tolerate, even enjoy some minutes in the cold water. Regular and frequent practice is required. After a lifetime of training, Mr Hof can control and direct his circulation to sustain his core temperature and to generate more heat from certain muscle groups around his core.

Mind is not only the determination to do these things, regularly, frequently. It is also the use of those periods after a deep breathing session, or while immersed in cold water, to focus your mind on the goals of everyday life - mental, social or physical - so that you are less easily distracted from your purpose. Advanced practitioners may be able to focus their mind on controlling their body temperature and their cardiovascular activity.

Do you want to be better? Are your inflammatory markers raised, is your blood pressure too high? Do you wish you were more able to handle the stress of work, of family life, better able to run, jump, swim, play bridge or compose poetry? Perhaps adopting The Method is for you, a good investment of your time. It might or might not be better than tai chi, yoga, a gym workout, a walk in the woods or saying your prayers, all of which can offer opportunities for introspection and a break from the pattern of everyday life. The mental approach to any of these is probably similar to that required for the Method.

I attended a workshop on the Wim Hof Method run by Ruth Geyer at her home in Pinner, with one other client, Macarena, an open water swimmer. After brief introductions, we had an educational PowerPoint presentation. We were familiar with Wim Hof's book and, before our meeting, using Ruth's instructions, had tried the Breath protocol and Cold showers. Ruth has become a certified Wim Hof instructor after she found the pressure and stress of a job in marketing too much to bear on two occasions, the second of these coinciding with the Covid19 pandemic that distressed us all. Seeking first to overcome her own dislike of the cold (weather, not just water), and using Wim Hof's techniques to do it, she determined to invest in the whole of the Method to become a certified instructor.

She took us through the rationale of the Method at a gentle pace, data were largely familiar from the book but updated. We undertook a Breath session that she guided with gentle music for four breathing cycles, before resting a while; tingling sensations and undirected emotional thoughts with tears.



Ruth Geyer

After a light lunch of homemade soup, enhanced with a little ginger, and delicious home-baked bread, we heard more of the studies that have been published into the effects of The Method. The data presented include relative and numerical measurements together with reported happy thoughts and good feelings, inspirational perhaps.

Now, the Ice Bath. We change into swimsuits and venture out into the garden. It's a cloudy day, windless, light drizzle, about 12°C. I take six deep breaths as I stand beside the water-filled tub topped with ice cubes and, as directed, step into the water and smoothly slide in so that water covers my shoulders. The initial sensation is surprising; not immediate cold. That comes after a few seconds and is controllable, almost comfortable. Steady breathing is easy, conversation too, but after a while the cold gets deeper. Ruth has a stopwatch. At 2 minutes she directs me to climb out, to think of rewarming not by immediate enfolding in a large towel but by taking up the Horse Stance (a stress

position engaging the big muscle groups of the trunk and legs) and beginning to move my arms and shoulders and breathe deeply and rapidly for 5 minutes. As I return to the house and get dressed, I feel good, the buzz of warmth through me, though my skin is still cold and I am shivering a little – momentary, localised tremors.

We talk briefly about the experience, how we felt, how we feel. Ruth has guided us gently through the workshop, taking time and making us welcome.

So, once more, do you want to be better at life? Ruth is a good and sympathetic guide and perhaps adopting the Method will meet your needs. She is here, offers introductory workshops such as we have done or for larger groups; for regular practitioners opportunities for guided breathing and ice-bathing from time to time. As for me, I shall continue taking cold showers and exploring the effects of deep breathing – if I can find the time.

Michael Hetreed

Dr Michael Hetreed is a retired medical practitioner. We recommend that medical advice should be sought if you are at all concerned about the physical effects of the Wim Hof method.

Find out more about Ruth Geyer at www.wimhofmethod.com/instructors/ruth-geyer

FORMER MAYOR'S CHARITY DONATIONS

Pinner resident Janet Mote, who was Mayor of Harrow in 2022-23, was delighted to present cheques recently to the two charities for which she raised funds during her term of office. In total, she was able to present £9,740.07 to each of two charities.

- Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust for NWPB Renal Unit. These funds will be used to enhance the facility for future patients receiving treatment, improving the lives of those in our community.
- Harrow Carers, where the funds will be used to enhance the lives and wellbeing of Young Carers.



Janet comments, "A huge thank you to all in the Harrow Community and to all outside, who have given so much to my two Charities! I am overwhelmed, and the money is going to make so much difference to many lives."

IN THE VILLAGER 75 YEARS AGO

Great excitement, as outdoor lighting was again permitted, having been banned during the war.

The Pinner Horse Show took place on the Pinner Football Club's ground at the top of Cuckoo Hill Road.

After much debate, it was agreed that the Victory pub at the bottom of the High Street could expand to take over the much-loved Pat's Pantry.

The Harrow and District Chrysanthemum Show was a great success; membership was offered for 2/6 per year (12.5p in new money).

The building of the Grove Estate was approved, with the option of flats rather than a low-rise 'garden village' preferred, as it would mean losing fewer trees.

Complaints to London Transport continued about the fact that the journey to Baker Street now took four minutes longer than in 1935.

CREATIVE PINNER

A BURNING PASSION



Well, Pinner has two fine butchers and a French baker, but did you know that we also have a candle-maker? Georgina Starnowski, whom many of us know from her work with jeweller Richard Trusselle, has been making candles for several years.

“It all started when I was on long walks with my Cocker Spaniel, Bella Mae. No headphones, just us - she is a very good listener - out with the amazing fragrances, across the seasons. I thought, I can do something with this.”

Georgina decided to focus on candle-making. “I’d been interested in art at school, more than the regular subjects, and this felt like a great way to express myself. At Trusselle’s, I have worked with clients designing a piece of jewellery and drawing it up as a guide to the goldsmith. This was something different and took a lot of experimenting before I got it right. Some didn't burn properly, some smoked, some of the fragrance combinations really didn't work, some of the candles went mushy. It was a year of experimenting. I researched materials and found a vegan wax that worked very well. I started to put together fragrances with high, middle and low notes that created something different and interesting. All the fragrances are natural vegan oils as well.

“Initially, I worked with saucepans on the stove, then graduated to a proper wax-melter. I experimented with different ways to ensure that the wick went in properly. Now I’m happy with what I am producing, though still always experimenting.”

Georgina’s candles are on sale at the Heath Robinson Museum shop in the Memorial Park, where you can choose from fragrances such as French Vanilla and Lemon or Tuscan Leather, Tobacco and Amber. The shop is open from Thursday to Sunday, 11.00am to 4.00pm and is free to enter.



