



Early spring at Kilmorey Mausoleum, from a photo by Tony McSweeney

ENVIRONMENT TRUST FOR RICHMOND UPON THAMES

Spring Newsletter 2010



Welcome to the next decade (or the final year of the last decade, depending on how you want to look at it). As this newsletter shows, the Environment Trust is beginning to take off with the educational work that we are developing, to enable people to understand and appreciate the environment (both built and natural) around them.

This means that the office is busier than ever, not helped by the fact that I will be moving on at Easter, as I am going back to fulltime medical writing. We are currently recruiting for a new office coordinator, which is proving to be much harder than when I “applied” for the post, as the Trust is now much bigger and more professional. No doubt you will be able to meet my replacement at the AGM in June (save the date!)

Meanwhile, we’re trying out a new format for the Members Meeting in the hope that people will find a less formal atmosphere more encouraging. So we’ll be opening the office up on Monday 15th March, from 7 to 9pm, and you can drop in at any point to meet the trustees and project coordinators and have a chat about the Trust. Light (and possibly alcoholic) refreshments will be available!

Until then, enjoy the newsletter, and don’t forget to book your place on one of our many leisure courses or the art picnic series.

Sara Black, Office Coordinator

PROJECTS ROUND-UP

Our work on Between the Locks and the River Centre has opened up contacts with education partners and river organisations from Teddington to Faversham, and our *Thames Celebration* events have gathered enthusiasts for the Thames from all walks of life. We have been greatly encouraged by the support of these organisations and by our patrons Sir David Attenborough and Bamber Gascoigne.

We find an enormous appetite for social history and archaeology, as demonstrated by the remarkable Thames Discovery Programme, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and run by University College London and Thames Explorer Trust. From an expectation of 70 people becoming involved in the process of recording the Thames archaeology, the organisers have now 280 on their books!

Our links with the borough’s arts service and Orleans House Gallery have strengthened this year, with the Trust being represented on the Arts Advisory Forum, and contributions to Orleans House Gallery projects are in the pipeline.

The Trust’s core work on listed buildings has continued this year with the project to repair and reinstate the mausoleum of Sir Richard Burton and his wife in Mortlake. The Trust first obtained a grant from English Heritage to fund the project development stage, which – with a successful application to the council for Listed

KEY DATES THIS SPRING

SPRING MEMBERS MEETING
Monday 15th March

A CELEBRATION OF THE WORKING LIFE
OF THE RIVER THAMES
Thursday 25th March

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Thursday 10th June

For details visit www.environmenttrust.co.uk or
contact the office on 020 8891 5455

ENJOY THE RIVER?

We have a space in the Trust’s boathouse on Richmond riverside and propose to buy a boat and find others who would like to share its use and the storage and maintenance costs. For more information phone 020 8948 2323 or 020 8392 8695

Building Consent – is now complete and a conservator has been appointed. The Friends of Burton are beginning the campaign to raise the funding necessary to complete the work and to provide a legacy so that the Trust can undertake to maintain the building. There are many potential educational benefits attached to this project, one of which is a link with Kingston University’s Historic Buildings Conservation Programme, providing an opportunity for students of that course to join in the work of conservation.

We continue to be consulted on local planning policies and applications for development, and are delighted that Colin Main has joined us to help in this work, creating a system for logging and responding to applications. He joins Hugh Corner who minutes many of our meetings and is contributing to the Trust’s response to Thames Landscape Strategy’s review.

Inevitably a great deal of time is spent applying for funding for these activities, but we are enormously helped by the people who are giving hours of their time to our projects and contributing to the bid-writing too! It is a joy to work with them. If you would like to help by donating time we’d love to hear from you, and if you can contribute funds, we promise they will be very well spent!

Angela Kidner, Projects Manager

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOR THE COMMUNITY

Since our last newsletter Richmond Council has announced its decision to delay moving forward with the overall Twickenham Riverside project until after the elections in May. As a consequence, the project itself is likely to become an election issue and the Trust, while remaining comfortable that the proposed scheme will benefit Twickenham and the local community, is happy to leave the public arguments to the politicians. As a result of these delays, the focus of the River Centre project team has shifted, although we continue to gather information and documentation about the River Centre and its proposed operation, such that we shall be fully prepared if the project restarts in the summer.

