

YOUR

MAY 2025

ALMSHOUSE

MAGAZINE





Welcome to Your Almshouse Magazine

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Welcome

to our new resident:

Andrew Bald,
Michel's Almshouses

Farewell

It is with great sadness
that we say goodbye to:

Vivienne Perkins, Hickey's
Almshouses, who has moved
into a care home

Eleanor Due-Lund, Candler
Almshouses, who has moved
into a care home

Photo Credits:

Front Cover:

Hickey's in Bloom
by Derrick Thompson

Back cover:

Richmond Theatre
by Colette Hewitt
(local photographer)
www.colettehewittphotography.com

Contents page:

White Camellia at Michel's
by Marilyn Edwards
(resident)

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& Mike Townsin.

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Chantal Richards



This magazine is recyclable.
Please feel free to share your
magazine with others.

Dates for Your Diary

Tuesday 13th May

Food Glorious Food
11am at 3C Adelaide Rd
Details on page 7

Tuesday 20th May

Welcome Tea for Emma
Hickey's Chapel, 2pm
Details on page 10

Wednesday 21st May

Film Club, 2pm
The Fabelmans
Details on page 10

Thursday 22nd May

Quiz Night 6.30pm
Hickey's Chapel
Details on page 10

Wednesday 28th May

Macmillan Planning Meeting. 10.30am
Details on page 11

Thursday 12th June

The Papa George Band at 5pm
Details on page 11

Tuesday 24th June

Residents' Summer Outing to Brighton.
Details on page 11

Sunday 20th July

Almshouses in Bloom Judging Day

Thursday 14th August

Annual Summer Party
Hickey's Lawn
Details on page 11

A gentle reminder to please make sure you leave your Carline boxes switched on when you are away from your Almshouse. In your absence, Carline will still monitor your smoke alarm and alert the Scheme Managers if needed.

Forthcoming Out and About Days

Tuesday 13th May. Trip to **Henley on Thames**, to the Rowing Museum and a Space Exhibition. Outing will cost about £12.

Tuesday 10th June. The **Chelsea Pensioners Museum**. Meet 10am at Richmond Station.

Wednesday 2nd July. **River Thames Canal Boat Trip.** The boat will leave and return to Teddington. Residents to meet at Hickey's Chapel at 9.30am. Places are limited so first come first served. Cost will be up to £25 (dependant on number of attendees) which is **Not Refundable**. Bring your own food for the trip. Tea and coffee will be provided. Book via your Scheme Manager.

Your Words and Photos! Contribute to our next issue

If you would like to contribute to our next issue, the deadline is **Friday 16th May**.

As a guide on word count, a half page article is ideally about 170 words. Give the article to your Scheme Manager, or email to c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk

The Opening of The Elizabeth Twining Almshouses

with HRH The Duke of Gloucester

by Juliet Ames-Lewis

The sun shone on a beautiful April day for the official opening of The Elizabeth Twining Almshouses.

HRH The Duke of Gloucester arrived at the almshouses and was greeted by dignitaries, staff and trustees, to whom he chatted in the grounds of Twining's.

He was then escorted by Jeremy, our Chair and our architect Clive Chapman to view the almshouses and the design plans. The Duke of Gloucester trained as an architect so he was very interested in the design and the Passivhaus status that the almshouses have.

The Duke was then shown into the lounge of number 4 Twining's, where he met with four of the Twining's residents – Ruki, Eleanor, Janice and Shobna. He chatted to them for a while and they had a photo taken with him.

The Duke is the Vice Patron of The Almshouse Association and he is very supportive of all almshouse charities. When he undertakes visits to almshouse charities up and down the country, what he likes most is meeting and talking with residents.

The Duke was then escorted by Jeremy and by Stephen Twining, a descendant of Elizabeth Twining, who we had invited to join us, through Church Estate, where they showed him the Secret Garden before bringing him round to the marquee on the front lawn.

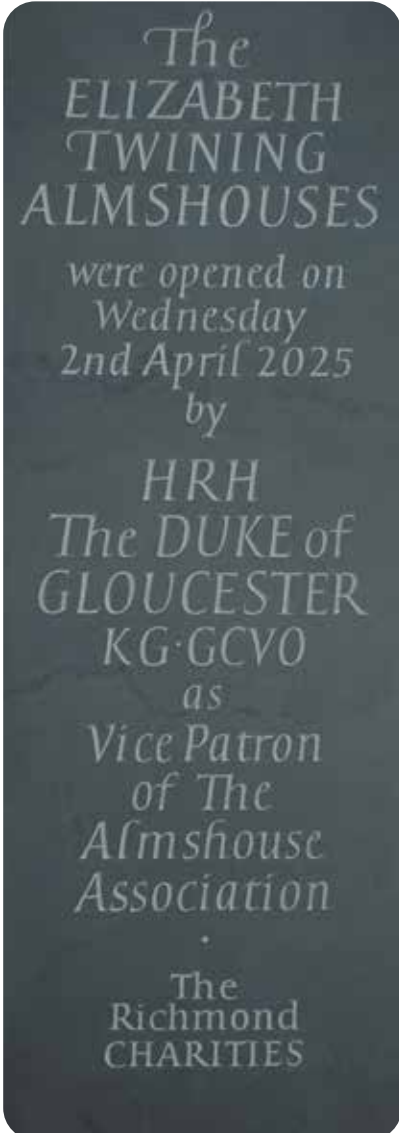
He admired the Church Estate Almshouses

and then met and chatted with about 50 other guests gathered in the marquee – Church Estate residents, staff, trustees, members of the project team for the development and representatives from the Council.

Following chat, tea and cake, speeches were then made by Nick Phillips, the Chief Executive of The Almshouse Association, Jeremy our Chair and then HRH the Duke of Gloucester himself. He then unveiled the beautiful plaque and we gave him a gift to mark the day which is a painting of both Twining's and Church Estate.

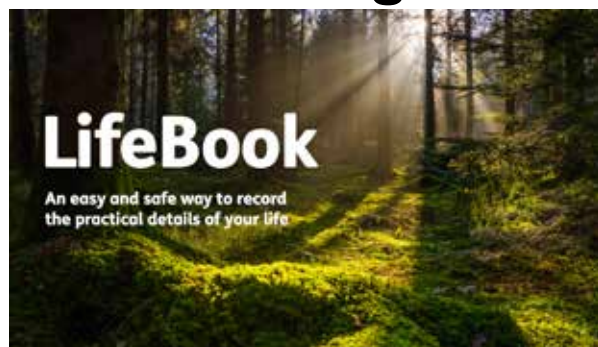
By the time you read this, the plaque will have been put up on the side of The Elizabeth Twining Almshouses – do have a walk down Mitre Mews to view the plaque!