I ask Georgina what is next for her. “I want to try diffusers and, maybe, lip balms. There is so much to look forward to!”

Editor

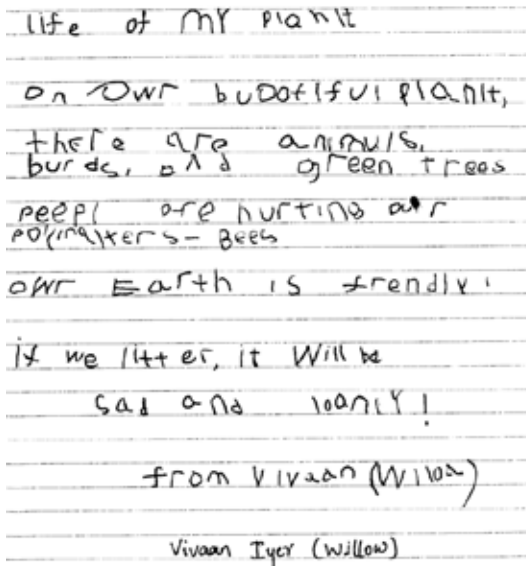
THE PINNER ASSOCIATION POETRY PRIZE

We really want to give the young people of Pinner a voice in *The Villager*, so we asked them to write poems on a subject very close to their hearts, Our Planet, with prizes of book tokens donated by The Pinner Association. Three primary schools took part, Cannon Lane, Pinner Wood and West Lodge.

Well, we have thoroughly enjoyed reading all the poems. We can see that we have an articulate and environmentally-conscious group of children growing up in Pinner and we thank all of the children and their teachers for the hard work and great imagination that they have brought to this project. The standard is very high, and the poems are full of lovely ideas and great expression. They show how much they all really care about our planet.

Poetry is a great way of capturing how you feel in a very few words. It really connects with people. Someone once said that poetry opens a door that you didn't know was there. There is certainly a kind of magic about it.

Here are the winners. This charming poem from Vivaan Iyer not only won the junior prize at Cannon Lane but was also judged to be the Best of the Best in its age group across all three schools. It is a heartfelt and sincere piece of writing about the dangers facing the world.



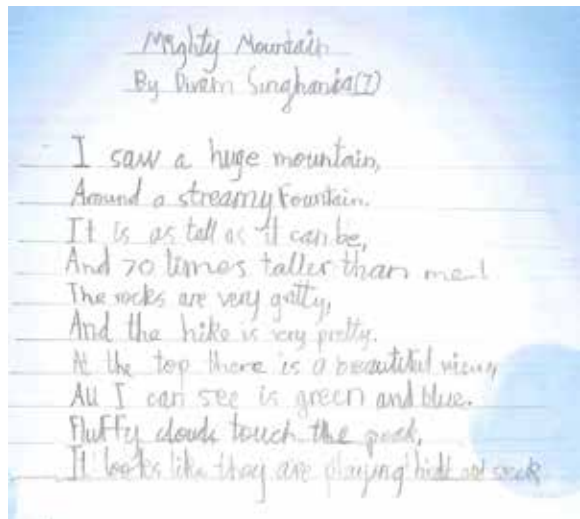
life of MY planet
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birds, and green trees
people are hurting our
pollinators - bees
our Earth is friendly!
if we litter, it will be
sad and lonely!
from Vivaan (Willow)
Vivaan Iyer (Willow)

At Pinner Wood, the winner in this younger age group was Maple Class, with their poem, *Our Planet*. it covered such a wide range from waterfalls to cities to animals to the weather and for us that said a lot about our planet.

Our Planet

Our planet has blue gushing waterfalls.
 Our planet has trees as big as a giant.
 Our planet has noisy cities where cars beep.
 Our planet has huge horses that are soft and fuzzy.
 Our planet has hot weather perfect for eating ice cream.

And here is the West Lodge
 winner, from Divan Singhania.



From the middle age group, here's an example from Hamza at Pinner Wood of an acrostic, where the first letter of each line spells a word or phrase,

Open your eyes and look at our wonderful planet
Use your brain to ask questions
Remember you are so cool and you always will be
Problems will always be fixed
Listen to the nature around you
Allow people to play in your games
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Everyone will be friends forever
Teamwork makes the dreamwork and don't forget it!



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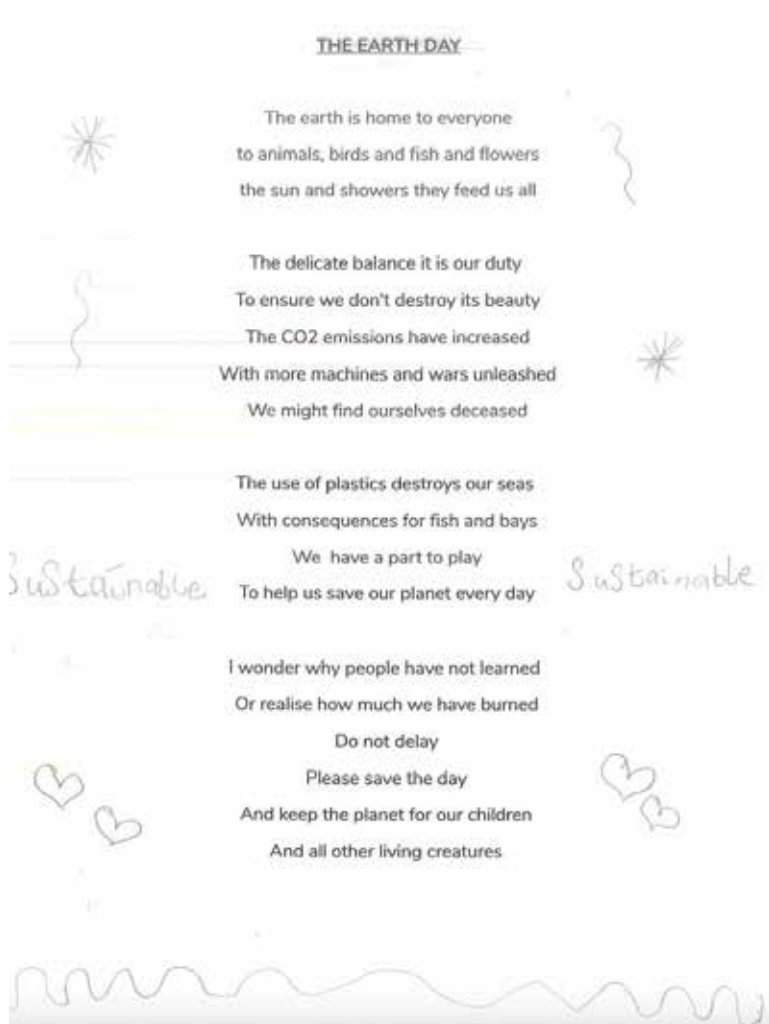


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The Best of the Best winner in this group was Kirsten Johnson of West Lodge, with *Earth Day*.



