

stepping stones

Newsletter of the Holly Lodge Centre

www.thehollylodgecentre.org.uk



As David Thomas retires, the Holly Lodge Centre announces a new Chairman of the Trustees and three additional Trustees

It is with very mixed emotions that the Trustees of the Holly Lodge Centre announce the retirement of David Thomas as chairman of the Trustees, the appointment of Brigadier Michael Smythe as the new chairman and the naming of three new Trustees.

David Thomas has been a moving force in the Centre since its creation in 1994 and has served as chairman of the Trustees since the Centre was established as an independent charity in 1998. David has also been chairman of Banfield Riding for the Disabled in Kingston for the past 28 years and is the administrator of Speirs House Residential Care Home in New Malden.



David Thomas



Michael Smythe

“We are very grateful for David’s contribution and support over the years, and we will sorely miss his steady hand that helped guide the Centre for so long. At the same time we are very pleased to welcome Mike Smythe as our new chairman,” said June Beedham, Centre Trustee who has headed the search for a new chairman and additional trustees.

After his retirement in 1996 from a distinguished military career, Mike Smythe served as Clerk, or chief executive, of the Vintners Company, one of 12 great livery companies of the City of London from which he retired in 2012. Mike is currently a member of the appeal council of the National Memorial Arboretum and a volunteer at St. Wilfrid’s Hospice in Eastbourne.

“I’ve only recently come to know the Holly Lodge Centre and I’m amazed at the dedication and competence of the volunteers who make this such a special place,” Mike Smythe said on a recent tour of the Centre. “Whether leading mini beast hunts on the nature trail or teaching youngsters about home and school in Victorian times this is a group of people who care deeply about what they do, particularly helping children and adults with special needs appreciate their surroundings and heritage.”

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New Chairman, New Trustees (cont.)

“In addition to our new chairman, we are very pleased to announce that three new Trustees are joining the Centre’s team and we look forward to their active involvement in our continuing efforts to offer groups of young people and adults, many with special educational and physical needs, the opportunity to encounter the diverse wildlife and distinct environmental and historical heritage of Richmond Park,” added June Beedham.

David McLaughlin is a chartered accountant with a long career in professional services particularly in the legal profession. David’s career started with Touche Ross & Co., in London and Paris. He then joined the paper products company Arjo Wiggins Appleton, before returning to senior finance positions with the law firms Linklaters and more recently Simmons and Simmons. Since his retirement David has pursued personal interests including research for a possible book. He is also treasurer of the Friends of Richmond Park.

Martyn Smith is retiring in September as HR Director of Avis International where he was previously Chief Financial Officer. He has worked for Jon Menzies and Inchcape. Martyn has also been the Honorable Treasurer of three charities including the renowned Thomas Coram Foundation and Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Lisa Waterman is a communications specialist and expert in implementing change management programmes. She works on contract for multinational companies such as BP, Barclays Group, Astra Zeneca and the National Air Traffic Services. Other jobs have taken her to the United Nations in New York and the American Embassy in London. Lisa is currently a Trustee of two charities in Tower Hamlets, a Festival Director and a Governor of the Petchey Academy.



Martyn Smith



David McLaughlin



Lisa Waterman

Watch the Video!

The new Holly Lodge Centre video is amazing and inspiring

[Click here to watch it](#)

Registered charity 1076741

Moving, Amusing, Insightful...

Samantha Bond wows a packed house at the Centre's Spring lunch

Dame Maggie Smith, Sir John Gielgud, Dame Judi Dench, Pierce Brosnan – just a few of the greats of theatre, cinema and television with whom Samantha Bond has played in a distinguished career from Shakespeare to Downton Abbey to JAMES Bond.

The trauma of kissing a great star on screen for the first time. Prompting one of the greats as he forgot his Shakespearean lines. Sharing the personal tragedy of a great actress then going on stage together as if nothing had happened. Advising her children to stay away from the theatre only to see them plunge in.

