



Jubilee Day in Weybridge Town 26th May



Weybridge Town Business Group -WTBG (Denise Murray of the Linen Room, Adam Moreve of Ben Vestito and Claire Fallon of Jacquie's Boutique) arranged an excellent Jubilee Day celebration covering the whole town; from The Quadrant, through Church Street, High Street, Monument Green and Baker Street.

Music (some provided by our own Joe Hall, Chair of our Weybridge Society marketing panel and his musical friends!); fairground rides, raffles, food, face painting, local organisations, scouts – and even an appearance by 'Elvis' (a tribute performer) all added to an extremely successful event. Weybridge Society was fortunate to have a stand in Baker Street, promoting our aims and encouraging membership. The event raised an impressive £2,300. The Weybridge Town Business Group

will donate the profits to Help-for-Heroes and the Weybridge Hall appeal.

The Weybridge Society is maintaining links with the WTBG which has recently involved discussions over the proposed Morrisons supermarket on the old Focus site.



WTBG is arranging a special dinner on 25 October 2012 at The Ship Hotel. The speaker will be The Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable, MP, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, and President of the Board of Trade. For more information please contact WTBG chair, Adam Moreve, adam@benvestito.co.uk 0192 854505.

Article by Carolyn Pennycook, Secretary

Michael Aspel - 'Living on Air'

We are pleased to announce that Michael Aspel will be giving a talk to the society Titled – 'Living on Air'

The subject is 'an accurate description of earning his keep as a broadcaster'. Please come along to the Weybridge Hall Thursday 29th November 2012 in time for an 8pm start. All are welcome (members and non-members)

The entrance fee, £3.00 per person, will be donated to Sam Beare Hospice.



scan this neocode
with smart phone
to link to website



Weybridge War Memorial

With the centenary of the start of World War 1 fast approaching and thanks to the tremendous efforts of Society member Ian Pickard; the imposing War Memorial standing on the Temple Market roundabout at the junction of Oatlands Drive, Monument Hill, Hanger Hill and Queens Road, was last year expertly cleaned and restored by Lodge Brothers who did a first class job.

We are also greatly thankful to County Councillor Ian Lake who apportioned a generous amount from his allocation of council funds for local projects.

Like of number of us, Ian Pickard had been saddened to see the Memorial standing without illuminated and in the dark on an isolated traffic island during winter evenings. Consequently, in conjunction with Surrey County Council's lighting contractor, Skanska, he formulated a plan to illuminate the Memorial. This consists of four

small lamps sunk into the grass at the four corners of the compass so that each side of the Memorial will be lit up. The scheme is discreet and, above all, respectful.

The project costs have been estimated at £8,700. County Councillor Ian Lake's generous member's allocation has contributed £3,960 towards the project. Additional sources of funding are currently being sought for the balance to make the proposal a reality. Early completion of this project would, of course, make a tangible contribution to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations



Photo submitted by Raymond Spary

Article submitted by Barry Judd

10 mph Speed Restrictions imposed in Weybridge



The council decided to clamp down on speeding in Baker Street.

Don't panic, it was in 1910. Weybridge Urban District Council imposed a speed limit of 10 mph in Baker Street, Church Street and High Street, because the motor traffic was becoming a nuisance! The transition from carriages to motor vehicles just before the First World War changed the pattern of transport, and the condition of the roads was improved. Tarmacadam surfaces were laid, which replaced the previous old gravel roads. This innovation saved watering and cleaning of the gravel to keep dust down in the summer months. However, it also meant that the Urban District Council had to spend large amounts of money replacing it with tarmacadam!

A road census on 29 June 1909 recorded 225 carriages, 20 motor vans, 179 motorcars and 1749 bicycles passed through Weybridge Town centre (bicycles were a popular and cheap form of transport).

Information from 'Weybridge Past' by Neil White, published by Phillimore.

