

## Children of De Beauvoir - this is especially for you!

Are there toys and books in your cupboards and boxes that you are too grown up to use any more and could bear to part with? I know this is difficult but we are looking for things to give away to other, younger children at our Party in the Park on 12 July and anything you can give us will be so much appreciated and used by other children.

We would be very glad, too, if your mums and dads would get rid of all those piles of books they have read and just leave around the place – and then complain to

you that you never keep anything tidy. That's grown-ups for you. And, if you know of any sales at your school, church or clubs where there might be toys and books left over, please ask them to give them to us. Thank you for the help that I am sure you will give.

Contact **Jane King** [j.king@btinternet.com](mailto:j.king@btinternet.com) (72 Mortimer Road Tel: 020 7254 4843) or **David Kingsley** [kingsleydavid@btconnect.com](mailto:kingsleydavid@btconnect.com) (81 Mortimer Road Tel: 020 7275 8889) **DBA**

## Bicycles

There has been an increase in bicycle theft with bolt cutters being used to steal cycles from sheds. Reducing the number of thefts is one of our local police team's targets and all residents are advised to see that bikes are secured and out of sight, not just padlocked to fences. Hackney is supporting a free national service for registering your bike frame number on the secure website at [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com). This can help restore a stolen bike that's been found to its owner. (Thanks to Northchurch Road Neighbourhood Watch for this information) **DBA**

## Stolen lead

In April thieves removed the lead from a section of St Peter's Church roof. The vicar, Julia Porter, reports that the church authorities have given permission for the lead stolen from the NE turret to be replaced, although apparently it's now quite usual for lead roofing not to be restored. St Peter's Church is just one of a large number of victims of metal thefts which have occurred across Europe in the last year and Britain has joined 11 other countries in an international crackdown on this type of crime. Reports of convictions are rare, though one metal thief in the Midlands was fined £800 and another received a month's suspended sentence. How times have changed. In 1842 Henry Ward was caught having stolen 17 feet of lead pipe, valued at 5 shillings, from an unfinished house in De Beauvoir Square. His sentence was to be transported for seven years.

Old Bailey Proceedings Online ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org) 4 June 2008) 24 October 1842 trial of Henry Ward (t18421024-3026) **DBA**

**De Beauvoir**  
ASSOCIATION

**Newsletter / July 08**

**Sponsored by Glen Insurance**

## Introduction

When you get this newsletter through your door it will be almost time for another PARTY IN THE PARK – Saturday afternoon, 12 July – and the weather will be glorious (fingers crossed). It is the fourth time the DBA has organised this most enjoyable community event in De Beauvoir Square. I say the DBA but actually it is largely thanks to Kathryn Moore, who from the outset has been our supremo and has spent a great deal of time in her busy life successfully putting it all together. This despite saying 'Never again' after every previous party! Thank you very much Kathryn from all of us.

Our 2008 Party has been most generously sponsored by the Benyon Estate and the DBA thank them very much for their support. We are unfunded, so without cash from a sponsor, it wouldn't be possible to run an event that offers so much that's free to the children of De Beauvoir.

The DBA and the De Beauvoir Gardeners also have to thank the Benyon Estate for the coach trip to Brogdale and Great Comp in April. It was rather a chilly day, but refreshing to be out in the Kent countryside. If you like apples, visit Brogdale ([www.brogdale.org.uk](http://www.brogdale.org.uk)) at the end of September when there are hundreds of apples you can try from the thousands of different varieties they grow. And there's a first-class local butcher's shop on site, too.

The Benyon and Beauvoir families are inseparable, as those of you who came to our meeting on 20 May at the Scott Head will know. Read more about Charles Posner's fascinating talk on page 4 and the rather disgraceful early days of both families.

Just one more 'thank you'. This time to Jonathan Bannister and his company, Typhoon, for creating this sparkling newsletter design. We hope you like it. Typhoon are also responsible for the DBA logo as well as for all our recent posters. Jonathan will, in fact, be our compère at the Party on 12 July.

Lastly, many people were enjoyably whirled away by Peter Werth and his Jazz Quintet at an evening the DBA arranged in April. Do you have any ideas for future entertainments? Be bold – and share your thoughts with us. They would be so welcome. Email us at [info@debeauvoir.org.uk](mailto:info@debeauvoir.org.uk).

Look forward to seeing you all, and I mean ALL, in De Beauvoir Square on Saturday afternoon, 12 July.

