

Knoll News



Knoll Residents Association Spring 2012 Newsletter

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

by Paul Savage

Welcome to the Spring Edition of "Knoll News" and a big thank-you to all members who attended the AGM in November. As well as the formal business of the meeting, members had the chance to ask questions of their local Councillors and listen to a very entertaining and interesting talk by Patrick Phillips of LBB's Parks and Greenspace Division and then to meet with fellow members, Councillors and Committee members over a glass of wine and snacks. A copy of the minutes of the AGM can be found on our web-site at www.kra.orp.org.uk.

As I mentioned at the meeting, we have a vacancy on the Committee. If any member would like to get more involved in local matters and would like to join the Committee, please let me know. I can be contacted at kra.chair@gmail.com. Duties include attending about eight Committee meetings a year and within the Committee there are a variety of different roles available depending on a person's interests.

One of the activities that the Committee undertakes is to represent the Knoll area at meetings of the Bromley Borough Road Safety Consultative Panel. Unfortunately, the Committee member who usually attends on behalf of the Association can no longer do so and none of the existing Committee members can attend on a regular basis. If any member would like to attend on behalf of the Association (whether or not as a member of the Committee- see above), please let me know via the e-mail address above. There are about six meetings a year, in the evening (usually on a Tuesday) at the Civic Centre, Bromley, to discuss road safety issues with reports from the Police and the Borough's Road & Traffic engineers etc.

Finally, it is with this issue of the Knoll News that we ask for subscriptions. At only £1 per adult household member, subscriptions are modest and I would encourage all local residents to join. Please complete the form on the back page and pass, together with the subscription, to your local Road Warden, whose address is in the list also at the back of the Newsletter.

Thank-you

COUNCIL MATTERS

As at the time of writing, full details of the expected cuts to Council services following the "Tough Choices" round of consultations are not available, although I understand that Council Tax will not go up. However, given the size of the reduction in LBB's budget required, one cannot but help be concerned at the likely impact on services. Once the details are available, we will review them and take up with local Councillors any proposals which seem likely to have a disproportionately adverse effect on the Knoll area; I would also welcome any input from members who may be particularly affected by specific proposals.

LBB are also proposing to introduce a trial green waste collection from kerbside service for a charge of £60 per annum. LBB will provide the necessary bin and collect twice a month March to November and once a month the rest of the year. Personally, I am not convinced of the use of this; most of my garden waste is either composted or is too big and bulky to fit into a bin but some members might find it useful.

Finally, a new Blue Badge (disabled) parking scheme is being introduced in Bromley and nationwide to, among other reasons, reduce fraud. There is a £10 application fee. Further details can be found at www.bromley.gov.uk/bluebadge.

ORPINGTON HOSPITAL

As most members will know, it seems likely that Orpington Hospital will close as part of cost-cutting measures by Bromley NHS Trust made necessary at least in part by the high cost of the PFI contract to build the PRUH and other buildings. As it seems likely that the Queen Mary hospital in Sidcup will also close, the only hospitals in the area will be the PRUH and Woolwich, although it seems likely that some services (X-rays, blood tests) will be available locally somewhere in Orpington.

At the time of writing, the Trust has not announced its final proposals but we strongly believe that as many as possible of the services currently provided by Orpington Hospital should continue to be made available locally. Once final details are made available we will make appropriate representations and would welcome details of any member who might be particularly adversely affected by what is proposed.

TREES

By Richard Healey kra.treewarden@gmail.com

Where did our trees come from?

When the last great ice sheets that covered much of Britain melted away about 10,000 years ago, a land bridge still joined southern England with the rest of Europe. Trees already growing in the warmer lands to the south gradually extended their range northwards as soils were exposed and temperatures rose. The first to arrive were fast growing pioneer species like birch. These were followed by Scots pine and by 6,000 BC Kent was blanketed by woodland. As the ice melted, causing sea levels to rise, Britain became an island. Plants & animals that were already established by that time are referred to as native species. Britain has approximately 33 species of native trees, all of which are found in Kent. Most are broadleaved, but there are also three native conifers, namely Scots pine, yew & juniper.

In general native trees & shrubs will support more wildlife than non-native. For example our two native oaks (sessile & pedunculate) support nearly 300 species of insects. Non-natives such as the sycamore or sweet-chestnut support fewer than 20 species of insect. Since Britain was cut-off from the continent other species have been brought in by man, either deliberately or accidentally. These introduced trees usually support fewer species of wildlife

How man has changed woodland

From Neolithic times onwards farmers began to clear areas of woodland in order to grow crops & graze animals and by Roman times most wildwood had become managed woodland.

Some woods were coppiced by periodically cutting the trees down, close to ground level, so encouraging the growth of many shoots instead of one and providing a renewable supply of fuel & timber.

Much of the woodland in Kent has been coppiced at some time but the practice has declined as the demand for hop poles, fence posts & charcoal as fuel has reduced.

Some wildlife species, particularly flowers & butterflies, depend on this regular coppicing to survive. Another way of managing trees is by pollarding, which involves cutting the trees at about 2 metres above the ground so that the new shoots form a bushy crown out of reach of the grazing animals. Pollarded trees can still be seen as boundary features or more often in wood pasture.