Much of our time is now focused on the development of an environmental education programme for the community, which will be a long-term legacy of this project, regardless. The Trust is working with a number of key partners such as Kingston University, Thames Explorer Trust and Capel Manor College, in developing and implementing this programme. These partnerships are themselves a major beneficial outcome from the project.

Thanks to funding provided by City Bridge Trust and our partnership with Richmond Environment Network (for example through its council-funded Schools Environment Forum), we have been providing environmental education and advice to most of the borough's primary and secondary schools for the past 2-3 years. Last

year we also initiated a programme of river- and environment-focused leisure courses and we have started a number of courses and programmes for people with learning difficulties. All of these programmes are designed to engage the community with the local environment in ways that are both informative and fun.

We have ambitious plans to develop and expand this programme over the next 3 years, delivering short courses and extended programmes to adults and young people alike. The focus will be on education for all, training for young people and the unemployed, and the engagement of disabled and disadvantaged people in active community life.

Our overall aim is the development of a more resilient community, more in tune with its environment and better able to adapt to the challenges of the 21st century. This borough's great assets – a strong network of community groups, plenty of public open space and a well educated and engaged population – make it ideal for developing this initiative. It is intended as a pioneering demonstration of how urban communities can respond to the challenges of economic and climate change and energy scarcity. The Trust is very interested in hearing from any members who would be interested in getting involved in these and similar ventures.

Rob Gray, River Centre Project Manager

ENGAGING YOUNG MINDS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Our intention for the River Centre is that it will be an exemplar sustainable building illustrating best-practice methods, materials and techniques of environmental design. It will be used to educate, inspire and inform about local, national and international environmental issues and provide a space for community activities.

We are already using the proposed building to engage students from Teddington School in environmental issues, encouraging discussion and development of ideas and practical innovative solutions.

I have been facilitating a series of workshops for the students, covering sustainable design, energy, transport, water, materials, waste, land use, ecology and biodiversity and including visits to the Creative Resources Sustainable Materials Collection (www.extranet.kingston.ac.uk/

rematerialise) at Kingston University and one of the UK's leading sustainable developments, Beddington Zero Energy Development (www.bio regional.com/what-we-do/our-work/bedzed).

I am using the experience and feedback from the students to inform my own research at Kingston University School of Architecture (supported by the Environment Trust). This is a great opportunity to work with the next generation of building users and potential designers. My research has shown that their understanding of environmental issues is impressive but when it comes to taking action there are a number of complex social, economic, political and technical barriers in perceptions and attitudes to pro-environmental behaviour. These workshops will hopefully overcome some of these barriers as the students tackle the challenge

of encouraging others to lead more sustainable lifestyles.

Keith Yarker, Assistant Head Teacher of Teddington School says, "The school is delighted to be involved with this project with students of the Applied Art and Design course working on a local environmental initiative benefitting both the River Centre and Teddington School students. The school always welcomes and supports community cohesion. The project is being developed into a unit of coursework that can be submitted towards the students' GCSE examination."

The workshops will culminate in the production of a piece of work that could be applied directly to the fitout of the River Centre building, the river environment, landscape or the building in use as an environmental education centre.

John Clarke, PhD Researcher

VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

The Trust is edging ever closer to delivering vocational training in environmental conservation for young people. In February Caroline Kerr Smith, generously funded by Thames Community Foundation and Adobe, trained as an assessor for the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) course and in March we held a forum to discuss the structure and content of the NVQ course. It was attended by representatives from the Royal Parks, the London Wetland Centre, London Wildlife Trust and BTCV, among others.

Joe Pecorelli, Environmental Education Coordinator

CAROLINE KERR SMITH

Caroline was formerly the training manager with Richmond Adult Community College. Her experience in vocational training is proving of great benefit with our plans to offer vocational courses from September 2010. Caroline is also interested in helping the Trust develop horticulture and environmental activities for people with learning disabilities. When she is not helping the Trust, she keeps busy with her garden design consultancy.