The day was a celebration of the charity and of the work we do to house residents in our thriving community and the ways in which we are always looking to develop more almshouses in order to house more residents.





Good Endings 1 – *LifeBook* by Derrick Thompson



Following our *Good Endings Seminar* in March, this is the first of a series of articles covering the topics that were included in our very well attended event. In this article we are looking at Age UK's *LifeBook*.

In this excellent booklet, called *LifeBook*, you can record all your important information in one place so that you can find important information easily when you need it. There are six sections to the book:

Personal Details, Life contacts, Financial, Documents, Possessions and Final wishes.

The *LifeBook* is completely free from Age UK by phoning them on [0800 678 1602](tel:08006781602), or via your Scheme Manager. If you prefer you can visit their website, www.ageuk.org.uk, where you can download a *LifeBook* and fill it in on your computer (although I would recommend printing it out once completed, as well as keeping a digital version).

As well as being a handy reference to keep track of things now, it becomes an excellent resource for your next-of-kin when they are required to take care of things on their loved one's behalf, or when they are dealing with the arrangements and administration that follows their loved one's death.

Next month I will be writing about *Final Wishes and Choices*.

Review of Good Endings Seminar

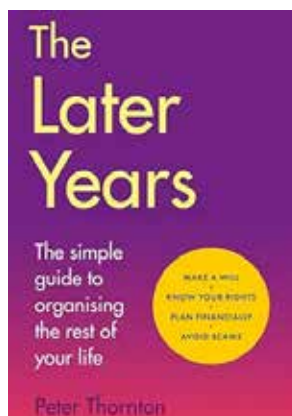
by Deborah Findlay

I don't think I'm the only person who's been putting off thinking about wills, funeral plans, Lasting Power of Attorney and keeping records of vital information. Derrick assembled a great group of speakers for the recent ***Good Endings Seminar***. It was informative, encouraging and, at times, sobering. For the first time I felt that I could move forward with making decisions and the ***LifeBook*** that we all received from Age UK was particularly good for focussing the mind.

It was lovely to hear Mark Uglow give some music choices and for Juliet to confirm the support that The Richmond Charities can give when a resident dies.

About 20 of us attended, we had a lovely lunch, tea and cake and a chance to have private chats with the speakers. I do hope more events like this are held as it really isn't frightening or depressing but just part of life! Thank you, Derrick.

Book Review: The Later Years: The Simple Guide to Organising the Rest of Your Life by Mike Townsin



The subject of end-of-life planning was covered in the Good Endings Seminar (above). This book review complements that discussion.

Sir Peter Thornton KC has organised and prioritised everything we need to know, and presents it in a simple, straightforward way that encourages us to complete the necessary tasks.

With chapters on important subjects such as one's Will and Lasting Power of Attorney, the book also deals with money, pensions, inheritance tax, scams, health, property, care, your rights and what to do after the death of a loved one, and makes it as easy to follow as a shopping list.

The book can be purchased on Amazon for about £12. Similar advice is available at no charge from Age UK.

Review of Mothering Sunday Gathering

A good number of residents gathered in Hickey's Chapel for a long leisurely cream tea with scones, jam and cream, dainty cakes and a traditional Simnel cake on Mothering Sunday afternoon. There was a slight break with tradition as the Simnel cake had twelve marzipan balls on it instead of the traditional eleven. The marzipan balls represent the eleven disciples,



excluding Judas, known as the one who betrayed Jesus. The inclusion of Judas' marzipan ball created some interesting conversations around the tables!



Food Glorious Food Outing

by Heather Shipley

On 8th April, a glorious sunny morning, five intrepid *Foodies* (Jemima, Agnes, Sally and Heather and David) set off from Richmond for Brixton Market, a colourful, noisy and vibrant market in south London, mainly providing ingredients for Afro-Caribbean and Asian cuisines but much else besides. Clothing in various hues, jewellery, medicaments, shoes, luggage, basket-ware, artistic objects and restaurants make up an interesting place to visit over a large area. There is easy access from Richmond, a Southwest train to Vauxhall and a few stops to Brixton on the Victoria underground line.

The sight of an array of exotic fruit and vegetables and other foods greeted us, such as cherimoya (custard apples), guavas, mounds of fresh okra, sweet potatoes from



Africa, chillies, brinjals (aubergine), matoke (cooking bananas), limes, and bundles of herbs, like dhania (coriander).

Meat counters offered goat, lamb, chicken, and items not on our shopping lists...offal — in many varieties and many hooves and feet! Fresh fish and prawns from far afield. We should have taken cool bags but will certainly do so on the next visit.

After loading the shopping bags, we entered the covered market where the restaurants are located. Fortified with tea, really good coffee, pancakes, avocado on toast, freshly prepared falafel and curried potatoes, we departed for Richmond and home, thinking of all the dishes to be made with our purchases. **The next Foodies morning will be at the Shipleys in Adelaide Road on Tuesday 13th May. Come and join us!**

Out and About Visit: Decorated Egg Sculptures

During the period 24th March to 27th April this year one-hundred two-foot tall decorated egg sculptures were placed in Chelsea, Canary Wharf, Covent Garden, Battersea Power Station, The Royal Albert Hall and many other sites. There were too many to get around in one day so we went for the 6 eggs at Covent Garden and Neal's Yard, a place where Monty Python lived hence the Blue Plaque on the wall. The eggs will be sold as part of the fund raising for the 'Elephant Family' working for Asian Wildlife Conservation.



Out and About Visit: Twickenham Museum and Tea with the Mayor

Our outing began in a small park by the river behind York House where there is a water feature known as the *Naked Ladies* statue, which is part of the remains from Sir Ratan Tata's previous ownership of York House.

About 30 years ago the conservation campaigner



Jack Ellis donated the building to become a museum: Number 25 The Embankment, Twickenham — the property which is now the museum. The house faces the river and is adjacent to the Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin in the oldest part of Twickenham. It was built around 1720 and is a Grade 2 listed building.