And at Cannon Lane, our winner was Laya Culli, with her well-titled poem.

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Finally, we have the senior writers and, again, the standard was very high. From Cannon Lane, we have Siyona Iyer's poem, *A Paradise called Earth*, had some lovely images; 'the chittering and chattering of the salty waves', 'the vibrant fish in the vast endless sea'.

A Paradise Called Earth ~ by Siyona Iyer (56)

The numerous birds in the cyan sky,
The vibrant fish in the vast, endless sea.
They all are in danger now,
Because of you and me!

Beneath the chittering and chattering of the salty waves,
Plastic is damaging the beautiful world of turtles and seagulls!
Deforestation, pollution and more,
We must stop for our magnificent earth to remain magical!

The Crystal-clear oceans and shimmering bays shine like diamonds.
Our planet is truly the most marvellous creation!
Before we destroy every living being on our Earth,
Let's pledge together to make our splendid home better for the
next generation!

Our Earth, an alluring, wondrous place,
Full of tranquil lakes, rivers and flourishing meadows.
Because of our mistakes, our planet is gradually dying,
Wake up humans, before this beautiful paradise is covered in
shadows!

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Together, let's take care of our planet!
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Ajyah Risvi of Pinner Wood wins the Best of the Best prize in this age group.

A Walk in the Park - Year 6

The breeze rushes past my face
 As I start to slower my pace
 I let the sight sink in
 'Where on earth have you been?'

'We've been here all along.'
 'Our birds awaiting to sing a song.'
 'So the real question is this.'
 'Do you not miss this everlasting bliss?'

I take a look around
 Rustling leaves the only sound
 The occasional tweet of a bird
 The sweetest thing I've ever heard

'Oh how I wish I could!
 'You'd say I was busy, you would'
 'You can't be as busy as our bees.'
 Laughed and chuckled all the trees

'Forget it, you won't understand'
 I said as the clouds started to expand
 From me, the trees turned away
 As the sky turned from blue to grey.

'What did I say?'
 I asked with dismay
 'You humans have no time for us'
 'Our killings you happily discuss.'

'You favour your grey flats more'
 'You take watering from us as a chore.'
 'You clearly take us trees as mere.'
 'And cut us down year by year.'

'So let us tell you the end is near.'

'Because without us, you wouldn't be here!'

And, from West Lodge, we have Niva Morjaria's *Our World*.

OUR WORLD

Mountains high, valleys low
All the plants that thrive and grow

Luscious trees that rock and sway
Fish that swim whilst animals play

Sunny skies look over blooming flowers
But here come the rainy showers

Ranges of birds that sweetly sing
As warm weather welcomes spring

Pollinating are the buzzing bees
Whispering secrets, calls our ancient trees

Rainforests both humid and wet
However, us humans seem to forget
Pollution plastic they all pose a threat

Preserve nature's blessing that's by our side
Otherwise, whales will get washed up in the tide
Flowers will wither animals die

So, protect our earth, seas and land
Stand together hand in hand
TO PROTECT OUR WORLD!

ANYONE FOR TENNIS?

The West End Lawn Tennis Club has been an established Pinner landmark since 1910. Originally on land between West End Avenue and Meadow Road, it moved to Cuckoo Hill Road when that was being developed in 1929, buying the site after the Second World War for £1,500. 114 years since its foundation, it continues to be a flourishing local centre for the game and in both the Adult and Junior sections the sport is thriving, with opportunities for social and competitive tennis. Playing members vary in age from 4 years old to several very active over-80s!



With a comfortable clubhouse, bar, viewing deck and six all-weather courts, the Club welcomes new members at a summer Open Day, with a variety of activities for juniors as well as opportunities for adults to try tennis for the first time or test their standards against established Club players. If you missed the Open Day, you will be welcome to arrange a time to come along to sample what the club has to offer.

Social tennis sessions organised by one of the coaches take place on at least 4 days a week, with members otherwise making their own playing arrangements throughout the week from 8am to 9.30pm. More generally, a varied programme of social events, including an annual quiz evening, is enthusiastically supported by members.

Tennis is a great sport for maintaining health, fitness, strength and agility. It also has social and psychological benefits and, not least of all, it's a fun way to get some of your 150 minutes of weekly physical activity. The Club is always keen to discuss membership with beginners or experienced players of any age. Please contact membership@pinnertennis.co.uk for further information.

Ian Waddell, Membership Secretary, WELTC



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BIRDS IN PINNER

The Nuthatch

As a visitor to bird feeders, the nuthatch will have been seen by many of you. They are the size of great tits, with a blueish back, a pale throat and a buff chest and abdomen. There is a prominent black eye stripe, and the bill is dark and looks large. Male and female look the same. Unlike woodpeckers and the treecreeper, the nuthatch can ascend and descend a tree **headfirst** when searching for food. They use the long toes and claws, seen in the photo. Their food includes insects, seeds and nuts. In the autumn, they can be heard in a tree tapping away to open a nut, at a slow rate, like you or me using a hammer, not a woodpecker-like drumming.



Interestingly, at a time when many, many species are showing declining numbers in the United Kingdom, nuthatches are becoming more common and expanding their range. A detailed national survey in 1970 showed most birds south of a line from the Mersey to the Humber; nuthatches were not found in Scotland or Ireland. Forty years later their range had expanded past the central lowlands of Scotland, with some birds further north (but not to Ireland). Estimated numbers have increased from 70,000 pairs to 220,000 in the UK. Unsurprisingly, they are rare in the fens and on moorland as they are a species whose preferred habitat is woodland and parkland.

Nuthatches are highly sedentary, with a territory of only about two acres. Indeed, in one study some birds never moved further than 100 metres from where they hatched. The range expansion will most likely be due to young birds being unable to establish a territory close by and having to move to the edge of the range.

