

# HARPENDIA

PEOPLE, CULTURE & NEWS

SPRING 09

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## Welcome to HARPENDIA

**Growing eco friendly fuel...making vintage French wine...nude models..cafe society. Find out what's really happening in Harpenden!**

Thanks for opening up the first ever issue of HARPENDIA.

This is a new concept in magazine publishing specifically for the people of Harpenden. It aims to provide thought provoking information about Harpenden, its people and its culture plus relevant newsworthy activity.

Distributed quarterly via e mail in pdf format makes it environmentally friendly, leaving no clutter., and best of all it is completely **free of charge** so please forward it

on to your friends, family and all your network connections.

Reading HARPENDIA will not only entertain but will also provide "I didn't know that" and "that's amazing" moments that will benefit residents and local business concerns.

HARPENDIA will be published quarterly with each issue featuring a balanced blend of articles, features and interviews on a wide range of subjects.

Today's internet savvy people use the digital medium to tell their own stories to a

world wide audience (witness the success of facebook-youtube and the bloggers world). So if you have a story to tell or a newsworthy item with genuine appeal then contact the Editor and if it meets the criteria of a forthcoming issue your story could be featured.

I hope you enjoy this first issue. The Summer issue will be published late July and our web site will be live in mid June. Good reading.

**Ron Taylor. Editor**  
[info@harpendia.com](mailto:info@harpendia.com)

# Harpenden

## Capital of Middle England?

What makes Harpenden the capital of Middle England? Is it the social ambience, the desirable property, the superb schools or maybe the village greens and commons surrounding the charming High Street. An escape from the crowds and pressures of commuter life.....returning home each day to the relaxing environment and calm demeanor that abounds.

Harpenden is blessed with some glorious countryside and a Town Council that really cares about the local environment. A £293,047 budget for Commons and Greens ensures that flower displays, hanging baskets, parks and gardens are maintained to the highest standard giving immense pleasure all year round.

The Harpenden in Bloom initiative is supported by many sponsors and judging by the visible results it's objectives of improving the quality of life for all in the area is achieved with the help of a dedicated work force and the support the local community. (Check out **FORUM** the town council's quarterly newsletter for full details of the 2009 initiative.)

**"...underneath this calm and pleasant exterior is a hotbed of rage and discontent, simmering, barely contained pressure cooker of suppressed anger."**

*From Adventures on the High Teas by Stuart Maconie, published by Ebury Press.*

*Reprinted by permission of The Random House Group Ltd.*

You already know Harpenden is a wealthy town, but did you realise it is the eighth richest town in Britain according to the Daily Telegraph (Spring 08)

Take a walk down the High Street and witness the "Village" feel where many independent shops, bars, restaurants and shops are promoting their wares.....people of all ages packing the pavements.....enjoying the latest coffee creations or cocktail concoctions. And all so well behaved!

No wonder Harpenden is in such demand for newcomers.

*See what Stuart Maconie has to say in full about Harpenden by reading his new book, out now in paperback.*





# More than good barbeque wines!

How many times have you been disappointed with a red that has no body or a white without enough flavour? Well if you pay a visit to Rollings Wine and speak to the owner Paul Rollings you'll end up with 2 beauties from the Chilean Trio brand.

"I can strongly recommend this Chilean red as a wonderful partner for your barbeque. It is a Merlot, Carmenere and Cabernet Sauvignon blend: smooth, rich and fruity and the white is a Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Reisling blend; full, fruity, fresh and complex. Both at £6.99.

Just two of the many wines you can choose at Rollings Wine with the help of the owner Paul Rollings. Rollings Wine, Harpenden's only independent wine store has recently been awarded the coveted "REGIONAL MERCHANT of the YEAR HIGHLY COMMENDED" from The International Wine Challenge 08. So I spent some time with Paul earlier this month to find out just what he has to offer.

**How did you win this Award?** A combination of product range, service and knowledge.

**How long have you been in the wine trade?** Over 25 years having started out with my father's company in St.Albans and then progressing through the wine trade in various roles and companies

**What are the most recent changes in the business and how do they affect consumers?** The one major change that is affecting both business and consumers is the drastic drop in the value of the £, pushing up prices along with shipping costs.

**What made you open a store in the face of Supermarket competition?** I felt that there was a need and demand for a



specialist merchant where customers could come for advice and different wines with the opportunity to taste as well.

**Why should customers buy from you rather than with their weekly shop?** Coupled with the extensive range and competitive prices we also offer free local delivery and an online shop – why battle with parking and queue for checkouts?