Twickenham River Centre Design Challenge: Teddington School Applied Art & Design students with facilitator and researcher John Clarke

LEARNING WITH THE ENVIRONMENT TRUST

Encouraged by the success of last year's pilot leisure courses, and taking on board some of the lessons that we learned from them, we are delighted to be offering a considerably expanded series of courses this spring. We've listed brief details here; you can get more information at www.environmenttrust.co.uk or by calling the office on 020 8891 5455.

We hope that you find a course or two that appeals to you – please do tell us if you have any other ideas for courses or formats. And also please spread the word about them to anyone who you think might be interested. Above all – book early for yourselves!

Ann Callaway, Trustee

LEISURE COURSE PROGRAMME SPRING–SUMMER 2010

Secrets of the River Drawing and printmaking workshops with Sasa Marinkov	Thursdays 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th March, 10am to 1pm Environment Trust members £60, non-members £72
Spring Trees and Biodiversity Guided walk through Terrace Gardens with Carole Ritchie	Thursday 8th April, 10–11.15am Repeated Saturday 10th April, 10–11.15am Environment Trust members £6.50, non-members £7.50
Boats and Boating History, construction methods and uses of the traditional Thames boats with Mark Edwards	Saturdays 17th & 24th April, 10am to 12.30pm Repeated Wednesdays 12th & 19th May, 6.15–8pm Environment Trust members £22.50, non-members £25
Shopfronts and Streetscapes Drawing different types of architecture on location with Emily Burton	Wednesdays 28th April, 5th, 12th, & 19th May, 10am to 12.30pm Environment Trust members £45, non-members £50
Richmond's Secret Garden Guided walk through Vineyard Passage Burial Ground led by Alan Sherriff	Tuesday 18th May, 10.30–11.15am Repeated Saturday 22nd May, 10.30–11.15am £3 (Environment Trust members and non-members)
Explore the Tidal Thames Guided walk along the towpath from Richmond to Kew led by Rob Gray	Thursday 27th May, 10am to midday Environment Trust members £8.50, non-members £10
Explore the River Crane Guided walk along the Crane led by Rob Gray	Sunday 6th June, 10am to midday Environment Trust members £8.50, non-members £10
Drawing Bridges: Detail & Drama Drawing from two contrasting bridges in the borough with Emily Burton	Tuesdays 8th & 15th June, 10am to 1pm Environment Trust members £27, non-members £30
Greening Your Home Workshop led by Stephen Pretlove	Tuesday 15th June, 6–8pm Free
Hidden Treasures: The Wildflowers of Ham Lands Guided walk through Ham Lands led by Claire Fifield	Thursday 17th June, 10am to midday Repeated Thursday 24th June, 10am to midday Environment Trust members £8.50, non-members £10
River Drawing: Ripples & Reflections Nature drawing with Emily Burton	Tuesday 13th & Wednesday 14th July, 10am to 1pm Environment Trust members £27, non-members £30



ART PICNICS

This year's Art Picnics season is off to a flying start, with visits to Kempton Steam Museum and the John Lewis store in Kingston.

The remainder of the year contains one or two familiar locations and several that should give you a new perspective on your neighbourhood, including the rooftops of Richmond in May, Lichfield Court in September and the Victorian gardens and lake of St Margaret's Estate in October.

So come along and see how you can transfer what you see onto paper, with the help of experienced local artists who will guide and encourage you. Visit our website or contact the office for more details.



OPEN DAYS AT KILMOREY MAUSOLEUM

Two extra Open Days are planned at Kilmorey Mausoleum this summer as the Environment Trust links up with larger organisations in an effort to increase access to this little-known historical site off a main road in Twickenham.

- **Saturday 1st May**, when the mausoleum grounds will feature in the Discovering Places weekend being run across London by the 2012 Olympic Legacy movement.
- **Sunday 13th June**, when the grounds will be included in the London Gardens Open Squares weekend.

Although the mausoleum grounds are in the

shape of a triangle rather than a garden square the organization promoting the June opening is delighted to welcome us into its embrace. On both days the garden and mausoleum will be open between 1 and 5pm and admission will be free on the May date, with refreshments, we hope, available on each occasion.

