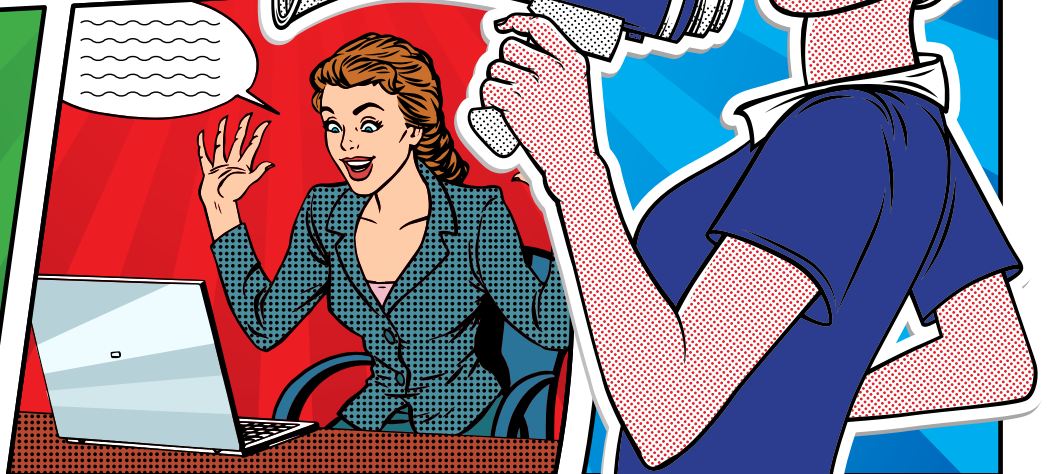
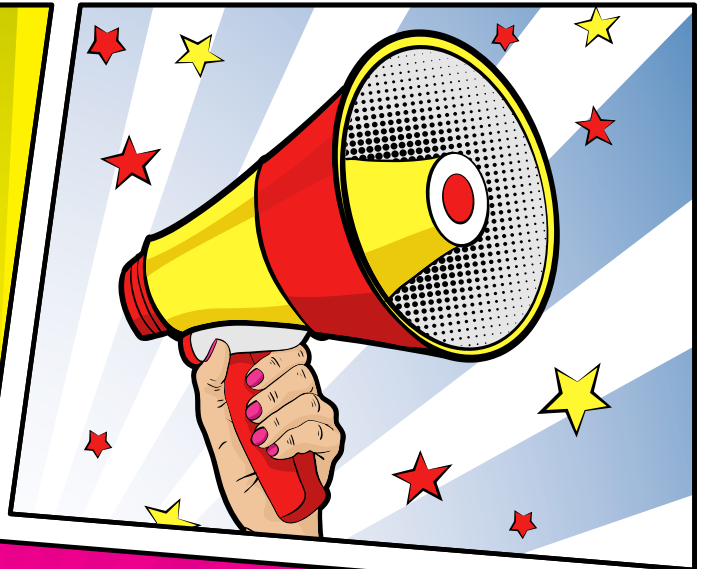


the court

March/April 2017



EXPERTS TRAIN LOCAL RESIDENTS

Journalism Students Set to
Triumph

PRIMARY SCHOOL PANIC

No Room in The Classroom

TROUBADOUR'S FOOD REVISITED

A Melodic Menu Is Born



Keeping
Life Local

Citizen Journalists Take To The Streets

This edition of **The Court** is brought to you by the freshly graduated students of *An Introduction to Journalism and Community Communications*. Begun in January this year, the 12-week programme has put eight enthusiastic residents through their paces at 1A Nevern Place, home of the Earl's Court Community Trust (ECCT) and this newspaper.

A free initiative hosted by ECCT and sponsored by the Family Mosaic housing association, *An Introduction* has given each student group and one-to-one tuition on how to structure and write relevant news stories, create interesting features, and make observations for reviews of events, restaurants and local services.

"We have seen great improvements in our students' writing ability and understanding of the journalistic process over the course of the programme," Programme Manager and Lead Tutor, Brian Scudder said. "They have interacted with some of the best media professionals out there – current and former journalists and educators from the BBC, Newsweek and the University of Arts London among others have kindly given their



time – and we are certain that this learning experience will add greatly to the creation of local community news, in all its guises."

Graduates are now ready to report on life in Earl's Court for *The Court* and other media outlets.

"The evolution of *The Court* newspaper is essential if we are to remain locally relevant," said Deborah Cleary, *The Court's* Managing Editor. "Reader feedback guides this development, and we know that in these times of change there is a growing reader-appetite for local

news. Creating a journalistic resource by providing residents with the skills they need to write about the world they live in is key to this. With an expanded team of editorial volunteers, we are confident that *The Court* is set to go from strength to strength."