**Which wine region is your favorite for Spring/Summer drinking?** I think that the Veneto area of north Italy offers a good range of wines from light and fruity to big and full flavoured

**How competitive are your prices?** We feel that our prices are highly competitive, especially against the off license chains, and in some cases we will undercut the supermarkets. Whilst we were talking Paul (right) introduced me to his associate Jonathan Walkden (left) a much travelled wine maker in France and Italy. Jonathan's passion for wine is explained on a later page.

[www.rollingswine.co.uk](http://www.rollingswine.co.uk)

OUR PRICES ARE  
HIGHLY  
COMPETITIVE...

IN SOME CASES  
WE WILL  
UNDERCUT THE  
SUPERMARKETS

Rollings Wine  
95 Luton Rd.  
Harpenden  
01582 769538  
[www.rollingswine.co.uk](http://www.rollingswine.co.uk)



## Coffee.. Italian style

**Saporito**-the name says it all"! So says Sergio Perano. "Roughly translated it means *tastier* and that's what we aim to achieve with our Italian coffees and restaurant food." Stepping into Saporito will take you to a different world from the plethora of coffee bars in Harpenden.

It is a trendy, welcoming bar with real Italian character. Their first anniversary on May 13th marked the end of a very busy year establishing the business in Harpenden. As a lover of espresso I wanted to find out what made his coffee so much tastier than the opposition.

**Q. Tell me Sergio what is the secret of your espresso?**

A perfect coffee blend called Mokambo and a good machine and a great barrista to go with it.

**Q. Is this brand unique in Harpenden?**

Yes it is. We tested over ten brands before settling on our favourite which is smooth and strong with a delicious aftertaste. And it's Italian of course.

**Q. How much training is required to become a good barrista?**

I teach the art of coffee making to my staff over two weeks, learning how to operate the machine, tampering the coffee and balancing all the ingredients to ensure customers receive a perfect coffee every time.

**Q. Most coffee shops offer you a croissant to accompany the coffee, what do you offer?**

At Saporito there is a wonderful variety of accompaniments for your coffee, from home made cakes and pastries to our delicious home made waffles



**Q. How do you achieve the "Italian feel" to the bar?**

The ambience at Saporito is buzzing yet relaxed, the walls adorned with Italian artwork and our food is authentic and homemade (all following Nonna's secret recipe of course...)

**Q. How important are the family?**

Very, and that's another reason for our success. My son Silvio is the head chef and my daughter Chiara, a graphics designer created the brand identity for Saporito. Also, like all good Italian families we like to spend time together so we open at 8.30 each morning and close at 4.30 in the afternoon.

**Q. Do you offer customers any bonus offers?**

We have a very popular reward scheme which offers a free coffee after eight purchases.

**Q. Have you been in the catering business for long?**

Only thirty four years.....not that I'm counting!

**Q. And your home town in Italy, is it in any way similar to Harpenden?**

It's a lovely community full of people who like to eat good food, dress well and talk about everyone's business--so in that sense yes! On the other hand it's on the Amalfi Coast, bathed in sunshine most of the year but it doesn't have it's own Saporito..

**Q. Finally, is there a gap in the market for an up market Italian restaurant in Harpenden?**

Absolutely. When the opportunity arises we will hope to fill that gap. Watch this space.

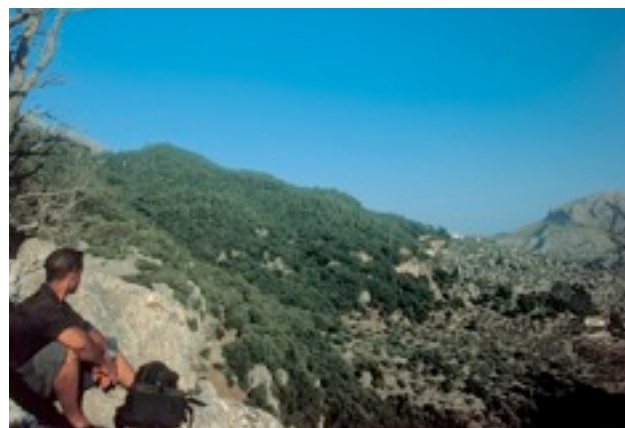
Next time you fancy a coffee why not visit Saporito, you'll be assured of a real Italian welcome and who knows once you have tried their "tastier" experience you'll be hooked.



Above: Chef Silvio Perano  
Right: Chiara and Chantelle with their father Sergio Perano  
Far right: Barista Monica  
Top: Chiara, Sergio and Chantelle







## SECRET MALLORCA

*From our travel correspondent.*

**IN** 1952 Mallorca became the first package holiday destination and that sealed its reputation for many years. With more than 2 million British visitors, it continues to be one of the most popular beach holiday choices, although city breaks in Palma and short stays in bijou country hotels are now well-established alternatives.

