



**Elmbridge**  
Borough Council  
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Elmbridge Borough Council's  
Leisure & Cultural Services

# Royston Pike Lecture Series

**2019-20**



An excellent series of lectures covering a wide range of topics

**[elmbridge.gov.uk/culture](http://elmbridge.gov.uk/culture)**

## The Royston Pike Lecture Series 2019-20

Edgar Royston Pike, formerly Chairman of the Esher Council, introduced the 'Esher Library Lectures' in the late sixties. In 1974, Elmbridge Borough Council changed the title of these lectures to the 'Royston Pike Lectures' in appreciation of his 20 years' work on the Library Committee.

**This season, the lectures will be held at the following venues:**

### **Civic Centre:**

Off High Street, Esher KT10 9SD

### **The Cecil Hepworth Playhouse:**

Hurst Grove, Walton-on-Thames KT12 1AU

### **Riverhouse Barn Arts Centre:**

Manor Road, Walton-on-Thames KT12 2PF

Tickets are £3 per person and will be available on the door. Lectures will start at 7.30pm.

For further information, please call Leisure & Cultural Services on **01372 474 568** or email [arts@elmbridge.gov.uk](mailto:arts@elmbridge.gov.uk)

## To Eritrea and Ethiopia: Retracing a Victorian Expedition

**John Pilkington**

**Date:** Thursday 12 September

**Venue:** Elmbridge Borough Council  
Civic Chamber, Esher | **Time:** 7.30pm



In 1868, Queen Victoria's government mounted an extraordinary bid to rescue a small clutch of European hostages in the Abyssinian highlands. They built a Red Sea port, then a railway across the coastal plain, and finally brought in 44 Indian elephants and took on 26,000 local people to serve the soldiers and carry their heavy guns into the heart of Africa.

A hundred and fifty years later, John followed their route, partly on foot with a donkey, and compared Eritrea and Ethiopia then and now. He found today's people spirited and energetic, living in dramatic and extremely challenging lands.

John Pilkington is an old friend of the Royston Pike Lecture Series, and this will be his 16th talk for us. He's often called "one of Britain's greatest tellers of travellers' tales". He has spoken to over 1,000 audiences in six countries, and holds the Royal Geographical Society's much-coveted Ness Award for popularising geography.

## A Nice Cup of Tea!

**Russell Bowes**



**Date:** Monday 14 October  
**Venue:** Cecil Hepworth Playhouse,  
Walton-on-Thames | **Time:** 7.30pm

Much has been written about plants that changed the world - cotton, sugar, tobacco, but little about Great Britain's "national drink" - tea. We get through nearly 35 million cups of it a day, but do you know where tea came from? Have you suffered on your knees through the Japanese tea ceremony? What was the Temperance Movement? Who invented the tea bag? And why should you never add the milk first?

Russell is a freelance garden historian and has been giving talks on the subject since 2000. He has spoken at the National Portrait Gallery, the Imperial War Museum, Chelsea Physic Garden, The Eden Project and Blenheim Palace, as well as for many National Trust members' associations, over 90 branches of the U3A, the WI, and hundreds of local horticultural and historical societies.



## Palestine: Beyond the Wall

**Jan Parsons**



**Date:** Wednesday 27 November  
**Venue:** Riverhouse Arts Centre,  
Walton-on-Thames | **Time:** 7.30pm

Palestine is a land of striking contrasts, from its ancient limestone hills crowned with scattered villages and more recently dense clusters of Israeli settlements, to the vast stretches of the Judean desert, rich in remarkable sites and buildings. Very few tours visit places like Mar Saba, Hisham's Palace and the palm shaded oases of this beautiful landscape.

Jan Parsons travelled through Palestine in 2017 with the Palestine Exploration Fund, meeting some of the hospitable Palestinian people across the West Bank including Bedouins and the Samaritan community with their ancient customs. We will visit the holy sites in Hebron, a volatile city where tensions run high, Qumran, home to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Temple Mount in Jerusalem - a significant site to the three major world religions. Jan's talk will also address the impact of the Separation Wall in the context of the more recent history of Palestine.

Jan Parsons was Chairman of Guildford Travel Club from 2013 – 2019. A keen photographer, her particular interest is visiting ancient and remote sites away from the tourist trail where travel, history, culture and archaeology meet.

## Oh No It Isn't: A History of Pantomime

Pete Allen




**Date:** Wednesday 15 January 2020


**Venue:** Cecil Hepworth Playhouse,  
Walton-on-Thames | **Time:** 7.30pm

What is it about Pantomime that attracts thousands of people every year to this strange concoction of fairy tales, music, dance and cross-dressing? Why do normally reserved, respectable, theatregoers find themselves chomping at the bit to gleefully shout out contradictory comebacks and what is it really like to play the back end of a Pantomime Cow? All this, and the answer to whether something really is behind you, will be answered in this festive talk about what has become one of the great British seasonal traditions.

