

# St Thomas's Almshouses

## Regular Events

MONDAY: Coffee Morning from 10am

TUESDAY: Coffee Morning from 10am  
Exercise Class 10-11am

WEDNESDAY: Coffee Morning from 10am  
Bingo 5.30-7pm

THURSDAY: Coffee Morning from 10am  
Knitting & Sewing from 1.30pm

FRIDAY: Coffee Morning from 10am  
Bingo 5.30-8.00pm

1st Friday of every month—*The Sweet Man*, from 9.30am

SATURDAY: Coffee Morning from 10am

**Won't it be lovely when these can all re-start!**

## Getting in touch

### WARDEN

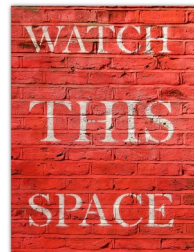
Sharon: 01474 534385

The warden is on duty from 8am to 6pm every day. Outside of these times, Centra will help with emergency calls.

### CLERK TO THE TRUSTEES

Emma Pannell: 07912 036258  
Email: [clerk@pinnocks.org.uk](mailto:clerk@pinnocks.org.uk)

**Suspended for now**



*If it's icy, we'll do our best to treat some paths, but **extreme caution** is advised, and ideally avoid all routes.*



# Pinnocks News



March 2021

Issue 2

## Saturday 20th March...

**...is the official first day of Spring here in the UK this year, and goodness, how much are we all looking forward to it!**

We hear and read every day now about the march to vaccinate everyone, and hopefully many of you at St Thomas's have had your second vaccine.

Some people think the UK economy will roar back, once people can get back to the shops, day trips and holidays and the like. We wait to see. But mainly, won't we all cherish our freedoms, our friends, the every day conversations with people we meet, and the people we have not been able to see?

Some of the almshouse residents had only just moved in when the pandemic began, or have moved in since. Hopefully you'll be able to get to know each other and enjoy some social events soon.



Thank you for all the ideas received for the name of the newsletter. The Trustees enjoyed hearing all the entries, and choose Pinnocks News.

Strange as it may seem, my first recollection of the war was not from a fear factor, but almost enchantment; a warm summer evening somewhat spoilt by the cacophony of a German air raid on Tilbury Docks. This was my impression, although I suspect now that it was probably the whole of the London Docks that were targeted. This I suppose from the air simply began at Tilbury and extended West or North West, by purely following the Thames not something that could be blacked out or instructed by ARP personnel to stop showing light. During the time I was allowed to watch, the air raid seemed to be strangely orchestrated. It possessed an eerie calm, broken occasionally not by noise, but light. It is only now that the broken calm is understood as being attributable to the flashes of explosions and the flicking. Probing tongues of ground based searchlights backed up by the illumination created by many small fires that seemed distant and scattered. The fires were a perceptible myriad of entertaining fireflies that pranced and danced to a backdrop of a low silent disbelieving summers night sky.

Why it now appears important to describe such memories is not really understood, logically the impact they have for the reader is to a degree, unimportant. Such described happenings will probably appear fictional and even dream-like, which is far from the case and during that long, hot summer was to be repeated many times.

Strange as it is that such childhood memories are more often or not accompanied by the inevitable, exceptional summer. This poses the question, bearing in mind the British climate, why the predominant memory is purely that of a long, hot summer! What ever other questions spring to mind, why was I permitted to witness such scenes of destruction? Bearing in mind my vantage point, which I guess was less than ten miles from Tilbury, should I not have been taking cover? Cowering under the table or stairs, for what good either would have been in the event of a bomb landing nearby or directly upon! As it was summer would not the hour have been later than normal? My father was fighting a war somewhere in Europe, so where was my mother? Certainly not in the good old Anderson, which we had and didn't use. Seemingly, the preference was under the stairs.

What a delight of a long, hot summer; late nights, school holidays. Do childhood memories play such tricks, or is it the seemingly halcyon that present such images? In reality, I think not so much so. To this day I also recall watching doodle-bugs, V1 and V2 rockets always seeming to head up river whilst I watched and waited for the engines to cut out and, with fatal fascination, attempt to imagine the final flight path of destruction. How was it that they always seemed to evade the protective curtain of barrage balloons? Surely it was not the long, hot summer. *ARD*

**With thanks to Mr Alan Dagger of Flat 39 for writing and submitting the article above. Alan grew up in Northfleet, attended St Botolphs Junior School and Colyer Road school for boys. He moved to the almshouses in May 2019 and wrote this article a few years ago. Thank you Alan!**

## Around the Site



Please, please just don't flush any products other than toilet paper down the loos.



The big sewage trucks were called out by us recently due to a complete blockage of the underground systems, which if left for any longer would have flooded the almshouses.

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## Did you Know?



The Almshouses as they are now were re-built starting almost thirty years ago. The previous Victorian dwellings on the site (pictured above) were in danger of complete collapse due to subsidence.

The Lodge, part of the original buildings was sensitively redeveloped, retaining many original features.

## Spotlight on...

**Bob Gladwell—Chair of Trustees**

*The Pinnocks Charity is overseen by a board of trustees. They share responsibility for governing the charity, ensuring it carries out its purpose, and directing how it is managed and run. Our Pinnocks Charity is made up of people from the local community, and half of the trustee body are local Gravesham councillors. All of them volunteer their time and their expertise to carry out this work.*

Name: Bob Gladwell  
Role: Chair of Trustees



**How long have you been involved with the Pinnocks charity?**

*I have been involved as a trustee with Pinnocks for nearly thirty years, and I have been Chair for the past 27 years.*

**Why did you get involved?**

*I was invited to be involved thanks to my wife's uncle Jeffrey May who had been a trustee and chairman for many years. During my working life I was a Building Manager and my skills and knowledge were useful to the charity, which was just about to start a total rebuild of the almshouses.*

**How would you describe your role?**

*I work with my fellow trustees to make decisions about how the charity's funds are allocated. Day to day, this might mean striving to ensure that contractors are doing work to the standards we expect, or finding solutions to issues with the buildings or the surrounding land. All the trustees are very much looking forward to being able to meet up again in person at the Lodge, and we know how hard it has been for everyone having to deal with this restrictions of this pandemic.*