However there is another Mallorca – the mountainous north. In the spectacular barrier range known as the Sierra de Tramuntana the rocks are ancient, the hidden valleys peaceful, and the peaks rugged. Surprisingly, on a relatively small island, these are real mountains; up to 4660 ft high and stretching for more than 50 miles, but there is a good road network so they are very accessible by car. If you are looking for a driving challenge though, try the road down to the coastal village of Sa Calobra, only ten miles long but with over 100 hairpins.

Numerous paths have been established over the centuries by pilgrims, shepherds, charcoal burners, and snow-collectors. As these activities declined or disappeared, the land at altitude became almost uninhabited and government protection has kept it unspoiled. There are over 250 miles of tracks, most clearly marked and well maintained, but some are quite difficult. Serious walkers will need to be properly equipped and there are several good guides available, June Parker's being the much-loved classic.<sup>1</sup>

Tree-covered slopes drop precipitously into the sea. The air is heavy with the scent of pine and wild rosemary, and the soundtrack is birdsong, cicadas and the distant tinkling of sheep bells. You may round a bend and disturb a family of wild goats, or perhaps look up to see soaring raptors. If you are lucky they will be black vultures; these spectacular creatures are among the world's largest birds of prey, with wingspans of up to 10ft, and there is a resident population. Just ten minutes after parking, it is easy to feel completely isolated from the travails of humanity.

The best scenery is in the northern section, around the Lluc monastery, and Pollensa or Puerto Pollensa is the ideal base from which to explore the area. The British have been visiting, in relatively modest numbers, for more than a century and so a wide range of hotels and self-catering accommodation is available.<sup>2</sup>

Northern Mallorca is already well known to ornithologists, hikers and racing cyclists but it is delightful for those who just want peaceful, beautiful scenery. Don't mention it to anyone else though; it's our secret, right?

1. Walking in Mallorca (Cicerone Guide) by June Parker
2. [www.puertopollensa.com](http://www.puertopollensa.com) or [www.pollensaholiday.co.uk](http://www.pollensaholiday.co.uk)



**SINCE** being founded just 18 months ago, an internet recycling group has attracted more than 2,500 members.

**Harpenden Freecycle** exists solely to enable local people to give away useful things they no longer want.

The range of items has been extraordinary. Computers, household appliances and baby items feature most days, but there have been pianos, greenhouses, boats and at least one car. Not that everything has an obvious value; piles of rubble, bits of plastic, odd buttons and sacks of shredded paper have all found appreciative new owners! The Freecycle Network was founded in 2003 in Arizona



and now has over 6,000,000 members worldwide, 1,700,000 of them in the UK. It is a registered charity run by volunteers, and membership is free.

One person's junk becomes another person's treasure about twenty times every day in the Harpenden group,

bringing pleasure to both and keeping useful stuff away from the Dark Lane tip and out of landfill.

If you are interested in learning more, the group can be found on; **HYPERLINK** "<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HarpendenFreecycle>" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HarpendenFreecycle>



England Expects

oil 32 x 40

Patrick Boswell at work



## "DON'T TURN A BLIND EYE" TO PATRICK BOSWELL'S EXHIBITION AT THE A&K GALLERY IN HARPENDEN

**THE** exhibition of Patrick Boswell's work, on display from May 8-23 at the A&K Gallery proved very popular.

Patrick, a Freeman of The City of Norwich and one time classically trained French chef will be paying homage to a local Norfolk hero, **Horatio Nelson**, in his painting **'England Expects'** a depiction of the Trafalgar Day celebrations at Burnham Overy Staithe.

Other paintings in the show capture all the fun of the fair, busy holiday beaches and people messing about in boats.

Patrick was born in 1942, and is a Freeman of The City of Norwich.

Originally trained as a classical French chef at Browns Hotel in London, his career led him to the Grand Hotel at Cap Ferrat and the Croix Blanch at Chamonix. There then followed spells in

garden furniture design and property renovation but he always came back to his first love, painting.

A largely self taught artist, Pat has been painting all his life. Using a chalky subdued palette, he is a tonal painter who strives to catch the continuously changing weather moods of his native North Norfolk.

Fellow artist Paul Darley writes: "I was drawn to Patrick Boswell's work long before we finally met. I recognised kindred spirit, a Norfolk man, inspired by its light vast skies and timeless beaches of childhood pleasures and memories.

