

Snow hits Harpenden on Sunday



The winter finally hit Harpenden on Sunday (Feb 5th) after a heavy overnight fall of snow. With advance notice of bad weather, however, the main roads had been gritted and disruption was at a minimum. Thank you to all concerned.

New Look for Harpendia

Reader feed back on the design and format of the Christmas edition was very encouraging. The general consensus being that the new typeface and wider columns made it easier to read on screen and the increased use of images made it more lively and commercial. The new look continues with this edition.

Exclusive articles

Harpendia brings the news you need to know, exclusively: Meet Harpenden's new community services officer...how to succeed in retail...how a local school is involved with the London 2012 Games... what is boudoir photography?... support the dental revolution!

Getting ready for the London 2012 Games special... see pages 12 to 16



From the Editor. Winter 2012

Well, the winter weather has finally arrived and Harpenden seemed well prepared. Let's hope for a return to milder weather soon.

With the austerity measures taking effect we all need some good news to lift the gloom. I hope this edition will go some way to brighten the mood. As ever it covers local news and people with national events that have an impact locally.



Ron Taylor Editor
6th February 2012.

Please contact me to air your views on any aspect of Harpenden life. info@harpendingia.com

PS. The HARPENDINGIA web site is updated weekly with lots of new information. Why not check it out.

www.harpendingia.com

In this issue.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

Pg. 2. Ron Taylor.

HELP FOR HARPENDINGEN RETAILERS

Pg. 3 & 4. By Keith Sammels.

THE DENTAL REVOLUTION

Pg. 5 & 6. By Ron Taylor.

HAIRDRESSING-LEARNING THE TRADE

Pg. 7 & 8. By Ron Taylor.

MONEY MATTERS

Pg. 9. By Geoff Newman.

HARPENDINGEN COUNCIL NEWCOMER

Pg. 10 & 11. By Ron Taylor.

ROTARY CLUB & LEA VALLEY SINGERS EVENTS

Pg. 11.

THE LONDON 2012 GAMES.

Pg. 12, 13, 14, 15, & 16.

By Amanda Thomas and Ron Taylor.

THE GARDENING COLUMN.

Pg. 17. By Renata Rybczyk-Savage.

HERTS AIR AMBULANCE.

Pg 18.

BOUDOIR PHOTOGRAPHY

Pg 19 & 20. By Ron Taylor

MAYOR'S CHARITY EVENING

Pg. 21. By Ron Taylor

TRAVELLER'S TALES

Pg.22. By Sue Taylor.

Think Small, Stay Small

By Keith Sammels. (Below) Executive Creative Director LAW Creative

In the Harpendia Summer issue I asked “is Harpenden in with a fighting chance?” In the recent High Street Review; published alongside new government commissioned research, it is claimed that ‘High Streets’ are degenerating or failing!



Spending in Town Centres is falling whilst out-of-town and online shopping has risen, with online sales doubling since 2000. The performance report also details what is called the “downward spiral of decline”. So, is it game over for the town centre?

Mary Portas ‘Queen of Shops’ also has a report into how to revive the high street on which the government is due to respond in early 2012. Richard Dodd from the British Retail

Consortium says that there were a ‘good number of sensible ideas’ in the High Street Review!

Of course the undoubtedly sensible, innovative and enthusiastic ideas that will flow from the ‘Portas Report’ will be welcomed and help to create greater awareness of the benefits of shopping in the high street. But why on earth do high street retailers who depend for their living on the success of their own businesses need to wait to be reminded of the basic requirements of successful retailing. Harpenden can attract shoppers. It has a ‘differential advantage’ over many other town centres. **People will shop in Harpenden:**

- If there is a diverse range of stores.
- If they receive exemplary service.
- If stores are open longer, when people want or need to shop.
- If they can park. (Open new car parks with restrictions to stop them being filled with retail staff and office workers before shoppers arrive).
- If the high street offers additional advantages or attractions such as walk in Spa’s or Yoga Centres, Gyms, Instant Non Cut Blow Dry’s. Or “Real Food” restaurants. (These businesses will be encouraged to open in centres with sensible rates, rents and lack of traffic wardens).



Above. The Apple store in the new Quarter shopping concept in Scottsdale Arizona

Apple Stores have been hugely important because they provide customers with amazing products, previously unimaginable service and convenient opening times.

High Street stores may be small but they can at least think big!

Article continues on next page...

Article continues...

At LAW Creative we offer exemplary seven days, 24 hours (if really necessary) service to our clients, together with award winning and successful marketing. We think big and often outperform our substantial competition.

This year this philosophy has won the Chartered Institute of Marketing's Hotel Marketing Association 'Best Agency Campaign of 2011' for our client InterContinental Hotels Group.

Despite all of the proof to the contrary I would still argue that shoppers have an inherent liking for the high street. They want to buy local but they are fed up with trying to overcome the lack of choice, service and convenience that their high street should inherently offer.

Retailers do not need to wait to be told what to do. They do not need to be full of apathy and pessimism. They might need to create a new charter for their own business which delivers for their customers and allows for optimism not pessimism.

Retailers are trading in a digital age where effective data capture and e.marketing allows them to compete with much bigger businesses for a fraction of the cost of advertising ten years ago!

And we should all remember that a great looking website with excellent functionality and search engine optimisation costs very much the same as the typically poor sites operated by most small businesses.

Every day your customers are exposed to websites for Oakley, Nike, Timberland and Nespresso. Why would you give a significantly worse experience when they visit yours?

Offer great products, great service, convenience and uniqueness. Then promote it. Then they will come. Challenge convention, differentiate, win hearts and minds.