During the spring we planted several experimental wildflower ribbon-shaped beds within the meadow, which will not only help to create a natural effect in the late summer but also allow us to control the grasses more effectively. Next year we intend to extend

these beds to cover more of the meadow.

Another feature this year is the renewed emphasis on recycling. If enough people volunteer to help on open days, we would like to devise a recycling trail through the grounds.

Volunteers continue to meet regularly on Monday lunchtimes for work in the garden. Tools and guidance are provided, so do come along if you feel like some exercise that is creating a valued garden for the local community. No particular skills are required beyond enthusiasm and some energy.

Derrick Mercer, Trustee



VINEYARD PASSAGE BURIAL GROUND

Local residents of all ages enjoy the Vineyard Passage Burial Ground but none more so than the young children who have fun walking on the boundary wall as they pass through with their parents. This is nothing new; it's been happening for generations. It is therefore particularly important that we keep the wall in a good condition to reduce the risk of accidents. The wall needs repair in a number of places and we are looking at funding options for the work that is required.

Following the repair of the headstone of Mrs Elizabeth Morden and Mrs Melliora Hollier,

we are turning our attention to another memorial that requires urgent repair. This is a brick tomb topped with a large stone slab, which we believe is the oldest internment in the burial ground, having been erected to hold the remains of Jonathan Doveton Esquire who died in January 1792 (the burial ground was consecrated in December 1791). In 1824 the remains of his son, Major General Gabriel Doveton were also deposited in the tomb. The tomb is now in a state of disrepair; with the original lime mortar disintegrating, resulting in the loss of supporting brickwork.

Angela Hoggarth, Volunteer

ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

Like any successful organisation, the Trust needs to ensure that it remains relevant to new generations of residents and workers in the borough. The trustees have therefore initiated a process of review and development planning.

Key to this was first to strengthen the Trust's central functions and capacity. Small groups of trustees, staff and helpers have been concentrating on particular areas, such as strategic finance, organisational development and events planning. We have made big strides in funding more hours in the overstretched office, improved the bookkeeping, and introduced more efficient processes in daily activities. Just as significantly, we are now well placed to be more in control of our future as we start bringing financial and business planning into focus with our activities.

FINANCING THE TRUST

The Trust's financial strategy is to reduce the proportion of its income that is derived from restricted funds. But what does this mean and why does it matter?

Restricted funds are given to us for a specific purpose, usually from grant funders or charitable foundations but sometimes from individuals. Such funds are normally time-limited and can't be spent on any other purpose. Often, such restricted funds do not cover the day-to-day running costs of the Trust, although increasingly funders are providing a small proportion of the total grant for such costs.

Unrestricted funds can be spent on any Trust business that the trustees believe is appropriate. These can have a variety of sources including membership subscriptions and income from the Art Auction and other fundraising activities.

Grants will continue to be important sources of income enabling us to provide benefit in line with our charitable objects. However, the hard reality is that funding bodies are making tough choices about how they allocate their funds, and we can't take such sources for granted. It is essential that we do what we can to be more self-sufficient and increase our reserves of unrestricted money.

A couple of illustrations help to understand why this matters.

- The Trust's staff provide essential administrative functions (such as producing this newsletter, looking after the website and organising marketing for courses). This work has grown considerably while the resources to run the office are struggling to keep up, although surplus income from the leisure courses is helping to fund some additional hours.
- Looking ahead we need to raise further funds to enable us to improve the services that we offer, for example to reach groups with special needs or different parts of the community, to engage them in a more sustainable way of life and increase their understanding of and sense of belonging in their local environment.

We are busy outlining a plan to ensure that our financial position remains solid. More on this will appear on the website in due time.

YOU TOO CAN HELP

Please consider making a donation when you renew your subscription, or at any time! Your gift however small is vital.

And of course, we can still use more volunteer support – how much faster progress would be with more help!. That is why we will shortly invite you to take part in a skills audit. We are sure that out there is a lot of talent – e.g. marketing, legal, ICT, fundraising skills – that could help strengthen the Trust and take us onwards into the 21st century.

John Anderson, Trustee