They are common in Pinner, and their calls are often heard from the tops of trees and bushes throughout the year. (A good way of checking bird song is the app called Merlin on your phone, from Cornell University, and free). They will nest in nest boxes as well as, more commonly, a hole in a tree branch or trunk. Nuthatches narrow the entrance hole of their nest by using mud, to keep out predators. One pair is reported as going for extra protection, by picking up newly laid cement instead of mud, though this story is at least seventy years old!

Ian McNeil

Pinner RSPB group meets second Thursday of the month in St John's church hall.

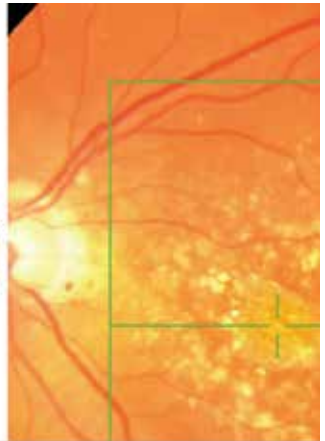


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NEWS FROM THE HEATH ROBINSON MUSEUM



Michael Rosen celebrates his children's book illustrators in landmark exhibition

The exhibition highlights the interplay between writer and illustrator. There will also be events with Michael and fun activities for children.

Michael Rosen's children's writing has delighted generations – and now a landmark exhibition journeys through his life and career via a selection of original illustrations from his books.

Michael Rosen: The Illustrators is our summer exhibition. It features work by 14 artists across a wide range of mediums including pencil sketches, watercolour artworks, film, digital art and collage.

Spanning his whole career from the 1970s to the present day, the exhibition takes in work by renowned long-time collaborators such as Quentin Blake and Tony Ross, plus exciting projects like Claire Mackie's illustrations for *Michael Rosen's Book of Nonsense* and Rosen's latest books, illustrated by David Melling and Michael Foreman.

Michael was born in Harrow in 1946 and spent his childhood growing up in Pinner. As well as being one of the UK's most celebrated children's writers, he is also a renowned poet, performer, broadcaster and scriptwriter. He is a patron of the Heath Robinson Museum and an advocate for children's literature, poetry and illustration. This exhibition highlights the integral role illustration plays in his work.

"The child who reads and looks at my books sees it as one whole thing," he says. "Words and pictures are part of a 'thing' but not as separate elements. They combine in fascinating ways, each side of the combination contributing to the other: words informing the pictures, the pictures informing the words."

"Every illustrator I've worked with has brought something different to the table and created a new 'unity' that we call the book," says Rosen. "I'm always fascinated and delighted by what they make, page by page, through the book as a whole."

Besides illustrations, the exhibition includes examples of Rosen's poetry and storytelling, and a timeline of his career.

Hannah Whyte, assistant curator at the Heath Robinson Museum, is a lifelong fan of Rosen's work and was delighted to take on the task of creating this show.

With young visitors in mind, the exhibition includes a reading and learning zone full of books, colouring pages and cushions; activities and fun facts in the gallery's Activity Studio, with a focus on the process of illustrating written works; regular storytelling sessions; and a workshop with Michael Rosen. There will also be accompanying activities in Pinner Memorial Park. Details of all of the events will be published on the gallery's website, www.heathrobinsonmuseum.org.



*Image courtesy of
Chris Beetles Gallery*

For Michael Rosen, the show is a chance to share important insights into how his published books take shape.



*Front Cover of 'Rover'
by Neil Layton*

"I hope that people will see that someone like me, who works in the world of children's books as a writer, is in reality someone who is part of cooperative, collaborative, creative process," he says. "When you look at an illustrated book, you are really listening in to a conversation between writer and illustrator. That may be a literal conversation, when we chat to each other, or it may be a metaphorical conversation that goes on, say, in the illustrator's head, when they interpret the words I've written. Their pictures are in essence a 'reading' of the words, just as we say an actor does a reading of a speech. What we see is the illustrator's interpretation. I hope visitors will see how they've done this."

Admission

Adults £6. Children under 18 and Art Fund members go **free**. Concessions available. Tickets can be purchased on walk-in or prebooked online at the **Heath Robinson Museum Website**, www.heathrobinsonmuseum.org.

POINT OF VIEW

WHY WE 'STARE AT OUR PHONES'

The year is the current year. You're sitting at the dining table with the rest of your family ambling around when you notice your young niece sitting across from you texting fervently on her phone. One of your in-laws, let's call him Dave, also seems to notice, and leans in towards you. "Hah, kids and their phones these days, eh? I miss the days when the young'uns would go outside. These kids probably don't even know what it means to climb a tree or get some mud on 'em. Always tapping away on those screens and whatnot."



But what is technology? When the conversation arises between the older and younger generations, the technology in question is mobile phones, computers and gaming consoles, but that can't be all. Pedantically, technology is '*machinery and equipment developed from the application of scientific knowledge*', which phones, computers and gaming consoles absolutely are. But the same can be said for all inventions; that's what inventions *are*, but you don't hear grandparents and in-laws complaining about the lightbulb, or the refrigerator. Do older generations not also over-rely on technology?

Dave-the-in-law, always complaining about how much *easier* it is for kids these days – "I mean, it's like they get everything handed to them on a silver platter nowadays!" He makes it sound like a bad thing, which is confusing. *I'm so sorry, Dave-the-in-law, for using my water filter. Next time I'll be sure to collect it straight from the Thames in honour of your great-great-great-great-great-great-grandmother.* Be happy that the 'kids nowadays' have it easier; that's what all the scientific breakthroughs and mistakes of the past are for, after all. As John Adams put it: *I must study politics and war, so that our sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy.* Our sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, navigation, commerce and agriculture in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry and porcelain. Think of all the stress that can be lifted from children's shoulders, by not needing to worry about remembering homework, for example. Even so, it's not as if technology has completely eradicated struggle: there are still exams to revise for, social issues to navigate, emotional events to survive. Maybe those can be solved by the next generation.



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You look back to Dave-the-in-law again and notice he's now found the game show channel on the T.V. and you are suddenly hit with the memory of him proudly proclaiming how much he knows about *Jeopardy!*, how he's watched every episode during retirement in that one armchair he bought back in '89 that you're sure has some new strain of asbestos in the creases. Suddenly, you

wonder whether people in the 19th century complained that springs being implanted into furniture would destroy moral fibre and the twentieth century fears that the shiny, big television would rot children's brains through overconsumption. Now it's 5G cell towers and Tiktok shortening attention spans. Dave stares, engrossed, shouting, "D! It's D! You blithering fool, pick *D!*" to the pristine 4K moving pictures; it seems like the world around him has disappeared. You think back to yourself as a teenager, when your mum had to stand in front of the television to get your attention. You look back to your niece and remember when her mum grounded her for a week for being too immersed in her video game and yelling at the screen ("*What are you doing? You're throwing so hard!*"). Is this really fair? Is time just a flat circle?