If you think small, you'll stay small and even worse you'll expose your business to a 'downward spiral of decline'.

Keith Sammels Executive Creative Director
LAW Creative
www.lawcreative.co.uk



Above.

'Scottsdale Quarter <http://www.lawcreative.co.uk/>
[#scottsdale](https://twitter.com/scottsdale)

Your smile is your greatest asset..and you don't need to go to Harley Street to improve it!

By Ron Taylor. Editor



The past few years have seen huge changes in dentistry. The days of NHS patching up seem to be numbered now that there is a demand for good looking healthy teeth. Press reports about cosmetic enhancements achieved through surgery are one thing but really what makes us attractive is confidence and a big smile. Good looking teeth make us want to smile!

Wayside Dental Practice in Harpenden has invested heavily in training and technology. Their dentists are able to offer minimally invasive, painless dentistry through the use of lasers and air abrasion and are able to offer pain free anaesthesia. As experienced cosmetic dentists they make full use of technology including computer imaging, to help you achieve your perfect smile.

Dr Robin Horton (right) commented.... *"it is fantastic to see a patient who rarely smiled, come into the surgery beaming with their new look teeth, and so many patients tell me it has made a big difference to their lives. As the saying goes, 'smile and the world smiles with you!'.*

Benefit from the latest technologies at Wayside Dental Practice in Harpenden

The Wand delivers anaesthetic at a slow and controlled pace so you don't feel a thing. Computer controlled, it was invented by a man who constantly injected himself at different

pressures to discover which was painless! Every dentist should have one, yet not many do.

Air Abrasion is literally a sand blaster for your teeth and can be used for small fillings without the need for anaesthesia. It is also used in place of chemicals to ensure optimum adhesion for bridges, crowns and veneers, thus increasing their life.



Robin with the DIAGNOdent laser decay detector.

DIAGNOdent lasers are used by all the dentists to detect decay. They detect decay in a tooth before a hole has formed so they can either direct prevention so no filling is ever needed, or if a filling is necessary, they can catch it early so only a small one is required. This preserves tooth structure and hopefully avoids the need for a crown at a later date.

Article continues...

Article continues...

Two of the dentists have multitude procedure lasers that can be used for fillings instead of a drill and often require no anaesthesia. Instead of the grinding and high pitched whizz of the drill, you hear just a gentle clicking noise. They can help eradicate gum disease, cut soft tissue to minimise bleeding and even to re contour the gum line to help get that perfect smile. They are also used in root canal procedures to sterilise the canal and in implant dentistry.



Nick shown with The Wand

Dr Nick Morton (above) " the laser has had the biggest impact on the way I do dentistry. They are fairly widespread in the US but UK dentists seem reluctant to invest. I could not do without it now and nor could my patients."

Computer software imaging really helps achieve perfect results. It can be used to place implants in the optimum position so you can decide how you want your teeth to look and see what can be achieved from invisible orthodontics.

New Dentists

Supporting their innovative approach is the appointment of two new dentists, **Carlos Turk** (above right) and **Mara Dytham** (right) who replace the now retired Donald Mills and Angela Cockburn. Both new dentists are widely experienced, with postgraduate courses in general dentistry and more complex procedures.

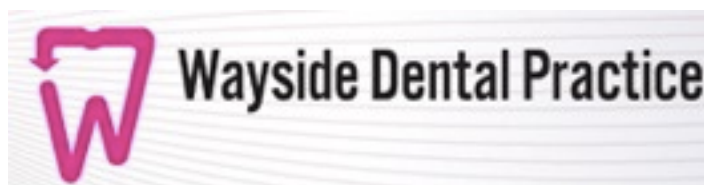
Carlos originates from Sydney in Australia where he qualified in 1995. Most recently working in private practice in Kent for the last eight years he has taken care of Donald's patients.



Mara graduated from University College London in 1989, then went on to work in General Practice for 20 years in St. Albans and Baldock. She has taken care of Angela's patients.



New Dentists above, Carlos and Mara at Wayside.



2 Douglas Road
Harpenden AL5 2EW
01582 712 470
www.waysidedental.co.uk

Harpenden's Cutting Edge on the High Street.

By Ron Taylor. Editor

Creativity and passion are vital qualities of a budding hairdresser. And the first intake of students who I met on Jan 10th at the Harpenden Hair Training Academy have plenty of both.

As well as being an actual working salon, which opened in September, the facility is also Barnfield Federation's first paperless site – with high-achieving students working with laptops and interactive whiteboards rather than the traditional pen and paper.

In three short months, Level One students have already learned to apply conditioning treatments, blow drying techniques, plaiting styles, wash hair properly and master important terminology. I spoke to three students to find out more.

Lorna Evans

“Creativity is the challenge for me” says Lorna. (below)

Before joining Barnfield Lorna had studied art, woodwork and metalwork at Art College but found it didn't quite match her personality and ambitions. Then she discovered the Barnfield Hair Training Academy. “This was the turning point for me”. Lorna liked the comprehensive

offering of the 2 year course enabling her to learn the art and skills necessary to get a full time job as a hairdresser. Her ultimate ambition being to work in the theatrical business. She loves working with short hair so when a client with long hair arrived at the Academy recently she was disappointed. The lady then removed her wig to reveal very short hair (she had just completed a course of chemo). Lorna washed, conditioned and blow dried her hair, the client then said “do anything you want with the styling”. The client was extremely happy with the end result; put her wig in a bag and left the Academy smiling.