Extracts from a leaflet by Kent Wildlife Trust www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk

◆◆Please remember to water any small council trees & saplings close to your property during dry periods☀

A YEAR OF CELEBRATION



An exciting summer lays ahead of us with the Olympic Games and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. If you are planning a street party there are some good ideas and practical advice, including where to go for public liability insurance, at <http://www.streetparty.org.uk/>.

Or maybe you are planning to join the 4th anniversary of Big Lunch on Sunday 3 June <http://www.thebiglunch.com/index.php>.

If you would like to share your event stories & photographs with your fellow Knoll Residents please email to Deepa Gadkary c/o kra.website@gmail.com

Orpington Chorale will be celebrating on June 23rd 2012 with their performance - Music for the Jubilee and Olympics, including excerpts from Merrie England by Edward German. Venue All Saints Church Bark Hart Road. For details contact orpingtonchorale@hotmail.com or

☎ 872231

AND HERE'S YOUR INVITATION TO..

St John's URC, Lynwood Grove, Orpington
Queen's Diamond Jubilee Community Event

St John's URC in Lynwood Grove invites everyone in the Knoll Rise area to come to a party on the evening of **Monday 4th June, starting at 5.00pm**, to celebrate the Queens' Diamond Jubilee. Children will be able to play games, have faces painted, make bunting, banners and badges. For adults it is planned to host events in the church's halls, such as dancing and craft demonstrations. There will be no entry fee, so just turn up and come and go as you please across the evening.

Refreshments and food will be available to purchase, and the proceeds will go to St John's current charity programme 'Thanks a bucket', which is raising funds to install a new water well to a needy community in an arid region of northern Brazil. The finale of the evening will be the **lighting at 10.00pm of a beacon** on the roof of the church. It is hoped that hundreds if not thousands of churches up and down the country will light beacons, which the organisers intend to conduct as a 'Mexican wave' across Britain. So please come along and help us to celebrate and give thanks for the Queen's 60 years in service by joining together for an event to remember.

V IS FOR VENGEANCE

by Richard Burton

67 years ago, the 27th March 1945 was a nice warm early spring day. But 134 residents of Hughes Mansions Stepney did not live to enjoy it because at 7:12am a V2 scored a direct hit on their tenement blocks. This was to be the penultimate missile of 1348 rockets launched against London during 1944/45. Later the same day at 16:57 the final V2 hit Orpington between Court Road and Kynaston Road. Compared with Stepney the casualties were light, one person died and 23 were seriously injured. The fatality was Mrs Ivy Mildred Millichamp who lived at 88 Kynaston Road. She was pulled clear by her husband Eric who was not badly injured. Ivy suffered the cruel fate of being the last civilian person to be killed in Britain by direct action during WW2. She is buried in All Saints churchyard, the headstone only being erected belatedly in 1989. Orpington and the surrounding area suffered thirteen V2 impacts from 12 September 1944 until the last one on the 27 March 1945.

The Knoll area was hit on the 2 March 1945 at 12:15 when a V2 landed between Elm Grove and Orchard Grove which caused 79 serious injuries and 250 houses badly damaged. This was the second one of the day: the first landed at Rooksley Road at 4:48 am where 5 people died and 46 were seriously injured. On a lighter note, on the 31 October 1944 at 23:30 at Crouch Farm, Crockenhill, a rocket impact brought down the entire apple crop waiting to be picked. The most serious one in terms of casualties happened on Sunday 18 November 1944 when a direct hit on the Crooked Billet pub Petts Wood, packed with evening customers, caused 24 deaths and 65 serious injuries. 100 firemen with heavy rescue teams laboured through the night and all of Monday looking for victims.

The other attack worthy of mention happened on the 1 March 1945 at 8:25pm to the rear of the High Street behind the Commodore cinema (now McDonalds) and Lancing Road. This caused 7 deaths and 64 injuries. The sheer bulk of the cinema saved the High Street shops from serious damage but flying glass killed a young woman who was cleaning Tritons cake shop opposite (now Domino Pizza) with her mother who was unhurt. There are a number of long term Orpington residents who can recall this period. Eric Blackford was living in Homefield Rise when the Lancing Road rocket exploded bringing the kitchen ceiling down into his breakfast: this made him late for school which didn't go unpunished. On the 6 February 1945 John Clarke was digging a trench at the bottom of Star Lane cemetery when a missile exploded at the top of the burial ground, the blast throwing him some distance.

The V2 (A4) was a 14m long liquid fuelled guided missile delivering a 750kg amatol warhead flying at up to 3,600mph with a maximum trajectory of 60 miles, and a range of 225 miles. Once launched, there was no defence. There were 3172 launches in total against the allies.

Many liberated cities of Europe also came under attack, Antwerp receiving over 1610 V2s, the most deadly being on the 16 December 1944 when a direct hit on the Rex cinema packed with allied service personnel resulted in 567 deaths. V2 Vergeltungswaff 2 (Retaliation weapon 2) was original called the A4 (Aggregat 4) by the Germans.

CONTACT US

The contact details for specific officers & committee members are:-

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Items for the KRA website to Deepa Gadkary kra.website@gmail.com

If you have any articles or news snippets you would like to share, or details of any forthcoming courses, events or talks that you would like publicised in the Summer Newsletter, please email the Secretary by Monday 11 June 2012. kra.secretary@gmail.com