Of course, Dave-the-in-law also can't deny the obvious positives of technology. It can't be understated how revolutionary it is to have a species' worth of knowledge and wisdom at the tip of one's fingers.

There's also the inherent benefit from consistently using technology: technological literacy. With the arrival of artificially generated images and online scam artists, the value of being surrounded by resources to tell you what to look out for and examples of what to avoid is priceless. When news sources spread statements that are meant to be accurate, young people know how to fact-check them and prevent the further spread of misinformation. You think back to last week when Dave-the-in-law reposted a clearly A.I.-generated image made to garner internet attention and sympathy on *Facebook*.

Maybe it's time for Dave-the-in-law to admit that technology can be better than humans in some respects. Why is it no longer 'frantically tapping away at the screen' when he's cooing at his grandchildren and asking for '*just one more video!*' of them performing in the school play? You wonder whether Dave-the-in-law ever considered just *asking* your niece what's so interesting.

Matylda Kormanska



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ROXBOURNE PARK

“England’s green and pleasant land” – William Blake’s words to the hymn Jerusalem. I believe that this special place bordering the southern end of Cannon Lane, beyond the Met Line railway, is ever greener and, definitely, very pleasant.



Harrow Council created the park on what was, in 1936, a landfill site. You can see from the steep sides of the riverbank, by the allotments and the concrete roadway, that there was a lot of rubble deposited here before it was greened over. Today, when badgers burrow in from the Yeading Brook pathways, we continue to find Victorian medicine bottles and earthenware containers thrown out behind them. Who knows what else might be buried under our park? Rumour has it that a London Omnibus is in there somewhere.

Visionaries at the Council created football and cricket pitches, used these days by Pinnstars and Pinner Cricket Club. They planted many trees and shrubs along the footpaths, while leaving vast tracts of grassland, about 26 hectares in all, for nature to thrive and develop. In those days, the Council’s nursery gardens were in Cannon Lane, where the Gesher School is now, and green fingered workers used the park to bring on specimen varieties of quince, jasmine, holly, willow and cherry. We still benefit from their work, and spring on the path next to the cricket pitch is a sight to behold. In those olden days of the 1960s, Harrow Council installed the children’s playground and a crazy golf area to further enhance the park – the golf was never managed though and fell into antisocial disuse, but read on to find out more about it. More recently a green gym has been added.



Also in Cannon Lane was the Gas Board land, with a gas holder and ancillary buildings. When this 16-hectare site was decommissioned in late 1990s, the Council acquired it to be kept as a nature reserve, and Roxbourne Rough was born. The area is quite special in that it sits on London Clay, and several unusual species of plant and wildlife can be found there. Deer, herons and red kites have been seen. The Rough is vested in the Harrow Nature Conservation Forum and more details can be found on their website www.harrowncf.org



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When the Harrow and Wembley Society of Model Engineers were looking for a permanent home for their trains in 1973, Harrow Council offered a site near Field End Road. A tenancy agreement was signed in 1975 and Roxbourne Railway moved their club in 1976. Public running was brought in from 1980, and these events continue on summer-time Sunday afternoons to this day. Please see their website at www.hwsme.org for more details.



Roxbourne Park has always been popular with dog walkers, because there are so many safe areas well away from busy roads. Usually, when a dog owner meets another, they stop and chat. It was as a result of just such an occasion in 2015 that the **Friends of Roxbourne Park** was born. “Why don’t we have a dog show?”, “Will the council let us use the pavilion?”, “Does anyone know who to approach?”.

A questionnaire in the autumn of 2015 started the membership campaign, and we now have nearly 600 members, who pay £5 a head, or £10 a family for life membership

So what has FoRP achieved? From that original questionnaire we created a plan of things to do in the park, which included tidying up the derelict crazy golf area, planting trees, making it easier to walk beside the Yeading Brook, installing more benches and so on.

- In 2018, we demolished the crazy golf and flattened the land adjoining the allotments. The concrete was piled up to one side. We planted twelve donated apple trees and covered over the concrete to make a Bee Bank.
- More trees have been added and last year we were heading for a bumper first harvest in our Community Orchard. Unfortunately, some less than community-minded people came and stripped the branches bare, but we have bounced back and continue to look after the area.
- We have planted new trees, most recently near the playground, to commemorate Queen Elizabeth’s reign and friends who passed away recently, funded by donations, especially from the Pinner Association, and by FoRP funds.



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- When we were formed, there were only 6 park benches, mostly around the cricket pitch. Thanks to our lobbying, there are now 13 benches and more to come soon. Some of the benches are labelled “Happy to Chat”, offering a seat where friendly passers-by may possibly stop and hold a conversation.
- The path beside the Yeading Brook, from High Worples towards the Orchard, has been tarmacked so that more people can enjoy the peace and quiet of the wooded area. This was achieved using a £25k grant from Government, and community funds.
- In the pavilion, FoRP has run a variety of community events, including Burns Nights, Christmas parties, flower arranging and Macmillan coffee mornings.
- Since 2017, we have been host to musical performances organised by Save Sunday Music. Every fortnight, there’s a different band, ranging from light classical to rock ‘n’ roll, jazz to American songbook. See our notice boards, website or visit Save Sunday Music on Facebook for more details.
- Some of us incorporate litter-picking during our daily walks, making Roxbourne Park one of the cleanest in the Borough.
- RoxyFest, our annual Fun Day, will be on September 15th this year, from 11am until 5pm. Scan the QR code for more details.
- A current project by Harrow Council is the rewilding of Yeading Brook. Work is ongoing to make the water cleaner and the banks more environmentally friendly. Look out for mallards and a little egret.
- FoRP is lobbying for a Playzone, incorporating basketball, netball and possibly other sports, and for a Bandstand, to allow more outdoor music events in the park.



As our strapline says - ***for the community, by the community***. Do come, join us and enjoy a visit soon!

Gerry Bloomfield
 Secretary, Friends of Roxbourne Park
www.forp2016.org forp2016@forp2016.org



Pinner Association of Churches *Christians in Pinner Working Together*

The five Churches in Pinner welcome you to the many activities provided on our premises for all ages. We aim to provide a safe environment where the local community can find friendship, support, fun and people who care.