Kimberley Fruen

“My mum is a hairdresser so I have hairdressing in my DNA”. says Kimberley. (below) Her Dad heard about the Academy on Chiltern Radio and thought it would be perfect for Kimberley. With her background knowledge she will have completed the Level 1 course in record time and be fast tracking to Level 2 during February. “I love working in the small groups learning from the professionals and putting my portfolio work on line for assessment.” Kimberley likes to keep in touch with new hair trends by following the International Hair Shows.



Photos at the Harpenden Hair Training Academy. Above. Lorna working on her favourite subject, long hair! Right. Kimberley demonstrating her drying skills.

Article continues on next page...

Article continues...

Zoe Neill

"I just love learning here" says Zoe (below right.) Zoe, who has always been interested in hairdressing, had a fortuitous moment earlier last year when she came to a stop in a traffic jam in Harpenden. "I looked round and saw the Academy windows with advertising posters for the hairdressing courses. Just what I always wanted" Zoe took a note of the number, phoned them later that day and signed up for what she believes will be a life changing experience. Previously a housekeeper in Harpenden she is now on track to become a qualified hairdresser working in a local salon, where she can help clients with all their hair problems making them happy with her passion and expertise.



More than just Hairdressing Skills

On the day of my visit the students were in the midst of an hour long maths lesson with tutor Mark O'Loughlin. Vital knowledge for any future salon owner wishing to profit from the course.

Barnfield Chief Executive Pete Birkett said:
"Our cutting edge Hair Training Academy is creating yet another style of learning for students. Training in a real salon will be a valuable experience for them, not only by aiding their learning but also by teaching them the important customer service and social skills required in the hairdressing profession."

Barnfield

Setting the standard

A warm welcome at the Academy from receptionist Nuala Prior (below)



Local employers have been invited to utilise the cutting edge facility for additional capacity during busy periods or for exhibitions and show purposes. Furthermore, the Academy can be used by any local community group in need of a venue for specific gatherings or promotions.

"I was more than impressed with the whole facility and the strategy for giving young people practical skills that can be used to inspire their future and benefit the local community. The Courses work too as more than 85 per cent of Level 3 hairdressing students who finished last year are now in employment or further training."Ron Taylor.

For more details on Harpenden Hair Training Academy and the courses that are starting now and in September or information on the facilities available call 01582 569 569.

Visit their web site: www.barnfield.ac.uk or call into the Academy at a time to suit you. 53-55 High Street, Harpenden, AL5 2SL.

Making sense on saving with the economy in austerity.

By Geoff Newman

In this edition I will give you some thoughts on what is going on in the global economy then return to the subject of saving and answer the November edition's teaser on pensions.*

Well, after all the mild weather we are getting some real winter temperatures, a bit like the Eurozone really, it's frozen but politicians have at last reached a solution by putting a sticking plaster over the problem and given us some breathing space!



Undoubtedly it is in all our interests for the Eurozone to work and have a healthy economy, after all half our trade is done with Europe but the problem is we are in a period where individuals, companies and governments are all paying off debt at the same time. The inevitable consequences of this are lower growth, higher unemployment and lower standards of living.

And the response to this by governments is to defy the markets and effectively turn Europe into one large command economy.....and we know what happened to the Soviet Union, the last large command economy!!

After years of spending and taking on personal debt the "baby boomer" generation (yes, I'm one of them) is telling its offspring to save more for the future, which is very difficult to do when any spare money is being used to either pay off student debt or maintain lifestyle as real incomes decrease. So the paradox is that saving is incompatible with a debt laden economy.

Wow where does that leave us? Going back to my previous article* I commented that: "Even if you are not in a company scheme you can set up your own personal pension where you can either make monthly contributions or a lump sum of up to £50,000 each year. Why would I do that I hear you say when the investment market is so uncertain at the moment....."

Well the government are very generous with regard to tax relief on pension contributions. If you have set up your own pension, a personal pension, you pay Income Tax on your earnings before any pension contribution, but the pension provider claims tax back from the government at the basic rate of 20 per cent. In practice, this means that for every £80 you pay into your pension, you end up with £100 in your pension pot. If you pay tax at higher rate, you can claim the difference through your tax return or by telephoning or writing to HMRC. If you're an additional rate taxpayer you'll have to claim the difference through your tax return. In addition, any increase in the value of your pension pot over the years is free from capital gains tax.

Clearly these are great benefits but what is the catch? For a twenty five year old one catch would be that you can't get at the money until you are fifty five (under the current rules) although some would say this is a good thing!

As ever, before deciding what to do it pays to take advice and our pensions experts are around to take your call on 01582 715777.

**Geoff Newman, Director, (above left)
Lyndhurst Financial Management Ltd
Authorised and regulated by the Financial
Services Authority**



***Read the first article by clicking on this link:
www.harpendia.com/Money.html**

At the hub of Harpenden

By Ron Taylor. Editor

A bold statement indeed, but one that newcomer Dan Taylor means to achieve. Dan is the recently appointed Community Services Officer for Harpenden Town Council and I interviewed him with Town Mayor, Michael Weaver on January 19th to find out more.



There was a recruitment advertisement on the Harpenden Town Council web site which had been placed following the departure of Helen Eadon. I replied immediately and after going through the interview processes I was appointed.

What was it that attracted you to Harpenden?

Although I grew up in Worcester, I have lived in St Albans for a couple of years so was more than aware of Harpenden and the potential within the town. As a medium sized town I felt that I would be able to get to grips with the issues, make a real contribution to the community and see positive results.

Photos. Above. Dan Weaver outside the Town Hall. Right. Dan with Town Mayor Michael Weaver

What experience can you bring to Harpenden?