Nuisance Advertising

Illegal and nuisance advertising is unsightly and spoils the neighbourhood appearance. Of course it's nice to know when the circus is in town but we don't need to see a large cardboard advertisement on every lamppost. Similarly, isn't it unacceptable that rouge estate agents to put their for-sale signs on public on common property? They are advertising their services at your expense. If you advertised your business in this manner you would expect to be seriously reprimanded. It's not right and displaying adverts without advertisement

consent is a criminal offense. In legal jargon they are 'causing harm to public amenity' and there's legislation in place to take action. Here's what to do, go to the Elbridge Council Offices and ask for a 'planning enforcement request form' and fill it in. There's also a link to a pdf document on their website <http://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/control/enforcement.htm>



MORRISONS' SUPERSTORE PROVOKES WIDESPREAD CONTROVERSY



Picture 1 Old Focus Building

No recent planning application has produced as much concern as Morrisons' much heralded plan to build a large supermarket in Monument Hill (planning reference 2012/1933). The old Focus building (*Picture 1*) together with the two adjoining office blocks (*Picture 2*) and Little Garth in Baker Street, all of which Morrisons recently bought, would be demolished to make way for the 6,400 sq m building.

The Weybridge Society is not against Morrisons having a store in Weybridge. We made it clear in our letter to Elmbridge Council that the Focus site needs to be used or redeveloped and that a Morrisons' store on the site, compatible with the town, would have been appealing to many.

Because of the complexity of Morrisons' detailed plans and impact assessments the Weybridge Society pressed the council to place a copy the plans (some 5inches of paperwork) in Weybridge Library, and also to extend the

period of consultation from the end of June to mid July.

The planning and transport panels held several meetings to examine the plans in detail against planning criteria and the recently published Elmbridge Core Strategy and the supplementary planning document on character and design. Dave Arnold and his transport panel were able to challenge many of the technical assumptions in Morrisons' traffic consultants' report on parking and congestion.

As a result of this work the planning and transport panels have written detailed letters of objection which highlight the drawbacks the scheme would have for Weybridge in terms of the scale of the development and the greatly increased pressure it would have on traffic and parking:



Picture 2 Adjoining Office Blocks

- The Focus site is the south-eastern gateway to the town and any development should seek to enhance it;
- The development, on a 115 metres long site, comprises a building of mainly two storeys, but with three storey sections. Some residents in Baker Street would look at an 11 metre high warehouse close to their back gardens;
- The development would overwhelm the neighbourhood including the important Monument Green Conservation Area where the historic York Monument stands;
- The proposed 28 metre roundabout at the bottom of Monument Hill, besides being an unattractive feature, would slow the traffic causing serious congestion both in the centre of Weybridge and its approaches; traffic is already at saturation point. The small grassed area at the entrance to Monument Road with its 60ft plane tree (*picture 3*) would also be lost adversely affecting the street scene;
- There would only be 220 underground car park spaces for customers, and staff would be a forced to park in local streets already full of parked cars.

As of mid-July the Morrisons' proposal has attracted some 500 individual letters of objection from residents as well as the business community. There has been only a handful of letters of support based on increased convenience and competition.

It is likely that the plans will be considered by Elmbridge's West Area Planning Sub-Committee on 3 September.

Robin Clarke, Joint Chair, Planning Panel

Weybridge Society Summer Party 1 July 2012

Rain didn't dampen the spirits at the Weybridge Society Summer Party. Organised by Margaret Wickes (Treasurer) and Anne Lindsay (Main Committee Member) it was well attended by ninety plus members. It was held in the beautiful gardens of Anne and Ray Lindsay. Michael Aspel OBE our very supportive patron joined the party and drew the raffle in his own inimitable way. Prizes were very generously donated by supporting businesses and members. Raffle prizes included 3 bottles of Champagne; 3 nights break in Devon; a picture by member Helen Mills; £50 voucher from La Terraza, Hershaw Road, Walton on Thames; £50 voucher from Dermal Lounge, Weybridge; and a garden plant from Plantation, Woburn Hill.



Photo submitted by
Raymond Spary



Photo submitted by Raymond Spary

Ray Lindsay and his musical colleagues provided the much appreciated musical entertainment. The profits will be donated to two charities 'Sam Beare Hospice' and 'Weybridge Land Charity' who will receive a donation of £421 each.

New Localism' and the Localism Act 2011

In order to be different from the last Government, which tried to plan centrally and regionally (remember John Prescott?), the present Government has legislated for local involvement in decisions about development through the Localism Act 2011.