Visiting session tutors included Frank Gardner OBE (BBC correspondent and author); Sue Dawson, senior lecturer at The University of Arts London; Caroline Tod-Richardson, Co-Director of the Earl's Court Film Festival;

Christopher Kelly from City Living Local Life - RBKC's community support division; Keith Clancy, long-time resident, ECCT trustee and creator of multiple festivals in the Earl's Court area over past decades.

External experiences included a visit to The Troubadour and lunch with Stacy Parish and Andreas Gunberg; a Finborough Theatre behind the scenes tour with Neil McPherson; and a visit to Rapidity, London's leading digital printer, a session that was of particular interest, as it showed how copy and design become a printed reality.

Over 7,000 readers enjoy our printed paper edition, while 10,000 online users receive regular communication via email and social media channels. What we do takes a lot of work, but it is totally worth it.

If you want to learn more about future educational initiatives, please email deborah.cleary@thecourt.london or SMS 07484 679458. We also welcome news, reviews or interview contributions, so please do contact us with your story ideas.



NO ROOM IN THE CLASSROOM

BY STEPHANIE BURGIN

Tens of thousands of children in England failed to secure their first choice primary school in 2016, and this year the situation is even more critical. With more than a third of children living in RBKC denied placements to their top three choices, it is unsurprising that thousands of parents and guardians are worried about their child's future.

In April 2016, a couple residing in Earl's Court Square were told that not only had their daughter not been given a place at any of the schools they had chosen, of which there were six, but that the school offered was to be outside of the borough. Although the alternative offered was reasonably nearby in Hammersmith and Fulham, the parents' frustration was understandable as their first choice was only three minutes' walk from their flat.

The Court spoke to parents to try and discover the reason that local children are finding it hard to secure places at local schools.

The Distance Dilemma

Many told *The Court* that the distance policy was unfair and discriminating, as low income families cannot afford accommodation close to school premises. Outstanding state primary school Bousfield extended offers to families living within just 0.19 miles (less than five minutes' walk). Fox School, the best performing primary in the UK, was even tougher, with the furthest pupil admitted living only 0.057 miles from the school. Some people joke that living in a caravan in the school car park might be the safest route to entry.

The Lottery System

Outstanding school, Our Lady of Victories, saw the need for change on this flawed policy, and in 2015 changed the distance criteria to random selection – otherwise known as the lottery system. Senior administrator Allyson Hodnett said, "This system gives families of all incomes the same chance as opposed to just families that are in a position to buy or rent a property nearer to the school." Faith-based schools in our area do also apply parish catchment and church attendance criteria also, adding to the challenge.

Local mum of three, Helen Sharma, said "It is well known and openly discussed that parents will move to accommodation near to their school

of choice. I am delighted that OLOV's governors have taken the decision to change the admissions criteria to random selection. Perhaps the lottery system is the way forward for all primary schools in RBKC."

School News

Marlborough School's new educational complex is scheduled for completion in September 2017. It will provide 60 more school places and a 70% larger play area. Kensington Primary Academy, located at 205 Warwick Road, at the junction of Kensington High Street, is also a really interesting option for Earl's Court families. Earl's Court Free School's permanent home will be at the heart of the new Earls Court development, but it is currently sharing the site of the West London Free School Primary in Hammersmith.

September 2017 primary school places will be offered on April 18th. Understandably, many parents and guardians are concerned and anxious to hear news of where their Little Einsteins will begin or continue their early years' education.

In uncertain times, people turn to brands they trust...

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Samantha Hossack
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RETURN TO SENDER

BY NINA KUMAR

When the Post Office announced plans to close and franchise 37 Crown offices in the UK, few envisaged the void that these sweeping corporate measures would create. Despite formal (and seemingly futile) consultations and considerable resident opposition, the Earl's Court post office closed in late January of this year.

The reasons for closure have continued to confound local residents. Full to capacity almost every day of the week, queues regularly tipped out onto Earl's Court Road, so the demand for postal and ancillary services was clear for all to see. So why close and what are the alternatives?

When asked about postal services in the community, many are pointed to Mailbox, other retail outlets to buy stamps for postage. Mr Raj, local Earl's Court resident, said, "there are local alternatives, but they do not offer the full Post Office services. For that you have to travel to High Street Kensington, a trip that, for members of our disabled or older community, can be a challenge.