I was in a similar role at Broxbourne Council so I have an understanding of the role requirements and with a degree in politics from Leeds University I felt I was ready to move up a level for the challenge in Harpenden.

What does your role encompass?

At this point Mike Weaver expressed his thoughts about Dan's role. It's all about 'LOCALISM', the new strategy you will hear across government, both national and local, going forward in 2012. Quite simply it means taking account of what the local community needs, listening to them and delivering results, within the constraints of ever tightening budgets. Helen Eadon had already made some progress and it's up to Dan to drive it forward. He can make a very positive contribution in this ever growing LOCALISM between the Harpenden, Southdown and Batford communities and the Town Council.

Can you be more specific on your tasks Dan?

I will have responsibility for major town events. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations, Discovery Day on the Common, The Christmas Carnival and Lights. Plus many smaller but no less important events throughout the year. I will also be engaging with local organisations like the Harpenden Retail Partnership to ensure local retailers have a voice and assess the merits of the 'Keep it Local' campaign. Then there are the local charities, and other organisations, the list is almost endless but all requiring involvement and support.



Article continues...

Article continues...

Who will you work with?

I can call on all the team at the Council to assist me. I will also work closely with event sponsors and event supporters to coordinate the various activities.

How will the people in Harpenden know what you have achieved?

I will use the Town Council's web site which has recently been redesigned and the editorial columns of the Forum Newsletter. Plus press releases will be issued to all the local media.

IN CONCLUSION

Mike Weaver commented that Harpenden belongs to us all and the Harpenden Town Council has a very open policy. We welcome contact and involvement with local Councillors from all the Harpenden community. Come and see us at the Town Hall information desk. Or take a look at the new web site.

www.harpenden.gov.uk



“ I want to be at the hub of the Harpenden community, so give me a call and if I can't help I will find the person who can. Call me, Dan Taylor on 01582 463665.

Make a note in your diary

9th March

ROTARY CLUB QUIZ OF QUIZZES

Harpenden Village Rotarys Clubs ever-popular Harpenden Quiz of Quizzes will be held on Friday, 9 March, 2012 at St Georges School.

The cost will be £12.50 a head, which includes supper. Club president Phil Murray said: As ever, all proceeds from the Quiz of Quizzes go to charities and other good causes supported by Rotary. Since 1996, when we staged the first quiz, the event has raised more than £50,000. The quiz is regularly a sell-out, so teams wishing to secure a place for March should contact Rotarian Roy Brimblecombe without delay at email

brimblecombe@btinternet.com

Or Tel.01582 713135.

24th March. 7.30pm

LEA VALLEY SINGERS - SPRING HARMONY

High Street Methodist Church, Harpenden

The Lea Singers have a lot to celebrate. We have appointed a young, dynamic new conductor - Ben Goodson. John Pickard, one of the basses in the Choir, has written us a new setting of the Magnificat to perform at

Durham Cathedral when we visit in April. James Sherlock, pianist and organist, is our featured artist for this season. Come and hear Ben conduct his first concert with the Leas at our Spring concert for choir and organ. The programme includes choir favourites such as Byrd's "Sing Joyfully", Bairstow's grand setting for choir and organ "Blessed City, Heavenly Salem" and Finzi's festival anthem "Lo, The Full Final Sacrifice".



Tickets £13, concessions £12, under 18s £5 from Fran Brown on 01582 793845 or email francesbrown25@yahoo.com or online at WeGotTickets or from Valentine's in Station Road

What connects Harpenden with the London 2012 Games? The River Lea, of course!

“Believe it or not, if you could take a trip down the River Lea from Harpenden during this Summer’s Olympics you would pass the Canoe Slalom event at the Lee Valley White Water Centre and end up in the middle of the Olympic Park.” Ron Taylor Editor.

1. River Lea rises in Luton



3. Then through
Batford and Batford
Springs (left)

2. Flows through
Harpenden
(below)



4. Through St Albans,
Hatfield, Hertford and
Ware.

5. Then into the Lee Valley, where the name changes to the River Lee. It remains unknown why this change has occurred. Then past Waltham Abbey to the Lee Valley White Water Centre.



Canoe Slalom

During the **London 2012 Games**, the Canoe Slalom competition will call for speed and precision on the daunting white water rapids at the new Lee Valley White Water Centre.

Venue: [Lee Valley White Water Centre](#)

Dates: Sunday 29 July – Thursday 2 August

Medal events: 4

Athletes: 82

Since becoming a permanent part of the Olympic programme 20 years ago in Barcelona, the sport has thrilled spectators at the Games with spectacular, non-stop action on the powerful, unforgiving water.



6. Finally through the Olympic
Park to the Thames

River Thames

The Lee Valley Centre is owned and run by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority whose Chief Executive Shaun Dawson said: “The take up for our summer season was very strong, with day after day selling out, and we’ve been inundated with people desperate to get their chance to raft the rapids before the Games. We’re running up to Easter - just 16 weeks before the Games, so this is an incredible opportunity to raft or canoe this fantastic venue before the world’s best take it on.”

Get fit for the Games...great new products to help you get started



Our friends at the London 2012 shop have pulled together some exciting new products to help you get fit in time for the Games and look the part while you do it.