We might all wonder how local opinion on planning of developments can be agreed without 'nimbyism' or special interest groups dominating the process. Well, we on the Society's Planning Panel heard a talk on 14 May from Mark Behrendt, planning policy officer of Elmbridge Council, in which he tried to explain how localism is supposed to work. Waving his arms quite a bit, he tried to wade through the treacle and I think we emerged with a view that local 'democracy' would take some time to develop and would probably only get started around a particular threat or focus (yes, perhaps even, but only informally at this stage, around the Focus site and Morrisons' proposals to transform the town centre). In practice, however, the formal procedure involves recognising a parish council or a newly created Neighbourhood Forum of volunteers (e.g. a Weybridge town centre forum). By law this has to pass through several hoops and be constituted and balanced demographically from a wide range of interest groups. An experimental example is under way in Bookham, with a subsidy not available elsewhere, which was formed to deal with a particular supermarket site. Weybridge Society would be expected to

be part (perhaps up to 10%?) of such a Forum, which would be monitored by Elmbridge Council for legal compliance, so that the Council could accept then the views from the Forum (assuming there are clear) after independent review and a Referendum; (another use for Weybridge Hall perhaps?!). At the end of the rather bureaucratic 'process map' there should emerge a 'Neighbourhood Development Plan', after about a year.

The assumption for such a Plan is that 'growth' is the purpose of development, meaning growth of jobs, housing and other such contributors to Government revenue, while trying to minimise the downsides (growth of waste, traffic, noise, crowding or crime), by good planning, (e.g. jobs not requiring too much road commuting, or not at the expense of other jobs). Growth of good amenities and schools can also be part of this. The hope is that once information and discussion has cleared the air the old 'nimbys' will turn into 'yimbys' ('yes in my back yard', or, more likely, 'yes I might be yawning sympathetically', after being worn down by all the talk). The idea of localism should be welcomed, as it involves the community rather than just the planners and developers. Doing it properly as set out in the Act does, however, sound like hard work and a long haul.

Submitted by Richard Marshall

MEMBERSHIP

The strength of any organisation is in its membership, and we urge all members to recruit at least one new member this year. The membership application form can be downloaded from the website (www.weybridgesociety.org.uk) or hard copies are available from the Secretary and other committee members.

Incidentally, if you know of a lapsed member, please encourage them to rejoin – and if your own membership needs renewing, please send your subscription to the Treasurer. (PO Box 492, Weybridge, KT13 8WX).

Time to reflect

Committee member Trevor Tarring has just turned 80, many congratulations to him. Today this is no longer the major milestone it once was; quite a lot of Society members have already passed this birthday and show every sign of paying their membership dues for many years more. Trevor has lived in Weybridge for 36 years; we asked him to reflect on the changes he has seen in the town in that time.

We asked Trevor on his views on the most significant changes over the years.

He said that the two big changes he notices are the street scene in the town and, linking with that, the traffic. In 1976 he was commuting to London for much of the year, either by train or motorbike, and travelling the globe the rest of the time. In those days, you could tell from the density of the traffic whether you were in central London or in the suburbs. Today, Weybridge's status as congestion headquarters for West Surrey means that that difference is not so obvious. Equally, the biggest lorries passing through Weybridge then were at least capable of turning the tighter corners without causing problems to other road users as today's juggernauts do.



What about the town?

On Church Street and the High Street there were more proper shops, less charity shops and slightly less estate agents. There was more of a "down home" feel to the place. The Post Office was dedicated to the business of Royal Mail; Lewis's were selling British motorbikes on Limes Road; Bowman's bustling garage on Baker Street was where the strange mausoleum of empty flats stands today; all the major banks had branches on Queens Road as well as in the town; you could access the station from either side of the track and the Victorian booking office had not yet burned down.

Are there any improvements?

There has been change, not necessarily decay. There are compensations for living in Weybridge in the 21st century. Nowadays it's safe to drive or walk down Brooklands Road at half past four without being run down by a phalanx of cyclists whose shift at Vickers had just ended. And you can still recapture Weybridge's glory days at Brookland's Museum; back then the whole Vickers site was off limits to the general public. Today's four trains an hour to London compare well with the limited services of the back then; though you didn't have the irritation of having to change trains to get to Guildford. If a newcomer wants a telephone line, they can have it straight away, and anyway they have their mobile phone. The Churchfield carpark is a sensible size (though never big enough at busy times). And just imagine what pressure shops would be under if we had not discovered internet shopping and home delivery. (Home delivery is a re-discovery of what used to be provided 50 and 60 years ago by errand boys with tradesmen's bicycles.) At the end of the day, Weybridge is still one of the more agreeable places to live.