Roles she would like to play? Yes, there are some, but the minute she mentions them it would be all over cyberspace so she demurs. Preference for film or TV or theatre? Theatre. The chance to interact with the audience, particularly in comedy. In live theatre with no chance for retakes there's much more of a real sense of responsibility – only one chance to get it right.

It was a brilliant afternoon and the audience showed its pleasure in its applause but also by supporting the Holly Lodge Centre's activities - £4300 raised. Many thanks to the events team of Belinda Powrie and Pat Leggett for their outstanding organisation.



A few of the many (animated) faces of Samantha Bond (photos by Hayley Bray Photography Ltd)



The Spring Lunch Team (left to right)

Nanette Gray, Volunteer
Belinda Powrie, Events Team
Robert Scalzo, Trustee
Samantha Bond
Pat Ealey, Community Engagement Manager
Pat Leggett, Events Team
June Beedham, Trustee

Spring came early to the Holly Lodge Centre, this year when the Monday Art Group assembled in January to “plant” their flowers on the Centre's picnic lawn – now we'll be able to watch them “grow” as spring approaches!



Spring Art

Not to be outdone in celebrating the arrival of spring, students from the Greenmead School for children of special education needs created these lovely montages while visiting the Centre.



Our thanks to Petersham Nurseries for their continuing support of the Holly Lodge Centre

Petersham Nurseries was very generous to the Holly Lodge Centre throughout last year. The owners provided equipment and seeds for the Victorian kitchen garden as well as raffle prizes for fund raising events. They opened Petersham House Gardens as part of the National Garden Scheme for charity, which raised almost £900 for the Centre. They also donated the proceeds from their Christmas shopping evening which was over £1,000. We are extremely grateful for their support.

In March this year we were able to take a group of children with special needs from Clarendon School to the tea house at Petersham Nurseries. They constructed amazing sponge cakes with strawberries, kiwis and cream to take home before they were given lunch. The cakes managed to make it into the boxes to be taken with them without being eaten!

Please say "Thank You" to Petersham Nurseries for their support of the Centre by visiting them and their marvellous restaurant and, of course, the nursery itself. <http://petershamnurseries.com/>



Clarendon School students building their yummy sponge cakes at the Petersham Nurseries tea house

Centre volunteers receive Kingston Community Awards

Two Holly Lodge Centre volunteers have been honoured with the Kingston Mayor's Community Awards which recognise those who have given up their own time to help others within the Kingston community. The awards were given at a ceremony on 31 March.

Margaret Bournier, a stalwart in the Centre's "back office," was honoured for her work with the Friends of Kingston Hospital where she has helped raise thousands of pounds for the hospital over the past 10 years.

Alan Pettitt, a pharmacist in the Centre's Victorian pharmacy, was recognised as a First Responder in the Kingston volunteer ambulance service, a joint venture between the London Ambulance service and St. John's Ambulance service

Congratulations to both – and to both thanks for your good work at the Holly Lodge Centre.



The winners: Margaret Bournier, front, second from right, Alan Pettitt, rear, far right

Thank you Dysart Arms

Another neighbour of the Centre – the Dysart Arms in Petersham – has been a loyal supporter, donating £1 for every attendee at its once-monthly Sunday concerts during all of 2015. Think about visiting this lovely gastro pub at [The Dysart Petersham](#).

Donations of this kind from individuals, companies and trusts are absolutely essential to the Centre since we receive no government funding and rely entirely on the support of our friends and neighbours.



The making of ... the Centre's new video

After many years of trying to have a Centre video produced, Paul Edwards, film director and camera man agreed to make us one as a gift to the Centre. The video is amazing and encapsulates everything that the Centre is about. Paul is a good friend of Adrian Mills, one of our patrons, who persuaded him take on this marvellous project for the Centre. Adrian did the voiceover. [Click here to see for yourselves](#). And here "the making of.." in photos.



Each and every photo worth at least 1000 words

Enjoying a Victorian Christmas, December 2015

(photos taken and donated by Shona Hughes)



Chinese New Year by the Monday Art Group, January 2016

