

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Welcome to the Summer edition of Knoll News. This is likely to be the last Chairman's Corner I write as my wife and I are, with great regret, moving out of the area (see "Goodbye and Hello?" below). I hope that I leave the Knoll Residents Association in as good a shape as it was when I took over as Chairman what seems like many years ago. There have been some changes to KRA in the time I have been Chairman, including the development of closer links with local Councillors, the proposed ASRC and I hope a varied and interesting line up of speakers at the annual AGM. At the same time the area has become busier and more developed, although on the plus side Orpington High St is being redeveloped with the new cinema etc.

We discussed many of these issues at our annual meeting with local Councillors on May 16. Councillors Tony Owen, William Huntington-Thresher, Kim Botting and Pauline Tunnicliffe attended. A major issue was road and pavement congestion on Orpington High Street.

Local businesses can pay a licence fee to LBB to have tables, chairs, and advertising boards on the pavement. Not surprisingly many local restaurants and coffee shops take advantage of this, which can cause congestion on the pavement, particularly at pinch points where the pavement narrows. Kim Botting has agreed to approach Orpington Business Improvement District – "BID", which effectively runs the High Street, to ensure that the licencing arrangements are not abused and any problems can be ironed out.

Road congestion is also a major issue, with the High Street crossing by Tesco's a major problem. Pedestrians often cross without looking and continual use of the crossing can cause long tail backs up Station Road. LBB is about to institute a review of congestion on Station Road and the siting of this crossing will form part of that.

Other issues in relation to Orpington High Street were poor lighting around the cinema, and the bus stop near Starbucks. Additional lighting is planned near the cinema as part of the ongoing development of the area and Pauline Tunnicliffe has agreed to contact the relevant Council Portfolio holder to get an update on timing. The bus shelter for the bus stop near Starbucks has moved and this can cause problems for older people seeking to board a bus. The siting of bus stops etc. is a matter for Transport for London, but Pauline has also agreed to contact them to see what can be done.

We also discussed speeding on Mayfield Avenue, cycling on the pavement, and drug use around Tesco's. In relation to Mayfield Avenue, Kim Botting has contacted Bromley Police to see if it is possible to institute temporary speed checks to ascertain the extent of the problem. Cycling on the pavement has also become an issue around the High St and elsewhere. There is also evidence of "legal high" use around Tesco's. Kim will take forward both these issues with the police. Other matters raised were parking restrictions around Moorfield Road, where LBB are considering a petition put forward by local residents and will put forward a scheme for consultation in due course, and the siting of posts to deter parking on the grass verges in Lynwood Grove.

SITUATIONS VACANT

We have a long standing vacancy for a Road Warden for White Hart Road. Could I ask any member who lives in White Hart Road, or nearby, who has a little spare time to contact Simon Wood on 01689/871811 to discuss becoming a Road Warden. The duties are not too onerous – the delivery of Knoll News three times a year and the collection of subscriptions once a year.

GOODBYE AND HELLO?

As mentioned above in "Chairman's Corner", in the next few months my wife and I will be leaving the district after some twenty seven years. We will be sorry to go but time does not stand still for anyone.

Ian Black, our longstanding deputy Chair and Treasurer, has agreed to take over as Chairman on a temporary basis but does not wish to become Chairman permanently; neither does any current member of the Committee. This means that there is a vacancy as Chairman of KRA.

Could I urge all members please to seriously consider if they would like to become Chairman of KRA – the duties are not too onerous and it gives you a chance to let your vision of the Knoll influence the future development of the area. If you would like to discuss the role of Chairman, please contact me by phone or email (details on the back page).

ASRC

We held a meeting with planning policy officers of LBB and Tony Owen, one of our local Councillors, on 27 April to discuss the progress of our application for ASRC status for part of the Knoll area. LBB had done a substantial amount of work on the proposal, including the preparation of a detailed report, covering, with photographs, every road on the proposed ASRC.

Their conclusion was that the ASRC should be restricted to part of Dalewood Road, part of Broxbourne and (all of) Lynwood Grove and Mayfield Avenue. The reasoning behind this is that the criteria for becoming an ASRC will be changed when the new local plan is adopted, and because an area can only become an ASRC through being included as such in a local plan, the new criteria will apply. The new criteria are unfortunately more restrictive than the old and specifically include reference to properties being of "similar style". It is this new criteria which is causing the problem – the majority of the properties in Lynwood, Mayfield etc. are arguably "similar in style" being mostly built in the mid-thirties and white rendered, while properties elsewhere (say those in Lucerne Road), although often built at the same time are more varied in appearance.