Thames Landscape Strategy

The Thames landscape is going through a process of improvement and beautification from Kew to Weybridge. The Weybridge Society is a partner in the project and has been playing a major supporting part. Member Tony Davis has provided the following update.

Members may remember that the project co-ordinator, Jason Debney, gave a talk to the Society in early 2011 about the work that was being done, mostly voluntarily, on environmental improvement schemes to the Thames riverside within London. It was then proposed to extend the geographical area upstream to Weybridge, and

members (and subsequently the Committee) gave him their support. They spent several days walking the river bank and co-ordinating ideas for future works of improvement. Since then the Strategy Review Document has now been prepared and published (available to see at the Council Offices), though regrettably without the chapter containing the extension to Weybridge. It appears that this still has to be considered and approved by Elmbridge Borough Council, and through pressure of other work they have not yet managed to do their part. We are promised that this will now be separately published as an Addendum, and be out for consultation by the end of 2012 (about one year late). Watch this space!

Paws In The Park - Sam Beare fundraising

Woking & Sam Beare Hospices will launch a new event at Brooklands Community Park called Paws in the Park. It is a sponsored dog walk which will take place on September 23rd.

Bentley, a 4 month old Maltese Cross and Lucy, a 4 and a half year old King Charles Spaniel are signed up and have been out for a practise walk. Bentley is owned by Chloe Denty, whose mother Wendy is a Community Fundraiser at the Hospices. Lucy's owner, Gwentyth Irish, volunteers in the fundraising department working on data input.

Wendy explained " Fundraising is all about the whole community getting involved and we wanted to include our canine friends that play such a big part in people's lives. The walk has two routes, the longest is only 1 mile long so suitable for all dogs, " Alex Shields from the Hospices who is also organising the event added " Brooklands Community Park is a large area, we have plenty of space; There will also be staggered start times . It will be a fun event for all the family; there will be stalls, dog-tombola, best-in-park competition and every dog will receive a finishing certificate. "

Help these Hospices located in Woking and Weybridge to raise the £5.4million they need every year by registering at www.wsbhospices.co.uk or call 01483 881752 to receive your fundraising pack.



THE PLANNING PANEL-JULY 2012

The following information is summarised from the Weybridge Society's Planning Panel's records; it is up to date at the time of writing and we hope that it is a true representation of the panel's opinion

WEYBRIDGE SOUTH PLANNING – JULY 2012

Beechfield, 22 Hanger Hill (2011/6470)

The former nursing home opposite the Cricket Green was due to be demolished and replaced by a terrace of four 3-storey town houses along Hanger Hill with two detached houses behind. Following opposition from us and the neighbours the application was refused by Elmbridge. We were delighted that the decision to reject was upheld by an inspector in May on the grounds that the development would be out of character in this "highly prominent location"; would "overwhelm" the locally listed building next door; and would result in the removal of a number of fine trees now covered by preservation orders.

St Martins Court, York Road (2012/0156 And 2012/0986)

There have been two applications for a single -storey detached building in the car park behind St Martin's Court to house two offices and, following objections from the Weybridge Society and residents, both applications were refused by the Council. Appeals on both schemes have now been lodged by the developer.

Robin Clarke, Joint Chair, Planning Panel

ST. GEORGE'S HILL PLANNING - JULY 2012

Lincoln Court 2011/5485 -

This application was refused by the Council, but went to Appeal. The Appeal was dismissed.

The Depot 46 Redhill Road - 2012/0423/0522

The application to construct a waste wood processing and burning operation at Redhill Road to generate electricity has not gone away. Another huge file of paperwork has reached Surrey and Elmbridge as part of this three years old saga to set up an industrial operation on Green Belt open land. Some of the new material seeks to rectify shortcomings in earlier submissions, especially about environmental impact, while there is also a new planning policy analysis. There seems to be no greater clarity as to which process is to be used, now that the company responsible for the process described in the original application has gone into liquidation. Your Committee will continue, as hitherto, to monitor this matter and make representations to Surrey, but it would be good if members who have individual comments to make to Surrey sent them in. It is individual letters making cogent planning points that count. The reference is EL 12/0423 and the contact is Alan Stones on 020 8541 7534, MWCD@surreycc.gov.uk

The Planning Panel continues to consider this application (to which they objected), and also the recent comments from the National Grid. The Society's objection was on the grounds of infringement of the GREEN BELT status of the land and that this industrial development would be very inappropriate in this location.