For more information, see the website www.pinnerchurches.org.uk

For full details of the Churches; Services (in person and online) and activities for all ages, please visit the PAC website www.pinnerchurches.org.uk, where you can access the website for each Church.

Details of the PAC Christmas Day Lunch are available on the PAC website.

Cannon Lane Methodist Church; Pinner Methodist Church;
Pinner Baptist Church; St. John the Baptist Church of England;
St. Luke's Roman Catholic Church.

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PINNER SKETCH CLUB EXHIBITION

A tradition carried on by artistic enthusiasts annually since 1942, the 2024 Pinner Sketch Club exhibition will be taking place at the Pinner Parish Church Hall from the **10th to 25th August** inclusive - open from **10am to 6pm on Monday to Saturday** with **free admission**. The exhibition will show more than 100 pieces for sale, created using many different artistic media, such as acrylic, oils, sculpture, and more.

Here is a selection of a few artworks to be exhibited by local artists. These can be bought during the show:

Yoshie Fellowes



This piece features a medley of spring flowers painted expressively with oils. The variety of the humble brush is displayed excellently, with a large array of techniques and textures achieved in this bold composition.

Samay Kachalia

A lovely sight of the local Metropolitan Line, which has characterised Pinner since 1885. This piece has successfully captured the intricacy of a sophisticated machine in coloured pencil, coupled with the dynamic experience of the train at a London Underground Station, achieved by utilising the vibrant attribute of acrylic markers.



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A pastel drawing, this vibrant and hueful portrait expresses all the dynamic aspects of humans. Definite strokes combined with subtly placed yet striking highlights makes this piece popular for households and galleries.



Dow Pichaiwatkomol



A lovely forest scene with contrast between the intricate trunks and branches and the sporadic spills of colour from the flowers. A warm depth is carried throughout the landscape using a large variation of strokes and techniques, extending the land of birds and foxes to the horizon.

Samay Kachalia

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'PARKING' IN PINNER

No, this is not another article bemoaning the loss of Waxwell Lane Car Park. Instead, it is the latest in our series about local walks in and around Pinner. This time we are going to break with tradition and not use one of the routes from *Ten Walks around Pinner*, copies of which can be purchased in the Heath Robinson Museum shop.

We are going to take a pleasant ramble to Eastcote and back, walking through several local formal and informal parks. At this point I should give credit to our local walking group, the Pinner Ramblers and, in particular to Richard Zackary and Diana la Rue, who put this walk together during lockdown to keep us sane.

We start, as always, at Pinner Station. Down Station Approach, left at the bottom into Marsh Road. In a few minutes you come to the main entrance to Pinner Village Gardens (Park 1) on your right. Over the last few years, a group of enthusiastic local residents have made many marvellous improvements to this park.

If you follow any one of the footpaths you will eventually come to the exit bottom left, that emerges into Whittington Way. Cross the road and head into Dawlish Drive, to the right of Tesco. At the end, turn right and immediately left into Cannon Lane. Take the first turn on the left, Durley Avenue, and you will soon see a concrete drive



To Yeading Brook

between two terraces of houses. Follow this path round to the right. If you are wondering why I have brought you down this enchanting path, well, turn left opposite the garages across the bridge. You are now by Yeading Brook (Park 2), one of Pinner's best kept secrets. What a lovely informal space this is. I often wonder why this piece of land was not developed at the same time as the houses that surround it. Who knows?

Take the path on your right which will lead you alongside Yeading Brook. At the end, you will emerge into Village Way. Cross Village Way (carefully) and turn right towards the traffic lights. At these lights, turn left, cross over the railway and

then turn left through the main entrance into Roxbourne Park (Park 3) - a wonderful park with many pleasant walks, sports facilities and, of course, the miniature railway! As with Pinner Village Gardens, Roxbourne Park has a group of enthusiastic local residents who keep it in great shape and host many community events throughout the year (see our article on P61).

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Colin Robinson

Once in the park, you have a choice. Either spend some time wandering around and exploring or follow the main path straight across and then turn right to follow a smaller path, again along Yeading Brook. Continue in this direction past the miniature railway to the exit from the park into Field End Road.

Cross Field End Road (again, carefully) and then take the path that continues beside Yeading Brook until you reach Queen's Walk. Cross Queen's Walk and now walk along the right-hand bank of the Brook. Before too long you will come to a row of garages. Turn right before the garages, taking the access road that leads you into Whitby Road. Cross Whitby Road and take the path that leads into Bessingby Park (Park 4).

Continue straight ahead, ignoring the path on your left, and you will soon enter Pine Gardens (Park 5). I know that is a bit of a cheat as these parks back onto each other but, hey ho. Take a look around Pine Gardens. Do you notice anything strange? Yes, there are streetlights, a road and drainage. This area was originally designated for the Metroland Pine Gardens Estate. The developer put the infrastructure in, but the site was never developed. By the way, if you have never seen Metroland, with John Betjeman, I would recommend watching it on Youtube - a fascinating insight to a bygone age.

Just past the playground, leave the park to emerge onto Pine Gardens itself. Follow the road and turn right at the roundabout into Coombe Drive. At the end of Coombe Drive, cross Southbourne Gardens, turn right and then immediately left into Oak Grove. Continue along Oak Grove, crossing over the railway, until you reach Elm Avenue. After crossing Elm Avenue, continue more or less straight ahead into Lime Grove. Are you detecting a theme, by any chance? Go past two roads on your left, Acacia Avenue and Myrtle Avenue (these names clinch it, surely) before taking the gate on your left into Warrender Park (Park 6).

Cross the park diagonally and exit via the gate that leads into Highgrove Wood (Park 7). Stay on the path and ignore the turning on your left. At the end of the path, you will reach a service road. At this point turn left then first right into Flowers Avenue. You are now standing on a very important part of local history. Formerly

*To Highgrove Wood*

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known as Pembroke Park (Park 8 – *ok, I accept that this is not a current park*), this was an outstation for the Government Code and Cipher School (GCCS) and played a significant role in deciphering enemy signals in WW2. After the war GCCS changed its name to GCHQ and moved to this site where it remained until the 1950s.



Pretty Corner

Anyway, back to the walk. From Flowers Avenue, take the first left into Ellis Close and follow the path that leads into High Road, Eastcote. Cross the road and turn right before turning left into Fore Street. On entering you might want to take a moment to look at the pocket park on the corner known as Pretty Corner (Park 9).