"Places to buy stamps do not address the general decline in essential services for local residents. It feels like the powers that be are more interested in serving visiting tourists tea and brand name sandwiches than providing essential local services." ❀



PULLING OUT THE STOPS

BY ANNE GREEN

Have you been wondering where some of your local bus shelters have disappeared to? The mystery has been solved.

French-owned outdoor advertising giant, JC Decaux, has tightened its grip on the London market with the award of the bus shelter contract. The 15-year contract was previously held by Clear Channel, which also lost the Transport for London (TfL) bus shelter contract to Decaux.

The new agreement in the Royal Borough includes the provision, installation, maintenance and advertising operations for 80 new bus shelters

including 16 sites already approved for 84-inch digital screens. Jean-François Decaux said, "Securing these additional premium locations including Brompton Road, Kensington High Street and King's Road strengthens our London advertising portfolio and will enable advertisers to reach audiences in some of the most affluent retail and tourist destinations in London, with 40 per cent of the retailers in the area classified as 'Premium'."

The Court is reliably informed that the new bus shelters, avec slick new advertising displays, will be re-installed soon. The good news is that the new shelters will start to appear from 13 March. ❀

BEAT ON THE STREET

BY RAJIV AWASTI

Even though the first thing you see when you exit Earl's Court Tube Station is a Police Box, affectionately know to all as The Tardis, the ward itself has a relatively good security profile. However, as with all transport hubs and urban centres, we do have our fair share of localised crime.

Most local incidents are related to anti-social behaviour and issues related to the consumption and sale of illegal substances, so it was great to see local officers out and about on the streets of Earl's Court recently, getting hands on and working to sniff out potential trouble makers, quite literally.

With drugs being a major factor for crime being committed, local officers, accompanied by Drugs Dogs and British Transport Police Officers, conducted a partnership Drugs Dog Operation in and around Earl's Court Station on Earl's Court Road.

The operation as a whole was a success with 33 stop and searches and seven detections within a period of three hours. This was a positive outcome and the local teams plan to arrange more in the near future. ❀



SHUSH!

BY EILEEN MAGNELLO

Tri-borough Library reconfiguration is changing the way libraries will be used in Kensington and Chelsea, a potentially worrying development for those that enjoy the status quo in our local literary havens. Predictably, efficiencies will come in the form of greater automation and computerization, especially in the areas of book borrowing. However, the bottom line is that there will soon be fewer librarians to assist users, which for many residents is not a good thing.

In a recent report, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council noted that library users not only want a good range of books, but they see helpful, knowledgeable and friendly librarians as a key reason to visit.

"We are blessed to have such a lovely library as Brompton Library on our doorstep," said local resident Mrs Shaw. "The staff there offer excellent services, and definitely do their bit to support literacy in Earl's Court, for young and old. Any change that would involve the extinction of the inimitable shushing librarian would be a great shame."

Let us know what you think of your local library. Email deborah.cleary@thecourt.london. ❀



FREE COFFEE OFFER

Bring along a copy of *The Court* newspaper to Earl's Court's new independent coffee shop, OVER UNDER, and enjoy a free cup of coffee. Pop in to see what all the fuss is about – you won't be disappointed. After all, a neighbourhood is nothing without a community (and caffeine). Over Under is situated at 181A Earl's Court Road. It is open from 6.30am on weekdays, and from 8am on Saturday and 9am on Sunday.

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Trees:
Succession
Planning seminar
at Kensington
Palace

BY LINDA WADE

Garden Square Committee members came to Kensington Palace in January for a half-day workshop to discuss the future of trees in our garden squares. The crowded room heard presentations from Todd Longstaffe-Gowan, the landscape architect responsible for re-design of Kensington Palace gardens, Stephen Crisp, the head gardener of Winfield House, home of the American Ambassador, and Mark Lutyens, who is at present re-designing another Historic Royal Palace, Hillsborough Castle, near Belfast.

Kensington and Chelsea is blessed by having so many garden squares. They provide a patchwork of green spaces in the borough, with each square retaining their own individuality — but some problems are shared, such as the importance of trees within the squares.

Many of our square gardens were laid out by Victorian property developers. Their planting responded to the style and needs of the time, as with the planting of the Plane Trees that now dominate some of our gardens – a response to 19th century pollution and soot.

Another speaker at the workshop, Rupert Bentley Walls of Barcham Trees, said ‘that London is unique in its microclimate, routinely being 5-10 degrees above the rest of the country, and this should inspire the wider choice of sustainable tree stock’.

The results of the table-top workshop session included the need for Garden Masterplans, which should include a stock tree condition survey with the aim of maintaining a healthy tree population through consideration of design, soil condition, and careful selection of a wider range of disease resilient trees.