Patrick's work captures the spirit of place beautifully.

Being both carefully observed and freely applied, it creates a world that is uniquely his own. This is a true gift that few possess; think of Lowry's Salford, Sickert's London, Spencer's Cookham and Boudin's Honfleur"

**A&K Wilson Gallery Ltd**  
11 Station Approach. Harpenden  
[www.akwilsongallery.co.uk](http://www.akwilsongallery.co.uk)



**Solar power will not be able to compete with conventional energy until there is a breakthrough in the technology.**

**A comment recently from BP's chief executive Tony Hayward set me thinking whilst walking the public footpaths round the Rothamsted estate. Here you'll see evidence of unusually tall grass and coppiced willow saplings. How on earth can this be turned into the fuel of the future I wondered?**

The scientists at Rothamsted have built a reputation over 40 years for researching a host of agricultural experiments many of which have received world wide acclaim. Now as part of the BBSRC (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Foundation) and with a budget of £27 million they have been tasked with finding a replacement for the petrol in our cars with fuels derived from plants. This in conjunction with 6 other scientific establishments based around the UK. Sustainable bioenergy offers the potential to provide a significant source of clean, low carbon and secure energy.



The process starts in the fields where willow saplings are harvested every three to five years when they reach five metres in height. A small plantation can yield an enormous volume of woody biomass. Similar trials are happening with Miscanthus grass, a tall exotic grass that also grows extremely quickly. A key objective of Rothamsted's crop scientists is to improve the productivity of these crops. How they capture sunlight. How they convert CO<sub>2</sub> into carbon and which are the best efficient plants. After harvesting, the crop is taken to the labs where the sugar material locked in the woody stalks is extracted and converted



into ethanol. This is achieved with the help of our old friend yeast in a similar process to that used in brewing beer. The microbial scientists use high-tech fermenters where the liquid plant material is fermented with the yeast for 48-72 hours. The key objective here is to speed up the process whilst ensuring all the sugars are converted into ethanol.

**How long before we can say "a full tank of Rothamsted please"**

*Biofuel for cars can be made now, it is a question of whether we can do this at a scale that is commercially viable and economic. It could happen within five to ten years. (Views from Dr. Angela Karp Director of the Rothamsted Centre for Bioenergy and Climate Change.)*



Miscanthus growing at Rothamsted Research. Miscanthus is a fast growing crop.

## National Willows Collection

The Rothamsted hub is called the BSBECC Perennial Bioenergy Crops Programme, and will utilise the National Willows Collection, also now based at Rothamsted. This is a repository for willow germ plasm, set up in the 1920's as a way of conserving varieties that were being lost when rural crafts declined.

Image captions:

Above left: Energy crop research at Rothamsted Research.

Above right: Harvested willows at Rothamsted Research.

**For more information and full details of the BBSRC programme log on to: [www.bsbec.bbsrc.ac.uk](http://www.bsbec.bbsrc.ac.uk) and for a direct link to Rothamsted: [www.rothamsted.ac.uk](http://www.rothamsted.ac.uk)**

# Can innovative teaching improve your child's education?

**League** table results show Harpenden schools in a good light but that doesn't mean teachers can sit on their laurels. No, we need our schools to move forward and examine innovative new teaching methods to help our children become better citizens.

One such approach is the **"Opening Minds"** concept introduced by The Royal Society of Arts. I discovered this quite by accident whilst researching a design brief on their web site. Being interested I followed the links to their education section where all was revealed.

## What is "Opening Minds"

RSA Education develops innovative, practical educational projects in response to the challenges faced by today's children, preparing them for the challenges of the real world where they face an unpredictable future with new social, economic and technical issues.

Opening Minds is a broad framework by which schools can deliver the content of the national curriculum in a creative and flexible way so that young people leave school able to thrive in and shape the real world.

## Content

It is based on five main sets of competencies: Citizenship, Learning, Managing Information, Managing Situations and Relating to People.

## Impact

Opening Minds is now being used in over 200 schools across the country and growing rapidly. According to RSA research, schools who use it tell them that their students are more engaged with school, more independent as learners, have developed real world skills and have higher self esteem.

*"Children are enjoying their learning-the effect on their engagement and behaviour has been profound"***Opening Minds Teacher**  
*"There is a clear and refreshing approach to learning,founded upon explicit teaching of learning skills..."***Ofsted report on an Opening Minds school, November 2007.**

## Some key findings

An RSA survey in July 2008 (based on responses from 48 schools) coupled with publicly available Ofsted data revealed many important facts:

- Schools implement Opening Minds with a view to improving the educational experience of young people without feeling that it must directly impact on ext. test scores or the schools' place in league tables.
- 70% of implementing schools cited having scope for more creative teaching to be a very important reason for implementing Opening Minds.
- 47% cited improved student behavior.
- 89% said it helped student to develop real world skills.