Take the path on the right onto The Celandine Route, which leads back to Pinner. Follow the path to the end and then turn right, over a small footbridge that leads back into High Road, Eastcote. Turn left and follow the road to the mini-roundabout. At this point cross the road to enter Eastcote House Gardens (Park 10). Another park where the volunteers have done a great job, this time with the support of Hillingdon Council, renovating the buildings, planting the orchard, restoring the dovecote etc.

Follow the path until you reach The Stables and café. At this point you can choose whether to stop for a break at the café, visit the walled garden and orchard (in which case you should turn right) or to continue on and return to Pinner.

If you are heading back to Pinner, cross the grassed area on your left and head towards the bridge. You are now in Long Meadow (Park 11), where you turn right to continue along the Celandine Route. At the end of Long Meadow, cross Cheney Street and take the path that leads into another meadow. After entering, turn right and follow the path that leads to the path through the trees between the River Pinn and the allotments. Eventually this path emerges into Cranbourne Drive.

Turn left and left again into West End Lane. Up West End Lane to the zebra crossing, where you enter Pinner Memorial Park (Park 12). Follow the path with Daisy's Cafe on your left and the pond on your right. At the bottom of the park, leave into Chapel Lane and turn right under the railway bridge. You are now back in the centre of Pinner, where we started two hours ago, and have a wide choice of coffee shops and cafés to reward yourself. So, there you have it. Six miles, two hours and twelve parks. What a great place Pinner is.

Minutes of the 91st Annual General Meeting of The Pinner Association held on 17th April 2024 in the Pinner Village Hall.

The formal business of the AGM began at 8.57pm. There were 51 persons present.

Minutes of the 90th AGM

A vote to approve the minutes of the 90th AGM held on 19th April 2023, as published on Pp 79 to 81 of *The Villager* 256, July '23, was unanimously agreed by the meeting.

Matters Arising

None.

Chair's Report

Julie Waller thanked all those who had supported her during her year as Acting Chair and three years as Chair of the Association; the Officers and Committee members, the editor of *The Villager* and the Membership Secretary, the Area Leaders and Collectors and the many other volunteers who had given their time for the Association.

Over the past years the achievements of your Association had included the formation of the Peace Garden volunteer gardeners, the continuation of the sponsorship and organisation of the annual concerts and Remembrance Sunday, the continuing maintenance of the flowers beds at Pinner Station, monitoring and commenting upon, when required, all the planning applications in Pinner and Pinner South Wards, and the initiation of a celebration of Diwali at the switching on of the Bridge Street festive lights. Donations had been made to local community organisations.

There was still work to do to make the Association more relevant to the changing population of Pinner and the Committee still did not reflect the current demographic of the area. New Committee members were being sought and your Association was slowly evolving to better represent all the residents of the area.

Adoption of Revised Constitution

The revision of The Pinner Association Constitution had been reported to all Pinner Association members on page 77 of *The Villager*, No. 258 - March 2024, and on the Pinner Association website, and the proposed changes were proposed and seconded and agreed unanimously by the Pinner Association members present. The revised *The Pinner Association Constitution 2024* would be duly reported to the Charity Commission by the Secretary.

Treasurer's Report

Tim Owen, Treasurer, referred the meeting to his report and the abbreviated accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 on pages 79 - 81 of *The Villager*, No.

258 – March 2024. A copy of the fuller set of annual accounts, in the format required by the Charity Commission, and which had been examined by and signed off by the Independent Examiner, could be made available for any member who wished to see them.

The full accounts had been approved by the Pinner Association Executive Committee on 6th February 2024, and subsequently inspected by the Independent Examiner who had given an unqualified report, and a signed copy of the accounts was available for inspection. There being no questions from members on the accounts, a vote was conducted on the proposed and seconded motion to approve the accounts for 2023 and this was passed unanimously and the accounts for 2023 were adopted by the meeting. The signed adopted accounts would be filed with the Charity Commission.

Election of Officers and Executive Committee

Julie thanked Keith Rookledge who was standing down from the Committee after three years' service, and Robin Youle who was retiring as the President of the Association after seven years in that role, and a great many more in various Committee and Officer roles since joining as Treasurer in 1987.

Julie Waller, Chair, conducted the election of the President. The only nominee who had been formally proposed and seconded by the 10th April 2024 was Warwick Hillman and he was duly elected by the meeting as President.

Julie then conducted the election of John Hinkley who was the only proposed and seconded nominee for the post of Chair and the meeting voted unanimously for his election as Chair of the Association.

The Chair (John Hinkley) then conducted the election of the Officers. There were no contested positions, and the following, having been formally nominated and seconded, were confirmed in post with the agreement of the meeting: Treasurer - Tim Owen; Secretary - Ruth Boff; Vice Chair – Vacant (position not filled)

There had been nine Executive Committee nominations for the ten elected posts available under the Constitution, and the following, having been nominated and seconded by the due date, were confirmed in post with the agreement of the meeting: Rahul Aggarwal, Ed Badke, David Lewis, Jenny McCann, Anisha Patel, Hema Solanki, Christine Wallace, Julie Waller and Bruce Watson. One elected Committee position remained vacant.

All the above elected persons continued as or became Trustees of The Pinner Association Registered Charity, number 262349, for the coming year.

Appointment of Membership Secretary and Editor of *The Villager*

The meeting unanimously agreed the appointment of Alison Whitehead as the Membership Secretary, and Phil Lawder as Editor of *The Villager*.

Vote of thanks to, and election of, the Hon. Independent Examining Accountant

Tim thanked the Hon. Independent Examining Accountant, Mr Anthony Fineberg, who had kindly agreed to continue to act in this capacity. He proposed the vote of thanks to Mr Fineberg and his re-election as the Independent Examining Accountant for the coming year, and this was seconded and passed unanimously by the meeting.

A.O.B.

None.

The Annual General Meeting closed at 9.16pm.

Report of presentation by Alex Dewsnap, MD of London Borough of Harrow, at the Pinner Association Open Meeting / AGM on 17th April 2024.

Mr Dewsnap commenced his talk with an outline of the key challenges facing the London Borough of Harrow. In common with many other local authorities:

- Finances set as single year settlements from a very centralised governmental model, meaning that the relationship between the pressures/challenges and the means to resolve these locally were complex at best.
- The demand pressures on the Council in Harrow for the provision of increased levels of adults' social services and children's services, increasing the provision of social and affordable housing, particularly family-sized units, and meeting residents' expectations. This requires the council to "do more with less" to retain and improve the quality of services, so that residents could experience a return for the increase in Council Tax.