Local Gems Review:

The
Troubador

The Troubador, or The Troub as some affectionately call it, is known internationally as a music venue of note. But its food has in the past been less well received. Our budding journalists – some of whom hadn’t eaten here for more than two decades – were kindly invited to taste the brand new menu and hone their reviewing skills in the process. Here are excerpts from the results.

Casual comforts
EILEEN MAGNELLO

The Troubadour is the last remaining 1950s coffee shop in London. Its funky decor and welcoming ambiance creates a casual and comfortable place to have a meal with friends and family. Staff are knowledgeable and the service prompt and attentive.

The freshest ingredients were the mainstay of my lunch: An omelette, fluffy, buttery and generously-sized, oozing with cheese, mushrooms and onions that practically melted in my mouth.

My wild rocket salad was peppery and crisp, and, dressed with an extra virgin fruity olive oil with peppercorn-sized bits of Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, permeated every single one of my taste buds. The food was bold in flavour and, quite simply, beyond compare. It left me wanting to return for more.

Pining for a pecan
TERESA COUCEIRO

I managed to resist the fettuccini as it is best I avoid gluten so asked for roasted pecans instead, which I had never tasted before. They came in a small bowl and, compared to the large fettuccini my colleague received, they looked tiny. But appearances can be deceiving and although small, the pecans were quite substantial. They tasted softly sweet and sour with a hint of pepper and cinnamon. They were also rather filling so don’t overdo them if you want to keep space for the main course. My choice was a hotchpotch of root vegetables, which provided warm comfort on a rather gloomy February day.



A satisfying lunch
RAJIV AWASTI

I’ve not stepped into The Troubadour in some time, but since the change of ownership, I’ve been keen to look beyond the velvet curtains and see what’s cooking. You are greeted by the aforementioned drapes, but, once inside, you enter an Aladdin’s cave of coffee pots, and ’50s memorabilia, all clues to the venue’s past.

Ours was a spacious table set near the window; the restaurant has a slightly cramped feel, but is cosy when you are seated. For a Monday lunchtime, it wasn’t especially busy and the staff were attentive, but not rushed off their toes.

The menu is filled with interesting sounding diner-like mains. I was sorely tempted by the 35 day aged chuck burger or the beer battered line caught haddock with chunky chips, but plumped for the bangers and mash with onion gravy. Comfort food of the highest order.

Service was reasonably fast and the food came piping hot. The sausages were slightly singed black on the edges and were plain, to my disappointment. No wild boar and garlic flavours here. But the mash was pleasingly presented and perfect to mop up the tasty onion gravy – food that does what it says on the tin, and no messing. The Troubadour provides a satisfying and filling lunch that won’t surprise you or your wallet.

Getting good value
LINDA WADE

It has been years since I have eaten at The Troubadour – it is not a place that I would choose to go to eat, and so I was very pleasantly surprised at lunch. The food was well presented, tasted good and represented good value for money. One of our party had Linguine to start, which would be have been a great lunch in itself, and the coffee has got so much better. The Troubadour is a venue with a lot of history and much has been retained by the new management. The rear garden is a hidden delight worth a return visit.

Winemaker
for a Day

Gavin Monery is a man on a mission. As head winemaker at London Cru, his task is to produce extraordinary wine for one of the most sophisticated wine-drinking markets in the world. No pressure there, then. But with some of the capital’s best restaurants adding London Crus’ work to their lists, and it receiving rave reviews as a result, the effort is clearly paying off.

Monery embraces the challenge with gusto, bounding around with a youthful enthusiasm that is nothing short of infectious. Which is exactly what you want when you are attending a wine course – even more so when it is a wine course with a difference. For besides



stocking the cellars of the city’s most discerning, Monery is head teacher at a ‘Winemaker for a Day’ event each month.

Part wine tasting, part wine-making, definitely-all-encompassing, Monery’s exposition takes you through the entire production process amidst the steel and oak barrels of London Crus’ Seagrave Road premises, just over the bridge



from West Brompton station. It is brilliant. For regardless of whether you are a novice or an expert, the act of sampling different wines in order to make your own blend transports you from detached observer to alchemist.

Learning about sugars, acids and tannins becomes more personal. After all, you will be taking home the bottle you concocted on the day in order to (if they are lucky) share with family

and friends. It had better be good. “I do as little as possible, but everything necessary to make a good wine,” says Monery. Following in his footsteps, even if it is just for day, is wonderful way of seeing how it is done. *London Cru’s Winemaker for a Day events cost £125. Call +44 (0)207 381 7871, email mail@londoncru.co.uk and see londoncru.co.uk for details.*



Local Gems Review:
OVER UNDER



BY ANNE GREEN

The Court is excited to welcome an independent speciality coffee shop to the heart of Earl’s Court – Over Under.