Visit the RSA web site for full details of Opening Minds  
[www.thersa.org/projects/education/opening-minds](http://www.thersa.org/projects/education/opening-minds)



## Teacher talk

Richard Kuhn of Bushey Meads School gave me first hand knowledge of how Opening Minds benefits their pupils

As first deputy head Richard has a responsibility to improve the school's performance.

Visiting the RSA to investigate "Opening Minds" he liked the cutting edge approach and following the recent introduction of Key Stage 3 Curriculum (targeted for all schools for year 7 pupils onwards) it was agreed to introduce OM to Year 7 (175 pupils) at the start of the September 08 term.

Parents were advised of the proposal in Summer 08 and encouraged to attend open mornings and evenings where their support was garnished and confidence gained. Staff resistance was overcome when confirmation that subject specialisation would be retained and that pupils currently lacking independent thinking when entering the 6th form would in future be better prepared. Launched in module format it soon became popular, with teachers and pupils becoming passionate about this new format, particularly the use of one lead teacher to coordinate all the activity. As an example OM was used with other subjects (history,geography, maths) to investigate "Disasters" and the issues regarding these events.

Feedback so far has been very encouraging from both teachers and pupils. It's inappropriate to have trial exams to measure this but the evidence from self assessment and peer assessment so far suggests a very positive future for OM.

Please contact Richard for more information about OM at Bushey Meads School via email.  
[richard.kuhn@busheymeads.herts.sch.uk](mailto:richard.kuhn@busheymeads.herts.sch.uk)





**“Most people want familiarity not new music. I wanted to expand my musical horizons playing music with a cutting edge. Not being able to do this left me out of love with music. Now I’m back in love .....with ART.”**

## Falling in love with ART

The sounds from Haydn Dickenson’s grand piano are now being replaced by the swish of a brush as one of Harpenden’s leading artistic talents transfers his allegiance from his music (more of which later) to his career as a creative artist.

Recently installed at the Copper Beech Gallery near Hitchin he has within 6 short months become their top selling artist. That’s no surprise when you have examined his work. Ranging from still life nudes to contemporary abstracts you can feel the emotion and passion embedded into every piece of work, leaving lasting impressions of love, hope, intrigue, sensuality, happiness.....

“I have to be in an inspired mood before I can put brush to canvas”. This can take effect at any time of night or day, lasting for minutes or hours. Then he stops to reflect on what’s been achieved, returning later to continue in the same vein or maybe alter the direction totally with fresh colours or new imagery, evolving the painting with single minded devotion until the final brush/palette knife stroke when his composition is complete and satisfies his expression of the subject matter..... works of art created with passion and a touch of genius?

An artist’s life is as much inspiration as perspiration, lots of it with hours of practice every day, at any time developing technique, building physical strength and mental exercise to stimulate ideas with original approaches. Dozens of images created every day, some simple some more complex.

His work has received international critical acclaim:

**Major Russian Artist Dasha Balashova** “The Art of Haydn Dickenson is like a true symphony.....These are works that resonate with the heartbeat of life.”

**Manon Vuillermet (Artist and Photographer Paris)** “Here were tender feminine outlines, some modest, some more brazenly sensual, in tones of pink,mauve,purple.”

### Profit or Pleasure

Introducing new art can transform your home bringing fresh life and interest. Art to make you feel happy, energised, intrigued or simply to look good. Investing in art can give you the best of both worlds. Providing on going pleasure and a family asset that could gain value!

### Better known for his music

Many people will be more familiar with Haydn’s musical exploits as a concert pianist having been playing professionally for 17 years. His first album “EAST” was recorded in 06 featuring compositions for piano by Peter Feuchtwanger. It is a series of 26 pieces influenced by the traditional music of Iran, India and Arabia imitating the sounds of the Santur, the Sitar to name but two instruments creating rhythmic and melodic pieces emanating from the culture of these countries and a sense of meditative calm. Haydn’s performances of these unusual works have been described by the music press as **“revelations of supreme pianistic virtuosity.”**

Born in Harpenden into a musical family and schooled at St. Georges he was always going to become a musician and his wish became a reality in the 80’s when his performance career began after a period of study with renowned Royal Academy Professor Guy Jonson. After 10 years however his career almost ended when he suffered PRI (performance related injury) in his hands making playing impossible. A visit to Peter Feuchtwanger the brilliant German concert pianist changed his life. A course of exercises devised by Peter enabled Haydn to overcome the problems; subsequently he studied with Peter who became his principle influence and mentor.