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## Around the town

### The Rosemary Branch

2 Shepperton Road, N1 3DT

[www.rosemarybranch.co.uk](http://www.rosemarybranch.co.uk)

24-hour box office Tel: 020 7704 6665

BREL – THE RAGE TO LIVE A one-man play with 15 songs, performed in English and French by Anthony Cable as Jacques Brel

[www.jacquesbrel-theragetolive.co.uk](http://www.jacquesbrel-theragetolive.co.uk)

11 July, 7.30pm Tickets £10/£8

MADAME'S LATE MOTHER A new English version of a classic Feydeau farce from Echange Theatre, Hackney's leading French theatre company

13 July, 8.00pm Tickets £10/£8

Double programme: ON THE CUT by Eileen Pollock. Two women do their bit as part of the war effort in the 1940s. A rehearsed reading.

ROPES, ROSES AND RABBIT STEW written and performed by Davis. Tales of an early 20th-century boat family.

18 July, 7.30pm and 20 July, 6.00pm  
Tickets £10

### De Beauvoir Gardeners

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

1 July GARDEN WALKABOUT Meet at St. Peter's Church main entrance at 7.00pm  
First garden will be at 72 Mortimer Road.

5 August, 7.00pm PICNIC AT CELIA BARLOW'S, 27 Albion Drive, E8

2 September, 8pm PRE-SHOW MEETING

7 September, 2.00-5.00pm FLOWER SHOW.

Annual Membership: waged £10; couple £12; unwaged £7; couple £9

### Kingsland Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Visit KCAAC's website for information on planning applications in the De Beauvoir conservation area and along Kingsland Road ([www.kcaac.org.uk](http://www.kcaac.org.uk))

### The Scolt Head

107a Culford Road

[www.thescolthead.com](http://www.thescolthead.com)

Tel: 0207 254 3965

Pub Quiz every Monday night; starts promptly at 8.00pm. Teams of 6 (maximum) can join in at £2 a head. Kitchen open 6.30pm-10.00pm every evening.

### Lockner & Kingsgate Estates

Lynda Sparks will be at 23 Blandford Court between 1.30 and 3.00pm on the first and third Monday of the month if tenants have any queries and would like to call in.

### The Warriors Cricket Team

Richard Lynam reports: So far this season we have held two practice sessions in the nets at Lord's cricket ground, which were attended by 20 or so of De Beauvoir's finest. While we haven't actually won a match yet in the three years of our existence (we've drawn one, tied one, lost ten), the practice sessions have undoubtedly changed us into a well-oiled cricketing machine ready for triumph. On Sunday 13 July we are playing against The Pyts at Fonthill Gifford in Wiltshire. Spectators and players are most welcome to join us.

Contact [richardlynam@compuserve.com](mailto:richardlynam@compuserve.com).

crypt available to us for events and meetings during the year.

**Beavers**, a local and inexpensive parent-assisted play-group for children aged between 2 to 5 at the Rose Lipman Community Centre, Downham Road. For further information telephone 020 7275 7086.

**Skyway** football kickabout. Plus, read about their basketball programme on page 3.

**Our Local 'Chef'** tells us that there will be choices of home made cakes and savoury dishes to suit all tastes - some that were very popular last year and some new delicious recipes - all at very reasonable prices. Pimms and cups of tea available, too, at other convenient spots around the Square.

Many thanks to **J. Murphy & Sons Ltd.** for making a disabled loo available to the DBA once again.

## Glen Insurance

Having helped sponsor the De Beauvoir Association's 2006 Party in The Park, **Glen Insurance** is delighted to support the DBA yet again by sponsoring this issue of your newsletter.

We began trading at the corner of Richmond Road and Kingsland Road, Dalston, over 50 years ago. That's why we understand the needs of people like you who live in De Beauvoir Town and can offer you the benefit of our unsurpassed local knowledge and experience.

You can be sure that we will carefully select for you quality insurance products and services that will bring you peace of mind, and that offer exceptional value. To do this, we use secure, well established and highly competitive insurers with whom we have strong partnerships. We are proud of the high standards of service we give to all our clients.

As your insurance broker, we will offer you:

- A confidential environment in which you can discuss your insurance issues
- Analysis of the risks you face and appropriate cover
- Completely independent advice

- Access to a large number of insurers, both UK and international, including the Lloyd's market
- A tailored programme that meets your specific needs
- Lower premiums, sustainable over the long term
- Assistance with claims, by dealing directly with the insurer on your behalf

Our dedicated account managers can provide you with the most appropriate protection, if necessary accommodating any changes you may need to make during the year in line with changes to your domestic or business requirements.

Whether you are a local business or a De Beauvoir resident, come and see us to talk to us about your insurance needs. Next time you are outside our shop, pop in for a chat, or call or email and see what Glen Insurance can offer you.

**Tony Dobbins**  
Director

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## Party in the Park – entertainers and stallholders

As usual we have the **Fire Brigade**, **St. John Ambulance** and the **Police** coming to our Party. We take them all for granted and tend to forget how much they do for the community when called upon. As importantly, making our children aware that they are the people to trust and turn to in an emergency.