Pete Allen is the Director of The RC Sherriff Trust, a charity set up through the will of the playwright and author RC Sherriff that supports the arts in Elmbridge. Previously, he was the Arts Development Officer for Elmbridge Borough Council, was co-founder and Artistic Director of WhirlygigArts and Storm the Stage Young People's Theatre, was the Director of The Together in Waddon Community Project and has worked extensively as a professional theatre director.



GRAND XMAS  
PANTOMIME



## Bowing to Tradition: Unexpected Sides to Japanese Society

Jim Holmes



**Date:** Thursday 27 February 2020  
**Venue:** Riverhouse Arts Centre,  
Walton-on-Thames | **Time:** 7.30pm

From the country that gave us all that is high tech and automated, it comes as a surprise to find that many aspects of Japanese society defy modernity. Children's pushchairs still made out of rattan, tiny tractors for miniscule fields and bullfighting where nothing gets hurt, there's much more than mega cities, Buddhist temples and volcanos in Japan. Travel with Jim Holmes through the less expected sides of Japanese life and see how simple, low tech and contradictory it really can be.

Jim Holmes is a professional documentary photographer that lived and worked in Japan for many years, producing images for travel and educational books for UK readers.

## Relationships: Everyone Seems Normal, Until You Get to Know Them

Maggs Latter



**Date:** Wednesday 25 March 2020  
**Venue:** Riverhouse Arts Centre,  
Walton-on-Thames | **Time:** 7.30pm

Maggs take a humorous and quirky look at relationships. Exploring whichever we choose, whether it is human, an inanimate object, a strange hobby or a furry friend, relationships come in all forms. Investigating in a light-hearted way, Maggs looks at how we behave towards and feel about the connection with our relationships and how it affects us and other people.

Maggs Latter is an arts consultant and speaker who has lived locally for over 30 years. She has been a drama teacher, an advisor for Surrey County Council, a youth worker and a founding member of the Barn Theatre Club. She is a member of the 120 singers of the Elmbridge Choir and participates in all things theatrical. A former Arts Officer for Elmbridge Borough Council and former Head of Friends of the Riverhouse Arts Centre, Maggs is now a Trustee of the R C Sherriff Trust.



## Mount Everest: The Longest Climb Dominic Faulkner



**Date:** Thursday 23 April 2020  
**Venue:** Riverhouse Arts Centre,  
Walton-on-Thames | **Time:** 7.30pm

In 2006, Dominic Faulkner led the British Everestmax expedition - the ultimate ascent of Mount Everest in a journey that lasted six months and has never been repeated. Starting at the earth's lowest point on the shores of the Dead Sea, the team cycled and negotiated their way through eight countries and 8000km to reach the north side of Mount Everest. The climb took place against the backdrop of one of the worst years in the mountain's history. Dominic's account of their journey is richly illustrated with images and video footage.

Dom Faulkner is an educator, writer and explorer. He has travelled widely and loves nothing more than riding a mountain bike or paddling a canoe into the wilderness. He is the author of the Longest Climb, short listed for the Boardman Tasker Award for mountain literature.



# The Rosebriars Arts Initiative

Taking its name from R C Sherriff's Esher home, The Rosebriars Initiative is an arts project for residents over the age of 60 living in Elmbridge.

Now in its 9<sup>th</sup> year, it offers:

Weekly singalongs,  
Twice monthly art workshops  
The Silver Screen monthly film club  
Stand alone projects

For information about the Rosebriars Arts Initiative visit

[www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk](http://www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk)

Or call us 01932 229996 or email [arts@rcsherrifftrust.org.uk](mailto:arts@rcsherrifftrust.org.uk)



# Family science fun day

## The challenge?

To centre the solar system!

Make stars and planets and try to balance these on a balance board

Give the performance of a lifetime as a star, balance point or planet

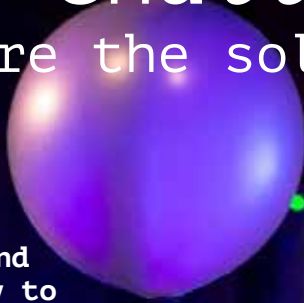
Move with Celestial Bodies performers to occupy the space you find around you

**THEN!** Understand the impact of yourself within the solar system and how, by moving one planet slightly forward, alters everyone's centre!

Experiments!

Movement!

Science!



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## Saturday 5 October

£12 adults, £10 kids. (Early bird prices: £10

adults, £8 kids - until 5 September)

Session times 1pm; 3pm; 5pm

[riverhousebarn.co.uk](http://riverhousebarn.co.uk)

01932 253354

[boxoffice@riverhousebarn.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@riverhousebarn.co.uk)

RIVERHOUSE BARN  
**ARTS CENTRE**  
walton on thames