## Changing direction

Recent years have seen Haydn performing internationally and also locally at The Maltings Arts Theatre, St. Albans as well as other venues.

A soul searching crisis in Autumn 07 confirmed to Haydn that he should concentrate his future in the art world and develop his talent away from full time music. He has also built up a reputation as a piano teacher of insight and vision, a career which he still continues.



## French Exhibition

August will see the launch of a new solo exhibition in Lodeve, Languedoc, Southern France and celebrating the opening with a piano recital by Haydn's wife, concert pianist Annett Busse this will be a stunning event to look forward to.



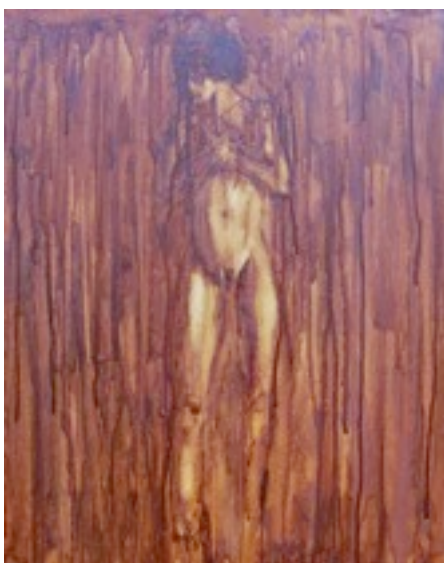
## copper beech gallery

Set in a beautiful two hundred year old barn the gallery ethos is to showcase talented local artists together with established and emerging names. Haydn's work is on display currently with new paintings being added frequently. **Located at Wymondley Hall Farm, Priory Lane, Little Wymondspley, Herts. SG4 7HE. 01438 7227700**, the copper beech gallery is a must-see for all art lovers.



## Starting out

A chance meeting at Artscape in Harpenden with Melanie Burnell Director of The Copper Beech Gallery led to Haydn being accepted by Melanie as one of the first artists to exhibit in her new collection. With over 20 paintings sold this confirmed a bright future. Despite the "credit crunch" Haydn's work is gaining in popularity. Although currently without a web site you can see more of his work at: **[www.myspace.com/hayndickensonart](http://www.myspace.com/hayndickensonart)**



## Piano lessons....

are continuing to blossom also under the guidance of Annett Busse, Haydn's wife. Herself a talented pianist and teacher having also studied with Peter Feuchtwanger she will be playing at The Maltings Arts Theatre, St. Albans lunchtime series on 10th June.

For further information please contact Haydn 01582 467911 or [Hayndickenson65@googlemail.com](mailto:Hayndickenson65@googlemail.com)





**“Relax and feel the tension disappear”**

**Deep tissue massage from Linda Ottway IIHHT.DIP-IIST\_PACT.(Also available from Natasha Morley ITEC Dip MGPP**

## **Walking on sunshine!**

**Have you ever seen so many smiling faces in Southdown, particularly around the entrance to 136a Southdown Road. I called in to find the secret behind the smiles and found the headquarters of The Southdown Clinic.**

This is a Clinic of Excellence offering Medical and Complementary Therapy from 15 qualified therapists trained in various disciplines from Acupuncture, Deep Tissue Massage to Hypnotherapy and Nutritional Therapy. The benefits to patients are many and treatments vary from 1 or 2 sessions to a regular therapy weekly or monthly.

**STOP SMOKING---STRESS REDUCTION---PAIN RELIEF---WEIGHT CONTROL** are just some of the treatments available.

**I asked Linda Ottway the manager of the Practice to tell me how a new patient is welcomed.**

“At the Southdown Clinic our aim is to create a calm welcoming and listened too environment. Patient wellbeing is top of our priorities”

**And how do they consider which course will best suit their needs.**

“At the Southdown Clinic we consider the needs of each patient by listening, we are then able to advise and direct them to the correct therapist.”

**What can Complementary Therapies achieve?**

“Complementary Therapies promote the bodies ability to natural healing. They can relieve pain, prevent disease, boost the immune system, reduce stress, relieve tension and restore balance.”

**Finally how do new patients find out about their services?**

“Word of mouth and patient recommendation generate most our new business. The business was established in 2002 so we have built up an excellent reputation over the last 8 years. We have a web site where full details of our full range of treatments can be found, or call on 01582 760200.”