The most significant part of the museum is the information on the Twining family — Thomas Twining, a member of the famous family of tea merchants, moved to Twickenham around 300 years ago. Elizabeth Twining, after whom our new almshouses are named, was a descendant of his. Also inside is a 1960s model of Hampton Court. A small museum but well worth a visit. Open on Friday and Saturday 11am to 3pm, and Sunday 2pm to 4pm, and is free to visit.

We then went to York House to meet with Richard Pyne — The Mayor and Trustee of The Richmond Charities, and his wife for afternoon tea. We had a great time together hearing about the work and duties of the Mayor and the history of York House, before a tour around the council chamber and other rooms in York House including the Mayor's Parlour and a room with a Tudor fire place.

A good afternoon out and many thanks to the Mayor and to Andrew and Elise, part of the Mayor's team.

The Eloysia String Quartet

by Barbara Costanzo

A candlelight evening of classical music by the Eloysia String Quartet was hugely enjoyed by a full and attentive audience in Hickey's Chapel on Tuesday 15th April. Every seat was taken well before the start of the concert, the reputation of the Quartet preceding the event.

The evening's programme included works by Handel, Vivaldi, Dvorak and Haydn, who we were told was not a child genius like Mozart but someone who had to work hard at his craft, as demonstrated by the Quartet in two of his complex later pieces.

The chapel was gently illuminated by Derrick's new (battery) candlelights. These provided the perfect setting for the music. Refreshments were provided at each spotless white-clothed table. Juliet gave a vote of thanks to the musicians and also to Linda and Derrick for their tireless preparatory work. All agreed.

Looking forward, it is hoped that the Eloysia String Quartet will visit us at Christmas with a selection of festive music.



RICHMOND MAY FAIR SAT 10TH MAY 10AM-5PM
RICHMOND GREEN TW9 1LX

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You are invited for Afternoon Tea with

EMMA HALFORD
our new Chief Executive

Tuesday 20th May
2pm in Hickey's Chapel



Emma would love to see you all there!

Please let your Scheme Managers know if you would like to attend so that we have some idea of numbers for catering.

Film Club:
The Fabelmans
Wednesday 21st May at 2pm





Inspired by Steven Spielberg's own childhood, rediscover the magic of movies in *The Fabelmans*, a coming-of-age story about a young man uncovering a shattering family secret and the power of film and imagination to help us see the truth about ourselves and each other. With a star-studded cast featuring Michelle Williams, Paul Dano, Seth Rogen, Gabriel LaBelle and Judd Hirsch, *The Fabelmans* tells a timeless tale of heartbreak, healing, and hope for the dreamer inside all of us.


Refreshments during the interval.
Director: Steven Spielberg Rating: PG.
Runtime: 2h 31m. IMDb: 7.5/10, Rotten Tomatoes: 92%

Quiz Night
by Margaret Goddard

WHAT? 

WHEN?   6.30pm

WHERE?  **Hickey's Chapel**

WHO?  **Everyone!**
Teams of up to 6

*Please note the change of date from 15th May to Thursday 22nd May.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

WORLD'S BIGGEST
COFFEE MORNING

Planning Meeting:
Wednesday 28th May

10.30am in Hickey's Chapel
with Derrick Thompson and Jo Davison

For many years there has been a Macmillan Coffee Morning held in Hickey's Chapel, raising thousands of pounds for the well-loved Macmillan Cancer Support charity. We are indebted to Pat Platt who organised these events but is sadly no longer with us.

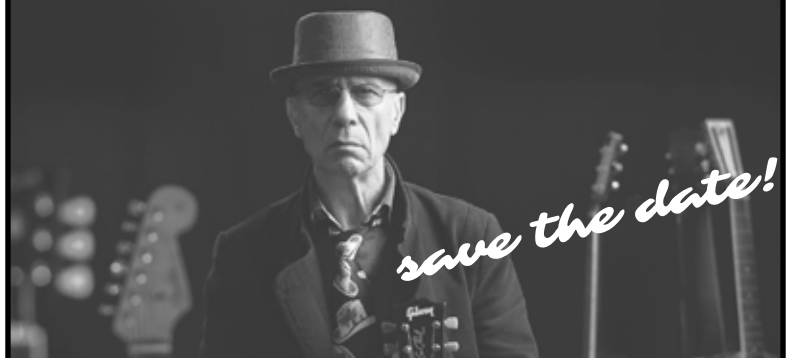
So that we can maintain and build on Pat's good work we are holding a Planning Meeting on Wednesday 28th May at 10.30am in Hickey's Chapel. Refreshments will be provided!

It would be wonderful to see some new faces there, joining with those who have previously supported this event, to help plan and prepare for the Macmillan Coffee Morning on **Friday 26th September**.

you are all invited

The return of

THE PAPA GEORGE BAND



save the date!

Thursday 12th June
5pm on Hickey's Lawn

Featuring our almshouse resident Peter Rees (bass),
Derby Todd (drums) and Papa George (guitar/vocals)

All residents, their families and friends are welcome.
Bring a picnic, drinks, warm clothing and chair/blanket.

We will supply chairs, but numbers are limited.
Please speak to your Scheme Manager if you require transport.

www.papageorge.co.uk

Annual Summer Outing to Brighton



Tuesday 24th June Leaving at 9am
and departing from Brighton at 4pm.

This year, the charity is kindly going to treat us to a sit down lunch — location, time and cuisine to be confirmed.

Joining us for lunch is completely optional, but if you'd like to partake, please let your Scheme Manager know, along with any allergies, dietary preferences or requirements.

As always, places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, so don't delay — let your Scheme Manager know if you'd like to go to Brighton!



Please save the date!

**Invitations will be
arriving very soon!**

Chaplain's Chat

by Derrick Thompson

You may, like me, have been puzzled over recent years by the appearance of cards and media posts in early May with the greeting 'May the fourth be with you'!

Being a little slow on the uptake I eventually realised that this is a pun on the greeting used by the Rebel Alliance (the good guys) in the Star Wars films, 'May the Force be with you'! The 'Force' being an invisible energy that gives life, energy and vitality.

As we look around us this month, we can see the force of nature being demonstrated in new leaves and flowers on the trees, and new life in chicks, ducklings, goslings and other bird and animal 'babies'. What joy that can bring us, and how much more alive we can feel as we notice nature bearing new life around us. Whether we notice and feel the benefit of Spring's vitality depends on us taking the time to stop, look at the fresh colours, hear the new birdsong and recognise what a blessing it is to have the force of life alive in us.