Located on the corner of Hogarth Road and Earl’s Court Road, this excellent new venture has stripped back coffee and café culture to what really matters: genuinely great coffee, incredibly friendly service, and simple, delicious and healthy food, sourced locally where possible.

At the heart of this community-focused café is new barista in town, owner, Ed Barry, who promises to provide customers with a consistently excellent cup of coffee visit after visit. Why Earl’s Court? Ed saw it as a thriving area underserved by independent shops and restaurants, and believed that there was a market for such a concept.

“We make great coffee and we want to share it with as many people as we can. Our baristas ensure every cup is perfectly brewed with expert precision. We care about your name and order, and we want your visit to Over Under to be the easiest part of your day. We’ve created a relaxed, intimate space to share our raw passion for excellent coffee,” he says.

Ed works closely with Brixton-based roasters Assembly to establish a flavour profile that fits the brand and the customer. Executive Chef Connie Grossman draws inspiration from her previous experiences working for Chez Panisse in California, Two Hands in New York and Ottolenghi in London. If you were wondering, like me, where the name Over Under came from, it is derived from Ed’s heritage. He is born to a British Father and a Kiwi Mother.

*Over Under Coffee, 181A Earl’s Court Road, London, SW5 9RB
Open 6.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday; from 8am Saturday and and 9am Sunday*

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March & April
HIGHLIGHTS

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If you have an event you would like us to promote, drop us a line.
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CHECK OUT WWW.THECOURT.LONDON FOR OUR FULL LISTINGS FOR MARCH AND APRIL

TROUBADOUR LONDON

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The Troubadour is excited to continue our long legacy of music, food, drinks and conversation with the Earl's Court community. Try the new menu in our cafe, enjoy the serenity of our secret garden and revel in our music venue.

Our fabulous new team in the kitchen is serving fantastic breakfast, lunch and dinner specials daily.

If you are looking for something a little stronger than our coffees and teas, our daily happy hour is from 4.30pm to 7.30pm.

We have returned to our roots as a coffee house with new coffee and teas, ready to stimulate long discussions in our cafe or secret garden.

Come for dinner and stay. Relax and enjoy the boundless talents of our singers and songwriters as they perform for you on one of the world's most intimate and famous stages. Our new sound system, designed by a GRAMMY award winning producer/engineer, is sure to impress.

*Always Something Happening
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THE COURT'S REVIEWS

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"The coffee has got so much better. The Troubadour is a venue with a lot of history and much has been retained by the new management. The reargarden is a hidden delight worth a return visit."

"The freshest ingredients were the mainstay of my lunch: An omelette, fluffy, buttery and generously-sized, oozing with cheese, mushrooms and onions that practically melted in my mouth."

March Music & Film at The Troubadour

- 13 Troubadour Film Club
- 15 Suz
- 17 Tracks Dogs, Portland, John Ainsworth
- 18 Bill Kerchen with Austin de Lone - CD Release Party
- 19 Troubadour Jazz Sessions
- 21 Paul Adams, Danny Wright, Roman
- 22 BLOOM presents 'Sprout'
- 23 Jazz with: Ana, John Wheatcroft, Daria Marx
- 24 Eddy Smith and the 507, Bee Bakare
- 25 Cute Owl Festival: Michael Valentine West, tAngerinecAt, The Dyr Sister, Stephanie Finegan, Where The Night Falls
- 26 Mothers Day Special: Jazz Sessions
- 29 Yucatan Records Showcase: Blanco White, Malena Zavala, Cameron AG
- 30 Ben Roberts, Portland, Julian Lebender
- 31 Melinda Ortner

April Music & Film at The Troubadour

- 1 Bill Kerchen with Austin de Lone
- 2 London Guitar Night - Guitar Revolution Special
- 5 Steve Heger (of the Beach Boys)
- 7 BLOOM
- 8 Josh Collins, Oliver Morgan-Russell
- 10 Troubadour Film Club
- 12 After The Gold Rush
- 14 Made From Colour, Ben Wickins, Leo Aram-Downs
- 20 From Nashville: Calico with Ted Russell Kamp
- 22 Kevin Davy White
- 26 BLOOM presents 'Sprout'
- 27 ReverbNation and Songwriting Magazine Present...
- 28 Dancehall Days, JAYA
- 29 Dancehall Days, Bloodshake Chorus