In the year 2023/24 thirty of thirty-three local authorities in London were reporting an overspend at Quarter 3 of 2023/24, and the average projected gross overspend per local authority was £15,000,000, 5.2% of their budgets. This was due to the extreme financial pressures on local authorities of providing adults' social care, children's social care and temporary accommodation / housing services.

However, the position in Harrow is better than the average in London. In Harrow borough, there was a projected underspend for 2023/24, a balanced position for 2024/25 and a predicted approximate £15,000,000 budget gap for 2025/26 and 2026/27. The controllable annual budget for Harrow borough was in the region of £200,000,000, 80% of which came from Council Tax and 20% from other sources of revenue.

The vision of the current administration was "Restoring Pride in Harrow", and the delivery of this over the past year had been assessed by a Local Government

Association Peer Review, which showed that the Council was improving over the period Feb 2023 to Jan 2024, through continued improvements in the customer experience for residents of the borough. There was still more to do, such as:

- Responding to 90% of complaints to the Council within fifteen working days - over 20% of the council's workforce had been through new Customer Ethos training
- The adoption of an additional Supplementary Planning Document to protect the suburban areas of the borough from new overly tall building developments
- Launching a new Planning Portal, giving residents better access to information on proposed developments, and more opportunities to have their say
- The Council-agreed business cases in January 2024 to develop two key Council-owned sites in the borough through the Harrow Strategic Development Partnership, including the old Civic Centre site where much-needed new housing will be constructed
- The six Green Flag Parks retained that status, and three more parks have been identified to be put forward for this award
- A new witness appeal campaign has been undertaken for fly-tipping, using the newly installed mobile CCTV cameras
- A new recycling team started in October 2023 and has made a significant impact on educating residents about recycling, and thereby reducing contamination in our dry recycling
- Enforcement has been enacted to demolish structures and illegal extensions with no planning permission through two planning Days of Action
- Motor vehicle catalytic converter offences in the borough in the last 18 months are significantly down from 407 reported cases in December 2022 to only 49 in December 2023
- A new neighbourhood model for integrated health and social care has been launched in January 2024, as well as the successful piloting of the innovative Conversation Café
- Support of local businesses through employment schemes and networking opportunities.

There are opportunities to further improve the customer experience for residents and there is still more to do, so the Council was "Putting Residents First" through all its decisions.

The use of new technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), for example, using an AI voice system to answer phone calls from residents, might be used to re-establish this form of communication where this would provide savings to the Council's budget, although this is still a few years off being of good enough quality to implement in Harrow. Additionally, staff and management development are a priority to optimise capability and capacity that would result in improvements in productivity.

All of the above would facilitate better and smarter delivery of the Council's vision and priorities and should result in a more efficient and better service from their Council to the residents of Harrow.

Mr Dewsnap then addressed the list of current concerns of Pinner residents which your Association had provided for him prior to his talk, including:

- The delay in releasing the new housing in Pinnora Mews for sale and occupation is due to a problem of water ingress into the buildings, and the Council are seeking to resolve this as quickly as possible so that these new houses, developed by the Council on what had been the Waxwell Lane car park, could be sold on the open market.
- A larger budget was to be allocated for Enforcement, so that more resources could be provided for planning and other enforcement issues, to address and resolve these more quickly.
- There has been consultation with users of the Council's new online Planning Portal, to identify and correct the problems discovered with the new software.
- There is a new borough-wide transport strategy being developed which encompasses road safety.
- The decision on which carriageways and pavements to repair is made using technical criteria. These need to be made more transparent to residents, so that they can understand why some streets are resurfaced and others, apparently also in need of repair, are not. The new technology being used to repair potholes should improve the general condition of carriageways on the borough's roads.

Ruth Boff – Secretary, the Pinner Association

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, July 28 Concert in the Park with Harrow Steel. Memorial Park 2.30

Saturday, Aug 3 Meccano Model Exhibition. 11.00 – 4.00 West House, Memorial Park

Every Thursday in August. Art in the Park 1.30 – 3.00. heathrobinsonmuseum.org

Sunday, Aug 4 Concert in the Park with Simply Grey. Memorial Park 2.30

Aug 10 – 25 Pinner Sketch Club Exhibition Mon – Sat 10.00 – 4.00 Free Entry at Pinner Parish Church Hall. pinner sketch club.co.uk

Sunday, Aug 11 Concert in the Park. Nimesh Sanghoi sings Bollywood. Memorial Park 2.30

Sunday, Aug 18 Concert in the Park with Stardust Big Band. Memorial Park 2.30

Sunday, Aug 25 Romeo and Juliet – open air theatre in the Memorial Park. 7.00pm heathrobinsonmuseum.org

Thursday, Sept 5 Michael Rosen on his early life in Pinner. Pinner Village Hall 8.00 (ticketed event). Pinner Local History Society. pinnerlhs.org.uk

Saturday, Sept 7 Pinner Village Show in the Memorial Park

Sunday, Sept 15 Roxyfest in Roxbourne Park, 11.00 – 5.00

Thursday, Sept 19 Coffee and Craft - Chinese Brush Painting. 10.30 – 12.30. Upstairs at West House 10.30 – 12.30. heathrobinsonmuseum.org

Saturday, Sept 21 Concert Paul Robertson: *Soundscapes* Charity Concert for Music Mind Spirit Trust *Bach, Janacek, Ravel, Beethoven, Elgar, Debussy, Tavener*. 7.30pm at Pinner Parish Church. musicinpinner.org.uk

Thursday, Oct 3 Peter Higginson on the life of William Heath Robinson. Pinner Village Hall 8.00 Pinner Local History Society. pinnerlhs.org.uk

Saturday, Oct 12 Concert by Art Themen Organ Trio – *Art Themen (tenor sax) Pete Whittaker (organ) George Double (drums)* 7.30 at Pinner Parish Church. musicinpinner.org.uk

Sunday, Nov 3 Concert by Emma Johnson (clarinet) and Gregory Drott (piano) Clarinet Celebration: *Mozart, Schumann, Clarke, Poulenc, Dvorak, Dankworth & Jazz Greats*. 7.30 at Pinner Parish Church musicinpinner.org.uk

Thursday, Nov 7 Ruislip Lido and its railway. A talk by David Ray. Pinner Village Hall 8.00 (ticketed event). Pinner Local History Society. pinnerlhs.org.uk

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