We are continuing to discuss the proposal with LBB to get the ASRC area extended but will have to await LBB's final decision. The current timetable is that the draft local plan will go before LBB's Development Control Committee on 11 July and then the Executive on 13 July. The plan will then be finalised over the summer and be put out for consultation sometime in September. We will therefore have a chance to comment further on the shape and extent of any ASRC during the consultation phase.

ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES, LOCAL TO YOU

St John's Church, on the junction of Lynwood Grove and Mayfield Avenue, is a hive of community-wide activities for all ages. Perhaps one of these may be of interest to you? You would be welcome to call into these groups anytime, or ring the named contact if you would like more details.

Just Babies: A group for parents/carers and their babies up to 1yr old. Meets every Wednesday afternoon 1.30-3pm, and aims to provide a relaxing atmosphere for those with babies to chat and share experiences with others whilst enjoying a cup of tea or coffee. Lots of toys and baby changing facilities are available, as well as a quiet space for feeding. Each session concludes with the singing of some favourite songs. Contact Chris Shaw on 853971.

Toddlers (for 1-3 yr olds): Meet every other Wednesday from 9.30-11.15am during school terms. There are puzzles, books, toys, a ball pit and the chance for all the parents and carers to have a hot drink while the children have orange squash, grapes and biscuits. The morning finishes with singing

of nursery rhymes and playing musical instruments. We also enjoy Teddy Bears Picnics, Story Time, and occasional stalls selling homemade cards, gifts and cakes. Contact Gill Campbell on 818143. Friendship Club: Enjoy a relaxing afternoon meeting and making friends every Thursday between 2-4pm, with entertainment which might include talks on a variety of interesting subjects, talented singers and instrumentalists, sing-a-longs, quizzes. We always finish with refreshments and homemade cakes. Contact Diana Campbell on 832204.

Men of Leisure: Offers an active morning of snooker (three tables available) and short mat bowling. Throughout the year they run competitions, and enjoy lively conversation during a break for refreshments. The group meets every other Wednesday morning 10-12am. Contact John Thompson 020 8462 2296.

KNOLL TENNIS CLUB

Our local club at the heart of the Knoll Community hosts its annual Finals Day on Saturday 16th July. Tennis from 12 noon - please feel free to drop in and enjoy the fun. No charge for entry. Whilst not quite Wimbledon, it's a wonderful setting, some competitive tennis, Pimms flowing

ORPINGTON PRIORY COMMUNITY HUB

As explained in the last newsletter a charitable trust was set up and registered at Companies House in December 2015 - Orpington Priory Community Hub (OPCH).

Their business plan for managing The Priory as a community asset was submitted to Bromley Council on 20th May 2016. The council says it does not need to raise capital funds but wants to avoid further annual running and maintenance costs so has welcomed the bid which, if accepted, will provide a vibrant and much needed community centre for Orpington.

Already many complimentary comments have been made congratulating OPCH on an excellent submission and wishing the trust the best of luck in achieving its goal. Chair Sally Pennington has set an ambitious fundraising target of £600,000, although events are not scheduled to begin until the trust is given the green light. They hope to have a definitive answer from Bromley Council by September.

STOMPING ON THE KNOLL – Local Musicians Ronnie Ross & David Bowie

Albert Ronald Ross (Ronnie Ross) was a renowned jazz saxophonist who during the 1960/70s lived at No 6 Irvine Way, Orpington. He was born in Calcutta India in 1933 and educated at St Paul's School Darjeeling where he was a border. A son of Scottish parents, his father was an engineer. The family returned to England in 1946. Albert attended The Perse School in Cambridgeshire where as an old alumna he is described as "Mr Cool".

It is not known if he came from a musical family but he studied music at Cambridge University then became a bandsman with the Coldstream Guards when on national service, playing clarinet. By the mid-1950s he was playing tenor sax with Tony Kinsley, Ted Heath and Don Rendell's bands. It was later he switched to baritone sax as Don played tenor. By the late 1950s he had appeared at the Newport Jazz festival and toured with the Modern Jazz Quartet. It is quoted that if it wasn't for Gerry Mulligan he would have been the best baritone player in the world.

Now for the Bowie connection.

Born David Jones (1947) and, by the late 50s, attending what is now Ravenswood school and living in Plaistow Place Bromley. His parents bought the young David a Grafton alto saxophone for Christmas

1961. Wanting to improve his playing, he picked up a copy of Melody Maker and there listed and living locally in Orpington was Ronnie Ross, so he phoned him up and the story goes like this:-
David Bowie: Hello my name is David Jones and my dad's helped me buy a saxophone, and I need some lessons.