To start there's the official London 2012 book (left) for anyone wishing to improve their levels of exercise and general wellbeing in the run up to the Games - **£12.99.**

Next a must have Team GB hoody - **£32,** London 2012 wristbands - **£5 set of four.**

Then a London 2012

Union Jack logo towel - **£18.**

And finally, something to carry it all around in, a Team GB Holdall - **£28.**



Buy from the London 2012 Shops or buy on line
www.london2012.com/shop

The easy way to get to the London 2012 Games... Park & Ride from Redbourn

By Ron Taylor. Editor

If you are lucky enough to have tickets for the London 2012 Games, which take place in the main stadia area, the Olympic park, then Park & Ride from the Herts County showground in Redbourn could be the best option.



Why Park & Ride

The park-and-ride sites are mainly intended for spectators who may find it difficult to make their entire journey to and from the Games by public transport, particularly those who live outside of London.

A fleet of coaches/buses will transport passengers between the sites and venues. There will be spaces for around 350,000 vehicles at the park-and-ride sites over the 16 days of Olympic competition.

LOCOG Chair Seb Coe said: *'Park-and-ride provides another option for spectators at Games-time and will help those who may find it difficult to get to train stations or coach terminals can get to their events on time. Next summer will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience and it is vital that spectators look at all the transport options available to them.'*

The Service from Redbourn

This is operated by First group games travel from the Herts County Showground.

A parking space is provided for your car for the whole day. Once parked, you take one of the regular coaches all the way to the Olympic Park. You need to allow at least 1 hour 50 minutes for your transfer to the Olympic Park and at least 1 hour from arrival at the Olympic Park to reach your event, **so careful planning is essential.** After the event you return on the coach to the Showground and drive away in your car.

The cost

According to the operator's web site (first group) the daily rate per vehicle inc. vat and booking fee is £20.50. That sounds like a great deal to me. If there are 4 people in the car you are traveling direct to the venue and back at a far lower cost than the train and tubes and without any hassle.

More details

The operators web site has all the information you could possibly need to make your Olympic visit enjoyable, so log on for more details.

How to book

www.firstgroupgamestravel.com

First Group Games Travel Team

Tel: 0844 921 2012

Herts County Show details

As a result of the 2012 Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebration, the traditional late May Bank Holiday has been moved forward to early June.

Accordingly, the 2012 Hertfordshire County Show dates are: Saturday 2nd & Sunday 3rd June.

Living the Olympic Dream at Roundwood Park School

By Amanda Thomas

Michelle Rooney, (below) Head of PE at Roundwood Park School, confessed to Harpendia, *“If I were on Mastermind, my Specialist Subject would be the Olympics.”* In fact, by the end of the summer, Michelle will have attended the last four Games: Barcelona, Athens, Beijing and, of course, London. Her passion for the event is infectious and inspirational for her students, who will all no doubt be looking out for her on the news when she is in Luton to help with the arrival of the Olympic torch in our area.



Roundwood Park was just the second in the county to sign up to London 2012 Get Set, a UK wide network of schools and colleges. The aim of the network, according to the website getset.london2012.com, is to use the 2012 Games to ‘inspire learners of all ages to get involved in [Olympic] Values-based projects and activities.’ Members of the network are asked to include the Olympics in the School Development Plan, something Headteacher Alan Henshall was quick to do. It is easy to see why, as Roundwood

Park has committed itself to fulfilling the Olympic Values of friendship, excellence and respect, and those of the Paralympics, inspiration, determination, courage and equality. The school even has a special Olympic link governor, Colin Metcalfe.

At the beginning of the Get Set process, pupils from Key Stages 3 and 4 attended a special meeting at Parmiter’s School in Watford where they were inspired to start a new house system at Roundwood Park, which has proved to be enormously successful. The houses are named after colours and will each be adopting a country in the run up to the Games.

On Sports Day on 10 July, house members will dress as their country’s nationals and parade in both opening and closing ceremonies. Winners of events will receive medals and will be required to stand on a podium – just like at the real games. Michelle Rooney explained, *“We want students to experience what it would be like in the real Olympics, but it isn’t just about sport. We all know how the Olympics will boost tourism, and for our students this raises awareness in other countries. There are a lot of cross-curricular benefits.”*



Roundwood Park students in action white water rafting at the Lee Valley Olympic Canoe Slalom venue (above); The new Roundwood Park School Sports Centre (left), opened in 2011 by former England Cricket Captain, Mike Atherton.



Article continues...

The Get Set network has also enabled **Roundwood Park** students to experience the Games first hand. Already a group of 15 lucky sports fanatics has visited – and tried out – the white water rafting facility with **teacher Mr Heald**. **Michelle** also revealed that the school has 70 tickets for the Paralympics which are valid for most of the events and for two separate days. They will be having a competition where pupils can win a ticket by explaining, ‘How I live the Olympic Ideals.’

Students began the lead up for the Games as soon as they returned to school after Christmas when ‘Paralympic awareness’ began in earnest. With the help of the Sainsbury’s 1 Million Kids Challenge project, pupils learnt what it was like to take part in goalball (a throwing ball game for the blind), sitting volleyball and blind football; around 600 hours were spent at the school in the organisation and setting up of these activities which pupils found more challenging and rewarding than they had expected.

Emma Wiggs, (below centre in red) the sitting volleyball GB Captain visited and took a masterclass. **Michelle** added, “Emma is a PE teacher herself and was paralysed a few years ago. She was a real inspiration.” The highpoint, however, was the staff goalball event where 40 teachers competed against each other in their house teams – Pink won.

The school has also set up a series of taster sessions for just about every Olympic sport including boxing, archery, boccia (a type of bowls originally devised for cerebral palsy sufferers), athletics, rowing, riding, and fencing. London 2012 Diving talent Officer (South) **Katie Hazleton**, an ex **Roundwood Park** student, will also be visiting the school to talk about elite sports.