Chapel Schedule

May 2025

Sunday 4th May	10.30am Holy Communion <i>Followed by refreshments</i>
Sunday 11th May	10.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 18th May	10.30am Holy Communion <i>Revd. Canon Nicholas Darby</i>
Sunday 25th May	10.30am Holy Communion
Thursday 29th May	1pm Ascension Day Communion

All are welcome to join us.

Morning Prayer, Tuesdays at 10am.

Thursday Fellowship, at 2pm.

For more information email

Chaplain Derrick on:

d.thompson@richmondcharities.org.uk



Festivals of Faith

by Derrick Thompson

BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY

Thursday 15th May (Buddha Jayanti - Buddhist). This, the biggest of all the Buddhist festivals, commemorates the birth of Prince Siddhartha Gautama, later the Gautama Buddha, who was the founder of Buddhism. According to Buddhist tradition, Gautama Buddha was born c.563, 483 BCE in Lumbini, Nepal.



It is common in almost all Buddhist traditions to decorate the houses where Buddhists live with lanterns and garlands, and the temples are ringed with

little oil lamps, consisting of a simple cloth or cotton wick in a small clay vessel of oil.

ASCENSION DAY

Thursday 29th May (40th day after Easter - Christian). Ascension Day commemorates the last earthly appearance of the Risen Christ, who, according to Christian belief, ascended into heaven in the presence of many witnesses. It is one of the four most important dates in the Christian calendar.

Ascension Day is associated across Britain with various festivals ranging from Well Dressing in Derbyshire to the Planting of the 'Penny Hedge' (or 'Horngarth') in the harbour at Whitby, Yorkshire. It is also the day for Beating the Bounds, or Boundaries, of a church's parish. The custom was once found in almost every English parish but now is only carried out in a few places. In modern times, it involves people in the locality walking around their church or civil boundaries, pausing as they pass certain trees, walls and hedges to exclaim, pray and ritually 'beat' particular landmarks with sticks.

The Creation Station Clay Modelling

Join a clay modelling session on
Wednesday 28th May



2 - 3.30pm
in the
Garden Room
at Church
Estate.

All equipment will be provided. Numbers are limited so please book your place through your Scheme Manager.

**Creative
Fun with Clay!**



TheCreationStation.co.uk



This month there will be a
4-week taster session of Tai Chi
with the instructor *Hanna Luna*
in the **Garden Room** at Church Estate.

The dates are: Thursday 8th May,
15th May, 22nd May and 29th May at 3pm.
Please let your Scheme Manager
know if you would like to come along.

Hear Here!

by Derrick Thompson



When we were having work done to Hickey's Chapel sound system last year it came to light that the 'Loop System' for the hard of hearing had ceased working.

I am delighted to report that we now have a brand-new Loop System installed in the Chapel, so come on in, switch your hearing aid to the 'T' setting, or appropriate digital setting, and 'hear here'!

Alternatively, if you are not coming to the Chapel and need a Loop System for an activity or meeting, we also have a portable loop system available for use. It is stored in the Chapel. Ask your Scheme Manager if you want to use it!

Croquet is back!

by Linda Prendergast

The new season of croquet begins on
Monday 5th May at 2pm,
on the front lawn at Church Estate.



Even if you have never played before, come and join this friendly group of residents and have a game.

You will meet your neighbours, make new friends and have some fun at the same time.

More information will also be in the monthly events leaflet.

Nordic Walking Sessions

with Rosie

Our next 6 week course will begin on: **Tuesday 20th May at 3pm.** Starting off on the lawns at Hickey's Almshouses.

What is Nordic Walking?

Nordic Walking is a safe, natural and effective form of exercise. It is a sociable way of exercising whilst being in the great outdoors.



Benefits include:

- Exercises over 90% of skeletal muscles
- Increases cardiovascular activity
- Improves posture
- Increases spinal rotation
- Shapes and tones
- Enhances mood
- Uses both sides of your brain

Please contact your Scheme Manager to book your place. Rosie needs to know numbers so that she can bring the right number of poles with her.

Trustee File

A new column introducing you to each of our Trustees.



Jeremy Williams

• *How did I become a trustee?* It was in mid 2014, when the charity was based in cramped offices on Richmond Green. I was a solicitor and the charity used to instruct my firm next

door. I volunteered and fortunately was accepted. I have enjoyed being a trustee every minute since then and was thrilled when I became Chair two years ago.

• I was born in Kew. It helps that I am a local boy and so know the area very well.

• I have been married to Caroline for nearly 50 years and we have three children and four grandchildren. Sad but true: our 25th wedding anniversary was on 9/11.

• My other great loves are Fulham FC, which I have supported for nearly 60 years, and golf which I have been playing for nearly as long.

- Favourite meal - proper lasagne
- Favourite book - *Birdsong* by Sebastian Faulks
- Favourite film - *Top Gun* (1986)
- Favourite music - Pink Floyd and Puccini
- Highlight of the last 11 years — the recent Royal visit, although building the two new Almshouse estates comes close.

IT Sessions with Age UK



If you are 65 + Age UK

Richmond's *Connect to Tech* service can help you get online and get connected.

You may want to:

- **Use a laptop**, computer smart phone or another device for the first time
- Learn how to **use the internet**
- Learn a particular skill such as **shopping online**, using messaging apps, making video calls (Zoom, Skype, Facetime) or how to find information online.
- Improve your **confidence**
- Resolve a problem with a device
- Learn how to **stay safe online**
- Get advice on what device to purchase to meet your needs
- **Borrow a tablet for 8 weeks** to learn with at home and no home internet connection needed.

Age UK can arrange a one-to-one private IT lesson with one of their volunteer tutors at a community location – Barnes Social Centre or Twickenham Wellbeing Centre. You can also arrange a home visit with a tutor.

All **Connect to Tech** services are free of charge, except when you book a home visit to help fix a technical problem with a device, such as setting up a computer, printer or other device – in this case, a £10 per hour charge applies.

To get in contact and ask for an IT lesson, email connecttotech@ageukrichmond.org.uk or call Ebru on 020 8744 1965

Getting To Know You

Alison Fleming

Where did you grow up? I grew up in two cities: Dundee and Edinburgh. I spent the summers on the Isle of Skye and in the West Highlands.