Magician, **Chris Nicholson** who enthralled us last year is with us again. He is an award winning close-up magician and star of Challenge TV's 10 part magic series "Playing Tricks". Chris holds a Guinness world record for his sleight of hand which he won on the ITV show "50 Years of World Records", other TV credits include mind-reading live on MTV, an appearance on the BBC's 10th anniversary "Ready

Steady Cook" magic special, and work with Endemol. Chris performs amazing card magic, magic with borrowed objects, levitation and fun and games. [www.chrisnicholson.net](http://www.chrisnicholson.net).

**Majestic Brass Quintet** from the Royal College of Music consists of five professional musicians all graduates of the Royal College of Music. They will bring to the Party a wide range of music from the Beatles to Jazz, and their unique versions of Popular Classics. They have won the RCM Brass Ensemble Prize, play with top orchestras such as the LSO, RPO, Covent Garden and for West End Shows. The Quintet is very involved in music education, has worked with children of all ages – and likes to have a bit of fun in its performances. The Quintet will be playing on the hour throughout the afternoon.

Face Painting by **Lucia Way** of Mush Arts and her colleagues. Children were created into unrecognisable works of art last year and we are delighted she and her team have agreed to come again to the Party this year. She can be contacted at [musharts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:musharts@hotmail.co.uk) or tel. 0775 328 1045. A local girl, too, being brought up in Mortimer Road, so she is one of us.

North East London **Sands** are providing a free under 7s painting area at the Party – all budding artists welcome to create a personal masterpiece! We provide support for local families who have experienced the death of a baby and can be contacted on 07948 272 486, [nelondonsands@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nelondonsands@hotmail.co.uk) or at [www.uk-sands.org](http://www.uk-sands.org).

**St. Peter's Church** will be having FUN WITH FAMILY HISTORY – activities for all ages in partnership with Hackney Archives. Incidentally, the DBA are most grateful to the church for making the

## Just outside the town

### Shoreditch Sharks Rugby (under 13s)

The new season starts on Sunday 14 September at Shoreditch Park with a training session from 10.00–11.30am. Further information from Jenny Aster: 07904 884485

### Free Tours Of The 2012 Olympic Site

1 August, 5 September and 10 October

Hackney residents can have a free look around the Olympic Park site by bus, guided by the Olympic Delivery Authority. The tour includes the huge construction site of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Park. After the games, the area will be developed into the largest European urban park created in more than 150 years.

Minimum age is 8. Under-16s must have a completed parental consent form. Over-16s must provide valid photo identification on the day of the visit or will not be allowed on the tour. No photography.

To book a place contact Helen Goodsell (0208 356 3975) or email [helen.goodsell@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:helen.goodsell@hackney.gov.uk) or visit [www.hackney.gov.uk/olympic-park-tours.htm](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/olympic-park-tours.htm).

### Teenage Hoops (Basketball)

A free tournament for boys and girls aged 12–18 years to be held at Space, Falkirk Street beginning Friday 11 July, 7pm–10pm and continuing for the following six Friday nights until the final on 15 August. All matches will be refereed by qualified referees and free basketball coaching will be on offer throughout the tournament for all age groups. Contact [daniel@skyway.uk.com](mailto:daniel@skyway.uk.com) (formerly Sky Partnership) or call 020 7729 6970 for more information.

### Timeline

You or your children may already know about the magnificent Stoke Newington-based Timeline magazine which is distributed free throughout the Borough to schools, libraries, hospitals and surgeries. It is particularly aimed at children with easily understood quizzes and articles. There are items of interest to adults, too. The latest issue (No. 18) tells how Tesco was started by Jack Cohen in 1919 in Well Street and how it got the name Tesco. The DBA and the Party in the Park also has a mention on page 10. There is much more of interest in this lively magazine, so do have a look at their website, [www.timeline.org.uk](http://www.timeline.org.uk) **DBA**

## Perfect shape, perfect colour, perfect price!

The Healthy Back Bag Company is extending its 15% discount for DBA newsletter readers to any bags purchased in July.

With nearly 300 variants in fabric, colour and size, the Healthy Back Bag® is both hip and practical. The spring/summer '08 range of vibrant rainbow-bright bags makes a perfect choice for summer holidays. The bag can be worn on either shoulder or cross-body, and efficiently distributes weight throughout its length, rather than pulling down from one point on the shoulder thus reducing pressure on neck shoulders and back, and encouraging good posture. Prices from £27.