[www.thesouthdownclinic.co.uk](http://www.thesouthdownclinic.co.uk)

Chiropody is another service to be found at The Southdown Clinic.(01582 766614) Read on to the next page to find out more.

# My feet are killing me

Probably one of the most common complaints from patients who visit their Chiropodist, or so I thought until I called in to The Southdown Chiropody Practice(at The Southdown Clinic) to see Ridley Whitfield. Practicing for 10 years in Harpenden, Ridley knows a thing or two about caring for feet as does his colleague Susan Hammersley.

**Q. I gather you give specialised advice to extreme events athletes. What's that all about?**

Extreme athletes like tri athletes and runners in the Marathon de Sable who are fundamentally physically sound, sometimes need advice on specific areas of their feet to help avoid blistering and excessive wear and tear to tissues.

**Q. What are the most common complaints from your patients?**

Corns and calluses, nail disorders, athletes foot, ingrown toe nails, verrucae, constitute the majority of complaints. By investigating the basic causes of the problems through biomechanical examination we can sometimes prescribe simple inserts or more complicated orthotics that fit into the shoes. These are designed to both relieve the symptoms and improve the function of the lower leg and foot.

**Q. How important is it to have foot complaints checked out quickly?**

Like any medical condition, leaving it can cause bigger problems later on. With feet, however, it's like toothache and the pain that takes over and even with the smallest corn the discomfort can be extreme.

**Q. If you don't follow advice what problems can it lead to?**

The body is a very clever piece of kit and the foot especially so, with 26 bones, 39 articulations and numerous muscles both from the leg and within the foot itself. For example there are four layers of muscles in the bottom of the foot. This gives it the ability to change and alter the way it works with the variety of situations we put it in.

At the basic level, continuing pain and discomfort. At a more serious level, if the foot is not in contact with the ground correctly, the body makes compensatory movement of muscles to try to correct the malfunction and by doing so puts extra stresses and strains on the skeleton and musculature to try to keep us upright. From that can occur knee pain, lower back pain and sometimes spinal problems.

**Q. Why do many people end up with ill fitting shoes?**

In my view, everybody is different but each pair of shoes is the same. The left side of the body is different to the right and it is quite normal to have one foot half a size bigger than the other.

Quite aside from the fashion issue, which at times is just daft, but beautiful, we don't have our shoes fitted individually. If we did that and invested the thousands of pounds it takes I guess some foot problems would disappear.

We should all go bare foot. In societies that don't wear shoes, foot problems are very much less. That is what we were designed to do.



**Above: YOUR FEET ARE IN GOOD HANDS**  
Patient treatment from Ridley Whitfield MSSCh MBChA

**Q. Why don't shoe makers research these issues and make improvements?**

I am sure they have but mass production techniques go against the individual quirk of the body

**Q. Does the fashion industry bear some of the blame?**

To some extent, but not as great as some think, however. Basic inherited traits will define how our feet are shaped. If your granny and her mother had bunions, there is a god chance that you will too regardless of the shoes. The issue is, of course, not helped by wearing high narrow shoes but there are plenty of people who wear silly shoes whose feet are perfectly ok.

**Q. What about buying shoes on the internet?**

Always buy two pairs in different sizes and send one pair back.

**Q. How can shoe retailers help customers to choose better fitting shoes?**

Make shoes individually!!

**Q. You see all sorts of people wearing trainers these days, from young children to pensioners. Are they really suited to everyone?**

With their good levels of support and cushioning, trainers can help people. For the older person, with declining muscle control and the loss of natural paddings, trainers can help. However, there is a school of thought that says that by preventing the foot from doing its job naturally as being barefoot, this can have long term effects. The best runners in the world wear very little on their feet sometime barefoot.

**Q. Finally are your services open to everyone?**

You don't need a referral from your doctor to see us. We offer treatment at the Clinic in Southdown and we also have a home visit service for anyone who can't get to us.



## Harpenden wine expert helps win Silver and Bronze Medals for French wine producer.

The skills of Jonathan Walker helped French wine producers **Domaine Gourdon** achieve a **Bronze Medal** at the **IWC 2009** with their **2007 Sauvignon Blanc** and a **Silver Medal** for their **2006 Merlot (Chateau Terra Rouge)**.

Jonathan worked in their vineyards during this winter and upon return to the UK provided sales promotion and wine sales via liaison with independent wine merchants which helped to win these awards.

