



Newsletter

Wandsworth



I wonder how many chameleons snuck onto the Ark?

I've given up asking rhetorical questions. What's the point?

Our Freedom Pass is safe! – For Now!

Last month we reported on the negotiations between the government and London's Mayor Sadiq Khan over a second bailout for Transport for London. There was talk that money would be conditional on higher council tax, extending the congestion charge zone to the north and south circulars, and *scrapping free travel for us older Londoners!*

In the end Transport for London secured a bailout worth about £1.8bn. This has been billed as a significant win for the Mayor as, though funding only runs till the end of March, the government backed down on the threatened conditions. So, expect another row come the new financial year. In the meantime the restrictions agreed as part of the first Covid-related bailout remain in place.

IN THIS ISSUE

- That Travel Pass
- Lockdown 2
- Poppies
- The Real McCoy Part 2
- Remembering the Doodlebug
- Trees
- A smile?

But are you safe?

Under the new lockdown rules there will be no mixing of people inside homes anywhere in the country, except in cases where childcare and other forms of support are necessary. However, unlike March, you can exercise or visit outdoor public places with the people you live with, your support bubble, or one person from another household.

Will you miss your grandchildren? Will the new restrictions make you feel safer? With less people at work, perhaps there will be more people in the shops? Will you worry that they might not be wearing masks?

Please let us know!

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Don Brind and Peter Martin are keen to hear from you.

Please email us at

u3anewswands@gmail.com

PM: 020 8672 8150
DB: 020 8673 1116



Lifelong Balham resident Kathy – evacuated from the area during the war – has been selling poppies at Balham station every morning this week from 7am. Wednesday's stint came after getting up at 4am to watch the US election! But no surprise that as a result of COVID-19 receipts from this year's Poppy Appeal are at real risk. However, there is the online British Legion shop: <https://www.poppymap.org.uk/collections/poppy-appeal> [with thanks to Balham Newsie]

BLACK HISTORY: THE REAL McCOY



We often hear the expression “this is the real McCoy” but how many of us might have used it without knowing its origin and why it was initially used? Last week Jeff Pickering introduced us to the early life of Elijah McCoy (1843-1929).

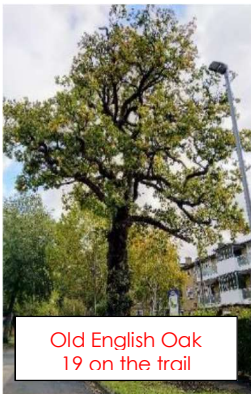
His work in Detroit included oiling the engines of the trains. Elijah became aware that children were oiling the engines by hand, dangerous work that could injure or kill them – and it often did. Elijah set about developing a device that would lubricate the engines without stopping.

In fact, once figured, the answer turned out to be quite simple: a drip cup filled with oil attached to an engine or machine. He patented this in 1872 and a year later he had made improvements to the device, receiving a second patent. He assigned all or parts of his patents to others in exchange for money to finance his workshop and he continued assigning patents from then on. At first, train engineers were sceptical/reluctant to use the device because it was developed by an African American, but finding how efficient the device was quickly changed their minds and within a short time railroads, shipping lines and factories throughout the world bought the McCoy lubricating cup. The money he received from these sales was used to develop more devices for locomotives/trains. Eventually, Elijah McCoy inventions were recognised throughout the world and he held patents in Russia, France, Germany, Austria and the UK. By 1926 McCoy had received more than forty patents for lubricating devices and inventions. These included special tyres and lawn sprinklers.

Elijah McCoy lived to quite an old age. Businessmen made millions from his inventions, much more than he had ever made for himself. In his later life with little money and perhaps few regrets he spent his time counselling and encouraging young people to pursue careers in science and technology. He died in Detroit Michigan at the age of eighty- five. Around 1920 Elijah McCoy agreed to let some businessmen establish the Elijah McCoy company in Detroit to make and sell his inventions. He worked as a patent consultant to the railroad and other industries and businesses. Other companies tried to copy the McCoy products but none met the McCoy standard for excellence.



So, if people wanted the best quality, they would always ask **“is this the real McCoy?”**



Old English Oak
19 on the trail

Do you know your Ash from your Elder?

Wandsworth Council is to spend £100k on new trees – it aims to be the greenest borough in inner London. The new growth will join the 60,000 or so trees that the Council currently maintains. And you will find some in Furzedown where a local community group has produced a Furzedown Tree Trail, “a COVID-safe activity for everyone to enjoy”. It’s a round trip, with a special tree identification activity along the way. The 30+ trees are numbered so you can visit them; read up about them; try the suggested activities and quiz questions; and tick each tree off as you go. Follow the link to the FCN website: <https://furzedown.net/furzedown-local-issues/1000-trees-for-furzedown/furzedown-trees-trail/>



Hearing the doodlebug; then silence before the explosion was nerve racking. One couldn't tell where it was going to land. Unfortunately, there are some fireworks that slightly resemble these, so I find November 5th difficult.

Yvonne from South London