Weybridge House 2012/0434

This application was refused on 24/7/12 on the grounds that it failed to deliver affordable housing, contrary to Core Strategy policy CS21 and National Planning Policy Framework.

for Peter White, Joint Chair, Planning Panel

OATLANDS PARK PLANNING - JULY 2012Land at 18-22, Barham Close (2010/0584 and 2012/1708)

The application (0584) to build three terraces of four three-storey houses, was allowed on appeal 15th February 2012. However the developer has so far failed to acquire the whole site required for the development and has applied (1708) for permission to build the development in two phases. The Weybridge Society has objected to this new proposal because if the development could not be completed beyond Phase 1, the end result would be totally unacceptable.

Land at Berkeley Court and Oatlands Drive (2011/5429)

This application is for a 12.5 metre high telecoms mast on the grass verge at the entrance to Berkeley Court. It was refused in June last year, was subsequently taken to appeal. The appeal was allowed in May.

Foxcroft, Oatlands Avenue (2012/1143)

This was a scheme to replace a single bungalow by a pair of semi-detached chalet bungalows. No representation were made and the application was approved under officer delegation in May.

Geoff Banks Joint Chair, Planning Panel

WEYBRIDGE NORTH PLANNING - July 2012Former Portmore Dental Practice At 4 Balfour Rd (2006/2047,2007/1838,1840 & 1859, 2011/0460,6301)

In previous newsletters we have reported that the house, a significant late 19th C building included in the Weybridge Conservation Area, is not presently at risk as the planning application was to convert it into flats. We are now pleased to report that the same application, which also proposed building 8 flats on the rear car park has been refused on appeal.

A number of local residents, a ward councillor and members of the Weybridge Society Planning Panel met the inspector on site.

We consider that the Inspector viewing the application site from nearby houses, Weybridge Society challenging site markings and pointing out views and site lines was significant.

This proposed building of flats on this site would have been a total over development, causing considerable damage to the Devonshire Road street scene.

Raymond Spary Joint Chair, Planning Panel

EMAIL ADDRESSES

If you would like to receive information via the email about Society activities and other events in Weybridge, then please make sure you send your current email address to our webmaster at webmaster@weybridgesociety.org.uk If you have changed your email address, please also inform our webmaster.

Editors Article - Cycling

I was very pleased to be invited to be guest editor of the newsletter particularly as the most outstanding local event for years has come to town - the Olympic cycling. Streets were cleaned and polished; the ugly building at the station was covered, roundabouts were decorated with beautiful artistic bicycles.

Weybridge residents turned out in their thousands to cheer and support one of the greatest cycle shows on earth as international athletes cycled through our town. Alexandr Vinokurov of Kazakhstan won gold medal in the men's event and our own, Lizzie Armitstead, who won the silver medal the following day in the women's race.

After the event, wasn't it marvellous to walk to the town centre without fear of being run over by speeding cars or lorries? It has been suggested that every local town should have a motor free day every Sunday - no cars; only buses, taxis and of course bicycles - wouldn't that be a good idea?

A few days later I was inspired to dig out my old bicycle, pump up the tyres and go for a nice ride. I had a quick look on the internet to find out where the safe cycle routes are but couldn't find any. Nevertheless, I set off towards the town along Brooklands Road, Heath Road and headed for Chertsey across the River Wey Bridge. The Weybridge part of this journey was quite unpleasant and unsafe. I felt very vulnerable as cars sped past with inches to spare. However, once across the bridge and into the next borough (Runnymede) I was very pleased to be on a safe off-road cycle route. It was a similar story across Chertsey Bridge into the borough of Spellthorne.

I'm surprised nowadays that we don't have safe local cycle routes. There would be so many benefits to promoting cycling. Of course financial barriers would need to be addressed; maybe local business sponsorship could be the answer. Route planning advice could be provided by local cycle groups. I believe there is an undercurrent of public opinion thinking along the same lines, the challenge is getting these ideas implemented – could localism at a town level be the answer? Maybe we should all rally together, whilst the topic is fresh in our minds to help create a healthy and safe environment for the future.

Joe Hall Guest Editor



Photo submitted by Raymond Spary



Photo submitted by Raymond Spary

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