As a child, what did you want to be? I didn't so much want to be as to do. I wanted to explore the world around me and to understand what it was about. I wrote and drew. But travel was my thing.

What is your favourite music/song from your teenage years and what does hearing it remind you of? Impossible to have one favourite song — I listened incessantly to Radio Luxembourg and then Caroline. But from earlier times I remember the Connie Francis record *Lipstick on Your Collar* wafting through the air from the annual fun fair which was held every Easter on the shores of the North Sea.

Who is your favourite live performer/artist and why? How to choose the best performer when there were so many! The Stones, Bob Dylan, and then Grace Jones, Elton John — just a few but impeccable, value all of them.

Describe your happy place. Standing in front of an easel with paints at the ready, not knowing what the result may be. Bliss.

If you could travel back in time, where would you go and why? Hong Kong in the 70s and 80s — a vibrant place full of non stop vitality and life and optimism. The Vietnam war was initially still going on as back drop while Hong Kong went through massive changes in structure and growth to become a modern Asian city. Many of the people I met then, as a journalist, who were fighting for a fair and humane society, are now languishing in prison.

What film or play makes you cry? *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982) still makes me cry.

Who would you invite to your fantasy party/lunch and why? Hugh Grant, Bill Nighy, Taylor Swift, Baroness Warsi — all people who understand the nature of the industry they are in and don't take themselves too seriously. For good measure Bernie Sanders and Ai Weiwei. All have something to say, from different viewpoints, about the world we live in.

What is your guiltiest pleasure? Pleasure without the guilt.

If you could teleport to anywhere, where would it be and why? Anywhere by an ocean or sea. The power and strength of the constant motion and sound linked with the sea and a big broad sky is comforting and renewing. A reminder of how minuscule we are in this huge world.

Your Pets

A new column featuring amusing stories about your pets — past and present! We would love to hear about your cheeky or naughty pet!

Persian Cats

by Heather Keeler

In 1987, we became the owners of a beautiful Persian cat and named her *Issabell*. She was very shy and nervous when not indoors but she would relax and feel safe in the garden.



About a year later my late husband Peter thought it would be a good idea to find *Issabell* a companion, at the end of 1988 we did just that, and came home, with a cheeky little black cat of the same breed and named him *Henry*. He was fearless and so energetic, at first *Issabell* resented him.



She would hiss at him, but the little chap stood his ground, and in time she came to love him.

Both of them gave us so much joy over the years. In 1989 my sister, who was a successful portrait painter and a lover of all animals, was kind enough to present these lovely pictures as a Christmas gift to us. When they passed away we felt we had lost so much. However, they had inspired me to write a children's book that was published in 1997.

Home and Away

This column was previously called Armchair Travel. We have changed it to Home and Away because we would like you to tell us about your travel experiences both abroad and in the UK, whether it be a holiday, a short city break, a long weekend, or simply doing something interesting where you live. And, of course, accompanied by photos!



Australia Days

by Jonathan Cooke

A dear friend of mine used to offer an opinion to the old question “what is humanity’s most useful asset?” His unusual answer was “Grandmothers”, whom he rated the biggest fillers-in for important needs in a growing family. I’ve come to hope in this day of nominal equality that this status may even be granted to grandfathers.

Sadly of course, fewer grandparents live close to their kids and grandkids, so it is often a need more honoured in the breach than the observance. I am lucky to have three girls and two boys. And I do get to see quite a bit of them — two in London on Wednesdays and three in Australia. Australia? That’s too far to go to keep up, surely. Well yes, I only get to see them once a year - but it is for a

they’ve been up to and what there is in store for me. As you might imagine, this involves a good deal of outdoors and suncream.

The kids extra-curricular activities take up a lot of everyone’s time and energy. 13 year old Ava wins medals for swimming in the sea and the pool and water polo matches. 10 year old Alfie does football, basketball, cycle coursing, scootering in the skate park and Boo (Arthur 4 “and a half!”) does everything with illimitable energy right up to the moment he falls asleep. The boys love to dance too and school puts on shows for parents where they both shine like diamonds. And Ava got a solo verse of the alternative national anthem “We are Australian” in the end of term assembly. Cue crusty old grandfather with suspiciously moist eyes making the focusing of his phone camera trickier than it should be.

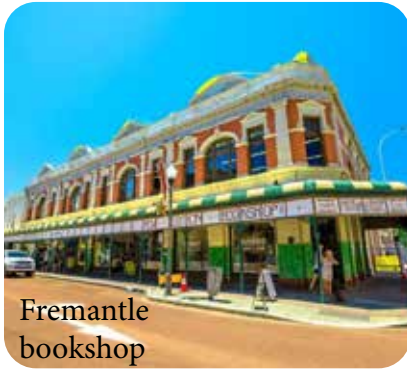
Beach days are regular, especially on Sundays



month. And one magical year when there was a gap between nannies, I took that on for the month and was instantly nicknamed Mrs Doubtfire, though I did refuse to wear the skirt.

I’m lucky that I fly without much jetlag worry, so the sight of the gang at Perth Airport is always an unalloyed bliss with hugs and stories on the way home in the car about what

when the local lifesaving club teaches beach craft and safety for kids from 6 to 18. Parents and even we wrinklies get involved with the races for the littlest ones by being roped in up to our knees, waists or necks to be the human square in the water that the kids have to swim round. The noise is fearsome and I sometimes think that the crazy joy of it makes it my favourite thing to do of all.



Fremantle
bookshop



Fremantle
aerial view



My Clare and her Will are a very busy couple, but delight in being good and sociable at weekends and their pool and pizza parties are a huge success with friends and their kids. Clare's best chum who is also Ava's best friend's mum, is another who can whistle up a party at a moment's notice and they had open house on both Christmas evening and New Year's Eve. If you've been to a party with Aussies of all ages intent on enjoying themselves, you know why I needed a bit of a lie down after that.

I had been actually looking forward to the customary Christmas Day picnic on the beach, but this year the famous 'Fremantle Doctor' wind took a hand in proceedings and blew up a hooly, so everyone decided it was a stay at home day. Which gave us all the more time to savour the Christmas presents. Art materials and make-up things for Ava, new scooter for Alfie and a proper bike for Boo. And Lego for

brussel sprouts just to irritate all the males.