However, **Michelle** (below right) left the best till last, “As part of the Get Set network, **Roundwood Park** has demonstrated how we are all living the Olympic Values. The reward for this is that we have been able to apply for the pool of tickets available to network members for the Olympic Games. We will find out closer to the time if we have been allocated any tickets...goodness knows what scheme we will have to devise to make sure they go to the most deserving students!”

For more information on Get Set, the official London 2012 education programme, go to: <http://getset.london2012.com/en/home>

The **Roundwood Park School** website www.roundwoodpark.herts.sch.uk now also features a Countdown to London 2012 clock and everything you need to know about the school. Regular followers at the website of Harpendia may be interested to know that the latest issue of the school’s ezine, **ParkLife**, is also online at the website.



A new look for your garden in 2012

By Renata Rybczyk-Savage. The Plantsitter

Over the years a garden without change can look a little tired. Sometimes situations can make a need for a change, such as the recent warning from the RHS about Busy Lizzies (Impatiens) being prone to severe mildew attacks and recommending growing different bedding plants.

So where can you get your inspiration from? There are many ideas that you may have come across without realising already. For instance, dig out holiday photos of gardens you may have visited either abroad or in the UK. This can be a great start to help you build on a new garden layout, colour schemes and unusual flowers. Search the internet for new varieties such as www.rhs.org.uk and www.bbc.co.uk/gardening or pick up a copy of a gardening magazine from your local shop for some creative motivation.

There are so many varieties that are more hardy and disease resistant these days that can grow in British gardens. Garden centres are also a good source for new or unusual plants. Don't be afraid to ask staff when shopping to help you find something that is both suitable for a particular corner of your garden and uncommon to create a different look.

As a keen gardener and owner of a gardening business I am always on the lookout for new ideas. This year I will be growing three new plants in my own garden and three different vegetables that I haven't tried yet on my allotment.

The new plants for the garden are the strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) – an evergreen tree from the Mediterranean that produces red, edible fruit in September, the Passion Flower (*Passiflora*) – a climber which produces beautiful flowers and Ameranthus pony tails (*Ameranthus*) as a decorative bedding plant. In the allotment I will be trying to grow sweet potatoes, pineberries (a white strawberry that should taste more like pineapple) and a few pea varieties (Canoe and Kelvedon Wonder) to see which types of pea produce a better crop.



Photo above. "unusual, exotic looking plants can often thrive in the Great British summer"

Photo below. "photos with labels will help you find what you're looking for"

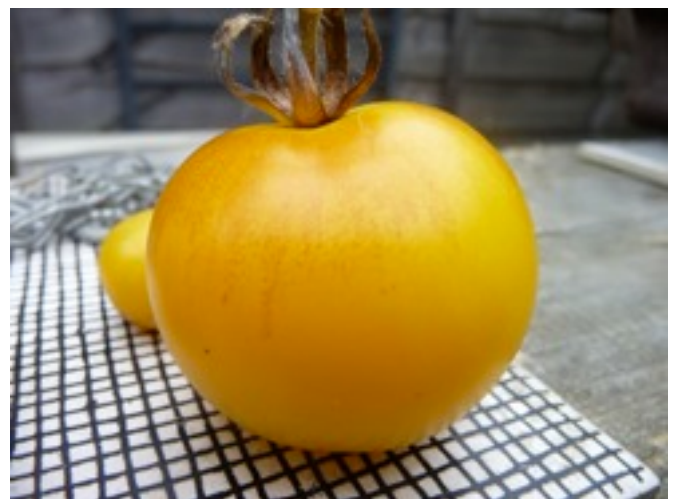


Photo above. "different coloured fruit or vegetables can also make an interesting and sometimes challenging change to a garden"

I'll be writing about how my new plants have grown in later editions of Harpendia.

www.theplantsitter.co.uk
renata@theplantsitter.co.uk

Herts Air Ambulance to the rescue



Accidents and illnesses happen and when they do, patients, whatever their age, circumstances or location need vital treatment fast. The speed with which our Air Ambulance Doctors & Paramedics can reach a patient, identify and administer processes to slow, halt or even reverse the effects of life-threatening injury, is crucial in helping to save the patient and return them to full health.

A large proportion of Herts Air Ambulance missions are trauma victims. Trauma is a leading cause of death among children and young adults and a major cause of disability. Our highly skilled teams of Doctors & Paramedics play an integral role in reducing disability and death from Trauma.

We hope you or your loved ones never need us but thanks to the generous support of the people of the County our service remains operational.

Facts of Flight

- The Herts Air Ambulance is operational 5 days a week.
- It costs in the region of £130,000 per month to cover all charitable costs and aircraft operations.
- The MD902 Explorer flies at around 150mph (138 knots).

Hold a Feast for Your Air Ambulance

Herts Air Ambulance is calling on you to take part in the Great Herts Feast over the weekend of 17th and 18th March 2012. The idea is simple; the event will consist of a series of 'Feasts' designed to raise money for this much-loved Charity, while also being fun for both hosts and their guests.

We are asking the residents of Herts to get their friends together for a feast of their choice. Hosts can choose to entertain their friends over a Saturday morning breakfast, a dinner party in the evening, invite guests to lunch on Sunday or even have brunch or organise a coffee morning. Feasts can take any form, from black tie dinners to fish and chip suppers or even a quiz night! It is up to each host to decide. The key objective is to raise money by asking guests to make a donation.

Would you like to host a Feast?

The idea is for you to get your friends together and entertain them as you would a normal party. The only difference is that you ask your guests to make a donation to Herts Air Ambulance. There is no fixed amount; the more they donate the more this vital Helicopter Emergency Medical Service can help to save lives.