Ronnie Ross: I don't give lessons, I am a jazz player.

D.B. But I really want to learn,

R.R. Well what are you doing Saturday morning.

D.B. Nothing.

R.R. If you can get yourself over here I will look at you.

So for the next 3 - 4 months the 10 year old David Jones (Bowie) would take the bus to Orpington every Saturday at the cost of £2 a lesson.

Years later when Bowie was co-producing Lou Reed's "Transformer" album he booked Ronnie Ross for the haunting saxophone finish to "Walk on the Wild Side". At the end of the session Dave Bowie, in his Ziggy Stardust get up, was unrecognised by Ronnie Ross until David said "you know me better as David Jones and my dad's helped me buy a saxophone". Ronnie says "Good god" and in a later interview said "You should have kept at it, you would have been alright".

The present owners of No 6 Irvine Road, knowing the connection of their house with two world famous musicians, lit a candle in their front dining room (this being Ronnie's music room) in memory of Dave Bowie, after his death in January.

During the 1960s Ronnie played with numerous jazz greats: Woody Herman, John Dankworth, Clark Terry, Miles Davis and Frank Sinatra to name a few. He was also in demand for session work, playing on the Beatles' "White Album", The Who's "Tommy" and Rod Stewart and Donovan albums, amongst many others.

He played on film and TV scores including "The Mirror Cracked" starring Liz Taylor and "The Beiderbecke Affair". He also had his own group, the Ronnie Ross quintet, recording a number of albums including "Stomping with the Ronnie Ross Quintet".

He had two sons and a daughter from his first marriage. Both sons (Andy and Peter) are musicians and were members of the pop group "Immaculate Fools", and in the 1980s Ronnie and Andy appeared and performed with the group "Matt Bianco". By the late 80s he was divorced (twice) and living in West London. Everyone who knew Ronnie Ross described him as a hard worker and true gentleman, practicing up to 6 hours a day. It is said : "The baritone sax is a weighty beast and can sound like a cross between a chainsaw and a growling Ferrari but Ross keeps it purring like a tiger on a firm leash."

Ronnie Ross died of cancer in 1991, aged 58.

David Bowie also died of cancer in January this year, aged 69.

Though Ronnie is mainly known for his baritone work he also played alto and bass saxophones, alto clarinet and flute.

Postscript

The first group the 16 year old David Jones (Bowie) was involved with was a local band called "The Kon-Rads" - the lead singer Roger Ferris and two backing vocalists Stella and Christine Patton all lived in Orpington.

Getting ready for a gig at the Green Man pub in Blackheath (1963) Roger badly cut his foot on glass and went to hospital. David stepped up to take over as lead singer. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Article by
Richard Burton 2016

WEA COURSES 2016/17

The WEA will be starting a new programme of varied and interesting adult education courses at local venues in the Autumn. Now is the time to start thinking about booking a place.

American History-- From Revolution to Civil War	11 sessions, Mondays am from 12.9.16 at Petts Wood Memorial Hall
Literature – Another Perspective on the Brontes	11 sessions, Tuesdays pm from 13.9.16 at St John’s URC, Orpington
Art – Romanticism in Painting: The Romantic Era 1770-1850	11 sessions, Wednesdays pm from 14.9.16 at St John’s URC, Orpington
Social History – Society & Belief in England 1500-1900	20 sessions, Thursdays pm from 15.9.16 at St John’s URC, Orpington
England’s Warrior Kings – The Late Plantagenets Part 1	11 sessions, Fridays am from 16.9.16 at Petts Wood Memorial Hall
Creative Writing – Building-Blocks of Successful Storytelling	11 sessions (fortnightly), Mondays pm from 19.9.16 at St John’s URC Orpington

For further details and costs - and to book a place - please contact either Penny Stewart on 01689 827420 or Martine Haynes at haynes.martine@googlemail.com

And why not try one of the WEA's Saturday afternoon lectures:

1 October	The Bohemian World of Bloomsbury
5 November	Harold & Hereward, The King & The Freedom Fighter – 1066 & All That
3 December	The Architects of London Part 3

They take place at St John's URC, Orpington (2-4.30pm) and tickets cost £8 including refreshments. To apply for tickets, contact Yvonne Tapper on 01689 877372 or yvonne_tapper@hotmail.com

CONTACT US

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

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Road warden secretary Dave Thomas 829646

Items for the KRA website to knollnews@gmail.com

Our Newsletter is delivered to over 1200 members in the area. 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 Autumn 2016 edition please email to knollnews@gmail.com by Monday 26th September 2016. Thank you.