The Christmas holidays have exhibitions on at the galleries and museums and musical events as diverse as jazz, didgeridoo and modern dance shows at the various arts centres and the kids came gamely along to the dance, the didge and even a walk-in multimedia show about Napoleon's favourite garden designer, which they said they enjoyed, bless their hearts. School had a history and art project of the Whadjuk people who are the local First Nation folk of the Walyalup area that became Fremantle. A subject now given good prominence.

I had as always a wonderful, emotionally fulfilling time with friends and loved ones, but even such good things come to an end. My last day was Saturday on the beach at Garden Island where the sun shone, the water was warm and I swam with the kids. On



both boys, with them showing their aged GP how to do it properly.

Clare calmly, and with a little help from Mrs Doubtfire and her charges, put on a feast as different to Turkey and Plum Duff as you could imagine. All very Southern Hemisphere, where the weather is usually heatwave and the food reflects the ambiance. Mind you she still made piggies in blankets and even sneaked in some

Sunday I flew home and on Monday I was home and swimming as usual in the open air pool at Pools on the Park. The water was warm and the sun even made a bit of a showing. Naturally the air temperature was 30 degrees colder of course, which made it different, but hey it's home sweet home and I have all the priceless memories to keep me warm.

Your Photos



Clockwise from top: *Blue Skies above Michel's* by Alan Shirley; *Blue Skies above Bishop Duppa's* by Alan Shirley; *Richmond Hill* by Derrick Thompson; *Primroses* by Jenny Heathcote; *Heather at Isabella Plantation* by Jan Thompson; *Butterfly Flower (Iris)* by Derrick Thompson and *Camellia at Michel's* by Jenny Heathcote.

If you would like to share your seasonal or local photos, please send them on WhatsApp to Becky Evans **07386 667185** or Derrick Thompson **07796 619697**

Local News, Events & Information

This month's round-up of local news and events that are relevant to you.



2025 Twickenham Regatta is set to take place on Saturday 24th May, running from Glovers Island to Ham House Car Park, Twickenham. Everyone is welcome, you do not need a ticket! 24th May Open 8:30am - 6:30pm. www.twickenhamrc.co.uk

The Rotary Fair Twickenham. A fair for charities and voluntary organisations to engage with the public. There will be entertainment and food and it will be part of the reaffirmation of the town twinning with Konstanz and Fontainebleau. Twickenham Green. Monday 26th May. Open 10am - 4pm. therotaryfair.uk



Free minibus service is returning to Richmond Park. The volunteer-run service returned to Richmond Park in March, giving all park visitors better access to enjoy the natural park. Timetable online. www.royalparks.org.uk The FREE minibus has disabled access, and runs between all the Richmond Park car parks, Ladderstile Gate, Richmond Gate, Pembroke Lodge and Isabella Plantation.

Spring Art Fair at Landmark Centre in Teddington. Landmark Art Fairs provide a unique setting for individual artists that make high quality fine art to exhibit and sell their work direct to the public. No galleries, no dealers, just the artists themselves... 16th May: 4pm - 8.30pm. 17th May: 10am - 5pm. 18th May: 10am - 5pm.

The Exchange in Twickenham has announced its summer 2025 programme featuring another season packed with theatre, talks, comedy, film and family events. www.exchangetwickenham.co.uk



Hampton Court Palace — Free Gardens Open Day.

The gardens will be open for **free entry** on the following dates throughout the year. (*Entrance to the Palace, the Maze and the Magic Garden will still require a ticket*).

Upcoming 2025 dates for free entry:
-10th May & 11th May
-1st July to 6th July
-13th September to 14th September

Springtime Walk

Around the Leg o' Mutton Local Nature Reserve in Barnes. Join Veronica Schroter, local resident. Built in 1838, the Leg o' Mutton Reservoir supplied water until its decommission in 1960. 8th May. details on website: www.barnescommon.org.uk



Coffee and Crafting at Museum of Richmond, Old Town Hall, TW9 1TP. Join an afternoon of crafting and creativity. Each workshop dives into the fascinating story behind a beautifully crafted object from the Museum's collection. Use them as inspiration for your very own craft project! **Wednesday 14th and Saturday 17th May:** Lace Knitting inspired by a Lambrequin (a short piece of decorative drapery) More info: www.visitrichmond.co.uk/events



And the Good News is...

Curated by Mike Townsin

- A miniature dachshund called Valerie, which went missing in South Australia 16 months ago, has been spotted alive in the wild. When she disappeared from a campsite, she was only 6 inches tall but has somehow survived for 500 days in the bush, evading predators including black tiger snakes – and all attempts to capture her.
- An 89-year-old man, Derek Harris, has won a battle to prevent BT from closing the last remaining telephone box in his village of Sharrington, Norfolk.



He argued that the K6 model kiosk, designed in 1935, was “an iconic heritage asset” and served a vital purpose in an area with a patchy mobile signal. “It means a lot to me to know that the phone box will be here long after I am gone” he said.

- Archaeologists have discovered a “once-in-a-lifetime” hoard of more than 800 Iron Age artefacts in North Yorkshire. They include elaborate horse harnesses, iron tyres, ceremonial spears and two ornate cauldrons. Experts said that the haul could alter our perceptions of life in Britain 2000 years ago.
- England’s first new forest in 30 years – the Western Forest – is to be created across 6,178 acres of the West Country with the planting of some 20 million trees by 2050. It will create habitats for wild life including dormice and pine martens, and make woodland accessible to 2.5 million people.

Wit and Wisdom

Curated by Mike Townsin



Poetry is the clear expression of mixed emotions.

Robert Frost
(The Road Not Taken)

Every time I’ve seen light at the end of the tunnel, it’s been an oncoming train. **Ange Postecoglou, football manager**

The only thing you absolutely have to know is the location of the library.
Albert Einstein

Only Napoleon did more than I have done, but I am definitely taller.
Silvio Berlusconi

You were given the choice between war and dishonour. You chose dishonour and now you will have war.
Winston Churchill to Neville Chamberlain

Solitude is un-American.
Erica Jong, US novelist

It took me 15 years to discover I had no talent for writing, but I couldn’t give up because by that time I was famous. **Robert Benchley, US journalist and actor**

Not knowing the scope of your own ignorance is part of the human condition.
David Dunning, US psychologist

I bet everyone’s always talking about what a narcissist I am.
Joke, quoted in the Times

On This Day...

Curated by Debbie Flaherty

1st May 1869 - The Folies Bergere music hall opened in Paris.