If you would like to be a Great Herts Feast host simply visit

www.HertsAirAmbulance.uk.com

or call Wendy Marcon on 0845 2417 690.



All hosts who register will receive a Great Herts Feast registration pack, which includes invitations to send to guests, suggested recipes and cocktail ideas plus a free gift.

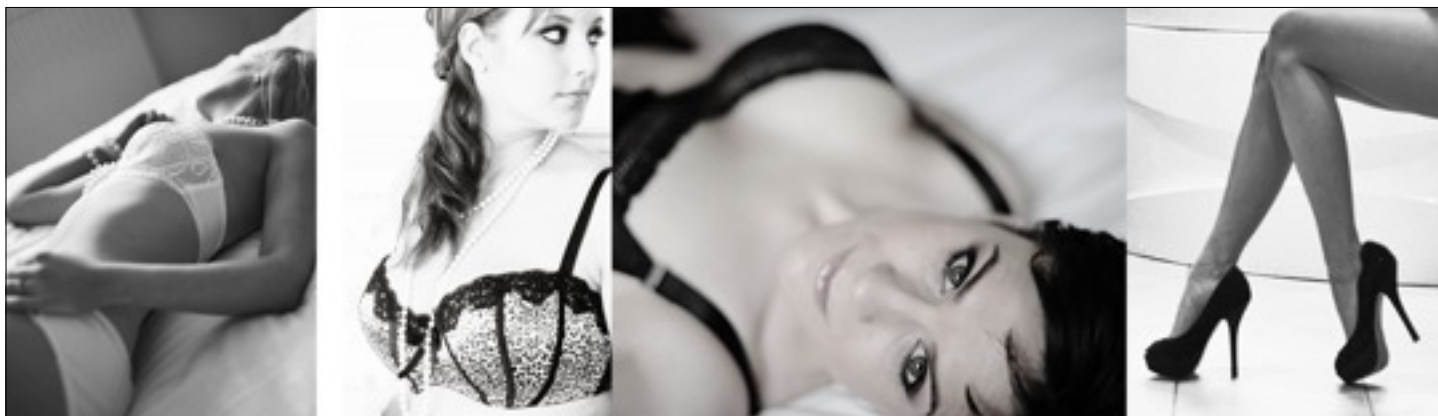
Too many friends to invite to your feast? Then encourage some of your friends to hold their own feast: the more the better!



Unlike NHS emergency services the Herts Air Ambulance is a Charity providing a free life-saving Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) for your County.

Why not experience the growing trend for 'Boudoir'

By Ron Taylor. Editor



Over the last few years 'Boudoir' photography has grown in popularity for women of all ages, during which time Cocoon Photography has established a growing reputation in Harpenden and the surrounding areas. ***"Many of our clients have asked us about photographing them with their partners, so we are now offering 'Boudoir photo shoots for couples'"*** said Kim, one of the founders of Cocoon.

The 'Boudoir' Adventure

Cocoon have been in the photography business for over 4 years with clients from the business world, family photo shoots and studio contracts. When people started asking for Boudoir shoots they decided to 'learn the ropes' and went on many training courses with some of the best in the industry. ***"These were invaluable as they highlighted all the practical elements we would need to offer as well as the differing styles of photography"***. said Jeanette, the other founder.

Artistic and sophisticated

The first questions Cocoon ask their clients is 'Why are you doing this?' and 'What do you want to achieve'. The answers enable Cocoon to create a concept that will match their clients aspirations and give them a clear idea of the finished result. Something with real class and sophistication. Romantic or sensual. The answers vary from client to client too. Many have a boudoir shoot done for their partner; maybe bridal boudoir for their husband-to-be, an anniversary present, or even for Valentines day. Other women have it done for themselves; a milestone birthday, a target weight loss, or just because they want to have a self confidence

boost. Whatever their reason, Kim and Jeanette will make it a special experience for them.

Location, location, location.

This is important as it will help create the right atmosphere for the theme of the shoot. The shoot can take place at the client's home, whether it's a one bedroom flat or a five bedroomed house, or a hotel. Why not extend the experience to a romantic weekend away at the same time? Cocoon also have a studio which can be used.

Getting ready

Like any big event you want to look your best. Hair, nails, make up, clothes and accessories all add to the look and feel of the shoot. Cocoon discuss all these aspects with their clients and send them advice once they have booked. A professional make up artist is on hand at the shoot to make you look and feel your best. Kim and Jeanette, of course, will art direct the photo shoot, and refreshments are provided. All these things help to make your shoot an experience.

Cocoon are not the cheapest boudoir photography in the area, but they pride themselves on being able to make any woman look and feel fabulous with their photographic skills. Not only are you paying for your photo shoot experience, but also the time and skill that is involved in the post production of the images. Every photo is professionally beauty retouched before you even see them. Client confidentiality can also be assured with every shoot, which is why you won't see many boudoir shoots blogged on their website.

Article continues...

Article continues...



Client recommendation

*“Last year I turned 40. To mark the occasion I wanted to do something other than just having a big party – I wanted something which I could keep forever as a reminder of how fabulous I still looked at 40! I chose to have a Boudoir Shoot done with Jeanette (below right) and Kim (below left) from **Cocoon Photography**. Feeling a little apprehensive about the whole concept of stripping down to my bare essentials and having to look ‘sexy and smouldering’ Jeanette and Kim were able to put me at ease by coming over and meeting with me beforehand to show me the types of photos they had taken in the past, run through the logistics of the day and we started to plan where the photos would be taken in my house.*

When the day of the shoot came, it was such a lovely treat to get my hair and make-up professionally done. There was no rush and the whole session was really laid back. Jeanette and Kim were able to explain clearly what they wanted me to do, and as they were both taking photos they were able to get some interesting camera angles and capture some of the more informal moments.