Just call us on 020 7812 9800 or email [jane@thehealthybackbag.co.uk](mailto:jane@thehealthybackbag.co.uk)

[www.thehealthybackbag.co.uk](http://www.thehealthybackbag.co.uk)



## A history of skulduggery, pathos, knavery and melodrama

We had a great audience for Charles Posner's talk on the building of De Beauvoir at the Scolt Head on Tuesday 20 May. Charles entranced us as he recounted the story of the various colourful characters who were involved in the building of De Beauvoir. First there was William Rhodes, the prime mover behind the early plans who, in 1821, was granted a 99-year lease by the owner of the Balmes Estate, the reclusive octogenarian miser, Reverend Peter Beauvoir. Peter Beauvoir had wanted to become an actor, but instead was obliged by family tradition and inheritance to enter the church. By 1821, he was Rector of both Downham, where he lived, and Hackney, which he ruled but hadn't visited since the early years of the century.

When Reverend Peter's distant relative, Richard Benyon, heard about the lease, he took legal action to nullify it. Benyon, however, was heartily disliked by the Beauvoirs. Reverend Peter, for one, never let Benyon forget that the Benyons were economically and socially subservient to the grander Beauvoirs.

So how did Richard Benyon pop out of the woodwork? His early 17th-century ancestor was the tallow chandler, Gabriel Benyon, of Crooked Lane, son of a Warwickshire yeoman who supplied candles to the Balmes Estate when it was owned by the Whitmores. Benyon's orphaned grandfather, another Richard Benyon, was shipped out to the East Indies trading post at Madras at the age of 9 by Colonel John Perry, the rather shady secretary to the slave-trading Royal Africa Company. Perry took a bond on this first Richard Benyon for £500 and in Madras, Benyon was taken up and adopted by the Beauvoir family in all but name. He eventually married into the family to save the estate at

Englefield from the Tory Catholics.

In their time, the Beauvoirs were one of the richest families in the British Isles. They had built up enormous investments through a combination of piracy, sharp trading and land expropriation in Guernsey, as well as through their services to both Charles II and James II – though they betrayed James II in return for even more generous rewards from William and Mary.

So back to Reverend Peter. Having sold the lease to William Rhodes, he was reported as saying that his only wish was to survive long enough to lay the first stone of what was to become De Beauvoir Town, but that

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was not to be. After his death, his will was bitterly contested by yet more distant relatives, many of whom hurriedly changed their names to claim the inheritance.

Rhodes meanwhile, was a man in a hurry. He wanted to cash in on the Regent's Canal which was going to be built through the Balmes Estate. To him, the canals and their wharfs were more important than the construction of what he called 'mere houses'. He not only began to plan before he was granted his building lease, but probably began construction illegally as well.

Benyon continued his case against Rhodes and finally won in 1839, despite having to pay Rhodes' gigantic costs – about £20,000. As it turned out, Richard Benyon wasn't very good with money. Within two years he had spent over 80 per cent of his

inherited £1.5m on the purchase of estates in Berkshire and Suffolk. Thanks to the great mid-century agricultural depression and over-building in London, these estates never paid their way and the grandiose plans for Beauvoir Town had to be abandoned.

What was built, though, is the De Beauvoir we know and love. Thomas Smith, a master builder from Bermondsey was responsible for the houses in De Beauvoir Square. He lavished his attention on 15 and 16, in particular, because these were to be occupied by his own family, but he built with so much attention to detail that by the time he reached the south side of the square in 1843, he was short of cash and was forced to make 25–27 into a single terrace. As a result, there wasn't enough room to pair a house with 30, which remained unattached. Thus Charles revealed, to the glee of the people who live on the north side of the square (and Charles was once one of them), that those houses are much better built than those on the south side.

Charles also touched on the question of which class of people De Beauvoir was built for. His friend John Nash said that '....buildings of a lower rate or class are best suited for the neighbourhood...', while Burton judged that the classical style running riot in the more affluent parts of London was inappropriate for De Beauvoir's future inhabitants – clerks and professionals. They would appreciate the 3rd and 4th-rate houses of a 'simple uniform design' the building of which he oversaw in Hertford and Tottenham Roads.

Amusingly, Charles also explained how houses with 99-year leases weren't expected to last. They were built to provide a profit for the landowner, the builder and the landlord and then to fall



Painting (1732) by Bartholomew Dandridge. From left to right: Osmond Beauvoir (1680–1757), his son Richard (1730–1780), and his wife Elizabeth, née Beard, (1700–1772). Son Charles (1731–1751) is on her lap and standing on the right is another son, Osmond, (1725–1795).

down before reversion. Indeed, many houses in Beauvoir Town did; some of Burton's houses in Tottenham Road and Derby Road obliged within five years.

Although Charles commutes between Mexico City and London and shows no signs of retiring from his day job with the University of London Institute of Education, he's committed to continuing his research and says that De Beauvoir has a wealth of sources that probably doesn't exist to the same extent for any other comparable area of London. These include collections of letters to and from the Beauvoirs and their Benyon relatives, the day books kept by William Rhodes, and the working diary of James Burton, Rhodes' majordomo. When Charles has time to delve further, we look forward to hearing more.

If you want to read more about the history of De Beauvoir, visit our website:

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