6th May 1954 - Roger Bannister became the first man to run a mile in less than four minutes.

19th May 1962 - Marilyn Monroe sang "**Happy Birthday Mr President**" to John F. Kennedy at a party in Madison Square Gardens.

20th May 1873 - Levi Strauss and Jacob W. Davis patented blue jeans with reinforced copper rivets.

29th May 1925 - British explorer Percy Fawcett wrote his last letter from an expedition searching for the 'Lost City of Z' in the Amazon - he was never seen again.

Miscellany Curated by Mike Townsin

- In Welsh mythology fairies ride corgis into battle.
- From 16th to 19th century England had a world monopoly on pencil production.
- The man who invented one-way streets, roundabouts, taxi stands and stop signs never learned to drive.
- The number of people killed by lightning today is a tenth of what it was in the 1940s.
- The French are 19 times less likely to wait for the green man than the Japanese.
- Nobody knows who named the Earth.
- Zero does not exist in nature.
- There is enough room in the human memory for 300 years of television broadcasting.
- Logomnesia is an obsessive searching for a forgotten word.



- In Sweden millennials are called 'the Curling Generation' because all obstacles have been brushed from their path by their parents.

What's the Origin of..?

Curated by Mike Townsin

• **To talk the hind legs off a donkey:** donkeys (like some other animals) don't sit down, but if I bang on long enough, they might just try to sit down until I finish!

• **This show is a barnstormer:** a flamboyant, energetic performance by actors touring the countryside in America in the early 19th century, who frequently performed in barns.

On Cloud Nine

• **To be on cloud nine:** means to be in a euphoric state. In the 1930s people who had too much to drink were said to be "on cloud eight", but that became "cloud nine" because it had a nicer ring to it than cloud eight.

• **To be taken down a peg or two:** in times when beer was served in wooden tankards, and the landlord thought you were getting inebriated, he would serve you in tankards with holes in the side sealed with wooden plugs; the more you drank the more plugs he would remove so the tankard couldn't hold too much alcohol, hence you were 'taken down a peg or two'.

• **Giving someone the third degree:** there was an Irish immigrant in the US called Thomas F. Byrnes (1842 - 1910) who became a famous senior police officer, with a reputation for using brutal methods to extract information. 'First degree' involved verbal persuasion; 'second degree' was intimidation; 'third degree' was physical pain.

Podcasts: What Are They?

by Chantal Richards

What is a podcast? Similar to a radio show, but you can listen to a podcast on demand, at your own pace. It is a pre-recorded audio programme, sometimes with video, and is delivered through the internet. Typically there is a series of episodes, which are like chapters in a book or seasons in a TV show. With over over 414 million podcasts existing globally it's a rapidly growing market. Subjects include news and current affairs, entertainment, interviews, mental health and wellbeing, lifestyle, technology...

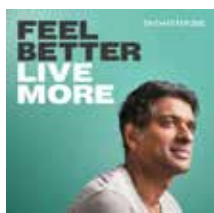
Are they free? Yes, most podcasts are free to listen to. Many are funded by advertising or sponsorship, allowing them to offer their content for free.

How to listen to a podcast. Use a smartphone (iPhone or Android) or a tablet, laptop, a voice activated speaker (Alexa). Use with your normal speaker or with headphones for on the move.

Why do people listen to podcasts?

- To learn - 55%
- For entertainment - 60%
- For inspiration - 27%
- Hear other people's opinions - 30%
- While doing something else - 52%

How to find a podcast. The best way to access podcasts is through an app on your phone. The most popular are **Spotify**, **BBC Sounds**, **YouTube** and **Apple Podcasts**.



This month's recommendation:

Dr. Rangan Chatterjee's podcast, *Feel Better, Live More*, focuses on practical strategies for improving health and wellbeing, drawing on his experience as a physician and his passion for holistic health. You can find this podcast on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and YouTube. He also has a weekly show on BBC Radio 2.

The Three Ks of Gut Health

by Mike Townsin

The gut microbiome – the trillions of microbes in our digestive tract – is a powerful system for influencing everything from our immune response to skin health, mood, energy and sleep. So, the balance of good and bad bacteria in the gut microbiome must be just right; imbalances can be linked to inflammation, obesity, irritable bowel syndrome and colorectal cancer. How to help keep things in harmony? Enter kefir, kimchi and kombucha: all three are fermented foods which contain probiotics – live microbes vital for maintaining gut health.

Kefir can be bought in supermarkets as a drink or a kind of yoghurt for dolloping on your muesli. The fermentation process is linked to benefits such as lower blood pressure and reduces kefir's lactose content which means it may be better for those with a lactose intolerance.

Kimchi is available in supermarkets, usually in the refrigerated section, or Asian grocery stores. It is a claimed 'superfood' which commonly includes cabbage, radish, carrot, spring onion and seasoning such as chilli, garlic and ginger – and is packed with probiotics and fibre.

Kombucha is made by fermenting tea leaves and is a 'gut-friendly' drink rich in organic acids, and anti-inflammatory compounds. In Richmond you can get it in Sainsbury's, Waitrose, Holland and Barrett and, of course, online. Drinking it instead of alcohol or a sweet soft drink is certainly a healthier choice.

NB: as with all dietary advice, if in doubt check with your GP or a dietician.



Debbie's LIFE HACKS

• To remove mould and mildew from fridge seals: mix lemon juice or vinegar in a spray bottle with 1 tbsp of table salt and 1 tbsp bicarbonate of soda. Wipe with a soft cloth or for those hard to reach areas, use an old toothbrush then rinse with warm soapy water.

• Simply hang a hanger from a kitchen cupboard handle and clip a recipe to it for a low-stress, hands-free cooking experience.



• If you've got seeds that you've been meaning to plant but nothing to plant them in, consider using toilet paper tubes to make seed starter pots.

• To cook the perfect fried egg, try cutting a thick onion ring and cooking your egg inside it.

Small Changes ... To Make Your Meals More Nutritious



If you enjoy a morning coffee, wait until after breakfast to drink it.

A slug of strong black coffee first thing might help you to wake up but could backfire by limiting your body's ability to tolerate the sugar in your breakfast.

Professor James Betts, for a paper published in the *British Journal of Nutrition*, found that drinking black coffee before breakfast increased blood-sugar spike after the meal by 50 per cent.

"Put simply, our blood-sugar control is impaired when the first thing our bodies come into contact with is coffee. We can improve this by eating first and drinking black coffee later if we feel we still need it.