We were having so much fun that time flew by. Before I knew it, it was time for the school run!

When the proofs came through, they were absolutely gorgeous and I couldn't believe how good I looked! It just goes to show how the perfect lighting, layout of the shot and some excellent knowledge and experience really makes a fantastic picture. It was a hard job narrowing down the choice to go in the album! I hadn't told my husband I was having the Boudoir Shoot done and I presented him with the album when we went away for a weekend together. He was speechless and he says it is the best present he has ever had!

I would recommend Kim and Jeanette without hesitation. They make a great team and their fun and interactive approach means that they can capture some fabulous shots. It might seem a little extravagant to get a Boudoir Shoot done, but I have to say it is now one of my (and my husband's!) most treasured possessions and was worth every penny.“

How to book a ‘Boudoir’ shoot.

Call Kim or Jeanette to make an appointment to have a chat about your Boudoir adventure.
Tel. 01582 793862.

Boudoir Photo Shoots start at £195
to include two hours of
photography,
professional hair and
make up styling,
beauty retouching of images

Why not check out the web site and see more examples of their work.

www.cocoonphotography.co.uk/boudoir

CocoonBoudoirPhotography

9 Lords Meadow, Redbourn, Herts.
AL3 7BX

Mayor's Christmas Charity Evening raises £1000+



The Town Mayor's Christmas Charity Evening at the Harpenden House Hotel in aid of the Herts Air Ambulance and the Harpenden Seniors Club was a great success. The evening had delicious food, a fabulous fashion show, a jazz band and a raffle with super prizes.

The Town Mayor said 'I was delighted with the tremendous generosity and support by local businesses and individuals who all contributed to make this a very special evening. I would especially like to thank Fiona at Oui, and her models and assistants, for all their hard work, the Harpenden House Hotel for providing such a great venue for the event and such fine food, Sound and Lighting for providing the music for the Fashion Show and St George's School for the splendid jazz band. Also, a big thank you to Nigel Wray, Chairman of Saracens, Bob Bashford of Chelford Fabrics and Bob Cammack of The Leyton Dental Practice for providing some really large prizes. I could go on and on with my thank yous because so many people have contributed and it really is appreciated so much. Everyone worked together in making the event a great evening. I am delighted to say that well over £1000 has been raised for the two charities.'

Click here to see the video of the event on YouTube.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbpGwU_gBWo



Photos. Above. Fashion Show models with Fiona Grant from OUI on the right. Top left. Mike Weaver and Ginny Cooper. Next. St George's School Jazz Band. Next left. Kate Lloyd-Davies from Herts Air Ambulance. Right. Rosemary Farmer of Harpenden Seniors Bottom. Enjoying dinner at the Harpenden House Hotel.

NEXT EVENT

Wednesday 15 February. 2.30pm.

-Town Mayor's 'Afternoon Tea and Entertainment' in Park Hall -

Delicious sandwiches, cakes and scones, tea/coffee. Tickets £12.50 each - available now from Linda

**Haynes at Town Hall. 01582 463662
In aid of Harpenden Seniors Club and
Herts Air Ambulance**

Paradise returned

By Sue Taylor



“Never return to the same place - you will be disappointed” how many times have you heard that - well we did and were not disappointed.

The Lantana Resort Hotel in southern Sardinia was an even better experience than our first visit in 2010. We already knew that the staff would be kind and helpful, the rooms spacious and immaculate with great views over the extensive gardens. The white sanded beach (just 2 km away) easily accessible by private taxi from the hotel with our return at a time to suit us.

We were yet to see subtle changes - due to the Lantana’s success in being a perfect destination vacation, more accommodation was required. Finding the “new” builds was hard to detect - the sympathetically designed rooms had been integrated within the existing area. The Lantana’s ethos is of comfort, style and luxury - you have a choice of half or full board, or self catering, which is a brilliant concept. You have the luxury of all amenities with the choice of cooking for yourselves, or ordering the same meals served for guests staying half board, and eating within the confines of your own rooms. You can join the other guests whenever it suites you. Families are so important - no one is too young to bring to the table and Italian children are the most well mannered and polite children we have met. Oh yes, did I mention the well stocked bar, which was added last year. It is tastefully positioned in the seating area and adjacent to the patio.

The Lantana prides itself on its wonderful food - locally sourced and a new chef had recently been appointed. His menus are tempting, delicious

and healthy. One evening there was a gourmet barbeque - that word fills me with dread (being vegetarian) as the smell and sight of meats and fish roasting is not my favourite. The Lantana had thought of everyone, the barbeque was on the lower level below the outdoor eating area - nothing seen - or smelt!. The chef had cooked many courses just for me - I felt like Paris Hilton - and the barbeque foods for non veggies were brought to the tables. My husband loved every course. Between courses we were entertained by a small local company who sang and danced keeping the Sardinian tradition which has been passed down for many hundreds of years. Dressed in their beautifully embroidered clothes they lit up the evening with their enthusiasm - and ended with a personal gift of hand made Sardinian cakes. A wonderful evening - which I will remember for a long time. **If you feel inspired log on to www.lantanaresort.it and book - you won’t be disappointed.**

(Below left to right. Sue and Ron Taylor, Gianni and Giovanna Gallia -the owners of the Lantana and their son Gigi.)