### Graduation as Top Student in 2007.

Jonathan studied at Plumpton College graduating as top student with distinction in Wine Production (FdSc.). His additional attainments: WSET Diploma – in progress, (equivalent college version passed with distinction) WSET Advanced Certificate passed with distinction 2005 WSET Intermediate Certificate passed with distinction 2004, Barnfield College, Award winner – 1st prize

### Italian Experiences

Azienda Agricola Villa Monteleone is a small boutique wine estate located in the heart of Valpolicella in the Veneto region of Northern Italy. Owned since 1988 by Signore Anthony Raimondi (an American of



"I was on the team that produced the 2006 vintage Plumpton College Dry White Wine which was awarded a gold medal (college 1st) in the 2007 SEVA wine competition."

Jonathan Walkden

Italian descent) Jonathan worked here between Jan -Feb 09 for six weeks as assistant winemaker for the 'appassimento' the traditional period of time during which the premium quality wines such as Amarone, Recioto and Ripasso are made from the fruit that was carefully selected some months ago from the previous years harvest to undergo a period of 'drying' to concentrate berry sugars and flavours.

Az. Viti. San Michele is a small but growing wine estate located in the heart of Valpolicella in the Veneto region of Northern Italy. Owned and run along sustainable lines by the 3rd generation of the Righetti family some 40+ hectares are used in the production of premium quality wines made mainly from varieties

such as Pinot Grigio, Corvina, Rondinella, Molinara, Corvinone and Cabernet Franc vines. In addition the winery business buys in vast quantities of locally produced grapes for the production of high quality bulk wines sold onto renowned producers the likes of Masi, Zenato.

Jonathan worked over a six week period as quality controller at warehouse reception for Amarone quality fruit from local producers. This work included; accurate grape sugar level grading conducted in a fair and responsible manner, fruit/bunch quality/size inspection and picking tray fruit density/layout assessment leading to acceptance/rejection.



### Award winning wines from Domaine Gourdon.

**Domaine Gourdon** is a traditional, small wine estate just west of Bordeaux in the 'Côtes de Duras' AOC region, South-West France. Practicing "sustainable viticulture" it produces a selection of wines from well established classic varieties such as Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc vines. Jonathan worked over a seven week period in

**Autumn 07 as winemaking assistant to the owner with time spent helping assess fruit ripeness in the vineyard but the majority in preparing the winery for the vintage start and most importantly of course, the actual wine making process. Winery work included; sanitising and cleaning tanks, barrels and equipment; checking and testing equipment; fruit reception, crushing, pressing, fermentation initiation, monitoring, decuvage, racking, sensory & chemical analysis.**

# APPENDIUM

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**31st May**

**Summer Planting Day**

**9.30am War Memorial Church Green**

Volunteers welcome to help with planting

**13th June**

**Harpenden Common Discovery Day.**

10am -5pm on the Common by the ponds.

Free family fun day with lots of fun including a falconry display.



**13th (10am-5pm) 14th June (11am-5pm)**

**Art on the Common**

Over 25 stalls of local arts and crafts

**29th July**

**Classics on the Common**

Car enthusiasts with their loved ones.

## CARNIVAL SUCCESS

**17th May**

**Rothamsted Park**

Carnival chairman Iain Sinnott reports that initial estimates suggest in excess of £11,000 has been raised thanks to the people of Harpenden who supported this major community event.



## THE LAST WORD

The date for the next General Election is a hot topic right now and according to Sir Robert Worcester of Mori it will almost certainly be called by the PM on April 7/8 for a polling day on May 6th 2010.

## COMING SOON SUMMER ISSUE

### FASHION FORWARD

The next issue will feature all the latest news from Harpenden's fashion leaders. Retailers--fashion designers--students--and anyone with a passion for fashion! If you want to tell your story then contact the Editor sooner rather than later.

### PLUS

#### ART GALLERY TOURS

We'll be reporting on the almost undiscovered secret that is the Margaret Harvey Gallery in St Albans.

One of the UK's most innovative art spaces.

### PLUS

#### SUMMER LIVING

Find out all about eating **Al fresco**, cool wines and the freshest home grown foods.

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### HAVE YOUR SAY.

If you have a story to tell then contact the Editor with a brief summary and if it has relevance with a forthcoming issue we will be in touch with you.

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### SPREAD THE WORD -PLEASE

If you liked reading HARPENDIA then why not forward it on to your network of friends.

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### REGISTER FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

Send an e mail to the Editor to register for the next issue direct, so much better than waiting for a friend to forward it on! And remember it is totally free of charge.

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### CONTACT THE EDITOR

I'd like to have your considered feed back on the content of HARPENDIA to help with future issues. Feel free to drop me an e mail. [info@harpendingia.com](mailto:info@harpendingia.com)  
Enjoy your reading. Ron Taylor.