Professor James Betts, University of Bath. Source: The Times October 2024

Vitamin Alert

by Mike Townsin

Vitamins are essential nutrients that help the body function properly. The body can't produce enough on its own, so they must come from food. There are 13 vitamins.

Vitamin C

Each month we will feature one, together with the signs of vitamin deficiency and its main food sources.

The main functions of Vitamin C

- helps keep cells healthy
- maintains healthy skin, blood vessels, bones and cartilage
- helps wound healing

Signs of Vitamin C deficiency

Scurvy which causes:

- bruising
- gum and dental problems
- dry hair and skin
- anaemia

The best food sources are:

- guava
- chilli and bell peppers
- kiwi fruit
- mango
- strawberries
- broccoli
- pineapple

*** Consult GP or pharmacy if in doubt.**

Next month: Vitamin D



1. Ins Therebetween. *The Inbetweeners*
2. Art Elephant. *Planet Earth*
3. Coffee Hit. *The Office*
4. Flattery Wows. *Fawlty Towers*
5. Forename Ghost. *Game of Thrones*
6. Berlins Keypad. *Peaky Blinders*
7. True Bleep. *Blue Peter*
8. Needs tears. *Eastenders*
9. It quotes mine. *Question Time*
10. Stage Candy Vein. *Gavin and Stacey*

Edible Flowers!

Can you guess the edible flower?



1.



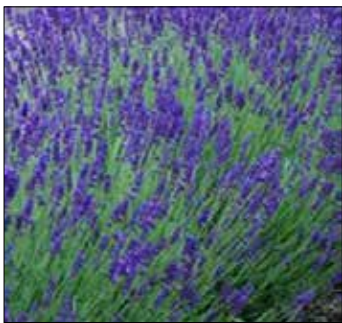
2.



3.



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8.



9.



10.



11.



12.



13.



14.



15.

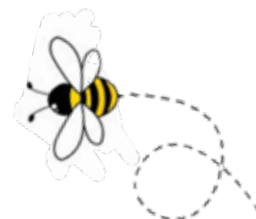


16.

Your chance to win a £10 M&S Voucher! Identify all 16 flowers. Please submit this page to your Scheme Manager, or place in the suggestion box **before Friday 16th May.** Name:

Wordsearch: Bees

World Bee Day is celebrated every year on the 20th May.



T H S C A R P E N T E R B E E T E Y O Q M W V F Y M R S R A U
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 R S O I B K M R D B S O Z B W E F L E F B U H F N P F E G R X
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 Z Y Y X N N K M Y K P W Y R O B E W Z C E C O H N G R P R A I
 T C Y Y J E B R V D V H G S E C Z S B Z T B N O X E K C I H J
 O B R C M L T B U D E N D E Z R G B V C J J J I A Q Y E M F A
 M X F G E R C U X A Y J S B Y V L M C A Y P V Q N H S B M I P
 R J B B E E B R E D R A C N O M M O C H Q O L E Z D G R E Y L
 V K E P I W L N V W I D W T A Q D J V P D F N A T D H N L E B
 N E C J Q V H W B E V C G E E B E L B M U B Y R R E B L I B Z
 V T C Z X Z L B Y I A S A X I P T T E J X W B H X O M Z P O U

Bumblebee

Mining Bee

Honeybee

Tree bumblebee

Squash bee

Ashy mining bee

Western honey bee

Carpenter bee

Mason bee

Leafcutter bee

Common carder bee

Hornet

Bilberry bumblebee

White-tailed bumblebee

Solitary bee

Sweat bee

Beewolf

Habropoda laboriosa

East African lowland honey bee

Hairy-footed flower bee

Tawny mining bee



Your chance to win a £10 M&S Voucher! Find all 21 bees and submit this page to your Scheme Manager, or place in the suggestion box **before Friday 16th May.**

Name:

Poetry Corner

by Nigel Davis

Charlotte Mew (1869-1928) was an extraordinary person (she liked to smoke a pipe and wear men's suits, for example, at a time when that was decidedly unorthodox). She was also an extraordinary poet, blending Victorian styles of poetry with more modern methods of metre and line arrangement.

And this is an extraordinary poem. In an age when there was relatively little environmental awareness, she identifies closely with the destruction of magnificent plane trees (cut down, we are led to infer, for no reason of disease or decay and with the cheerful workmen heedless of the loss they are wreaking). But the poet goes beyond just reflecting on wanton environmental damage. She also mourns the destruction of life itself in these trees. And then she moves on yet further to reflect on the sadness in the premature loss of any life-taking, remarkably, the example of the loss of the life of a rat, traditionally just about the lowest form of life in the estimation of humans.

This is, I think, a most moving poem. Note its careful rhyming structure underneath the complex metrical arrangements. The opening quotation on which the poem is based is taken from the Book of Revelation in the New Testament.

The Trees are Down

by Charlotte Mew

and he cried with a loud voice: Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees - Revelation

They are cutting down the great plane-trees at the end of the gardens.

For days there has been the grate of the saw, the swish of the branches as they fall,

The crash of the trunks, the rustle of trodden leaves,
With the 'Whoops' and the 'Whoa', the loud common talk,
the loud common laughs of the men, above it all.

I remember one evening of a long past Spring
Turning in at a gate, getting out of a cart, and finding
a large dead rat in the mud of the drive.

I remember thinking: alive or dead, a rat was a
god-forsaken thing,
But at least, in May, that even a rat should be alive.

The week's work here is as good as done. There is just
one bough

On the roped bole, in the fine grey rain,
Green and high

And lonely against the sky.

(Down now! -)

And but for that,
If an old dead rat

Did once, for a moment, unmake the Spring, I might never
have thought of him again.

It is not for a moment the Spring is unmade to-day;
These were great trees, it was in them from root to stem:
When the men with the 'Whoops' and the 'Whoas' have carted
the whole of the whispering loveliness away
Half the Spring, for me, will have gone with them.

It is going now, and my heart has been struck with the
hearts of the planes;

Half my life it has beat with these, in the sun, in the rains,
In the March wind, the May breeze,

In the great gales that came over to them across the roofs from the
great seas.

There was only a quiet rain when they were dying;
They must have heard the sparrows flying,
And the small creeping creatures in the earth where they were lying -
But I, all day, I heard an angel crying:
'Hurt not the trees.'

