



DE BEAUVOIR FLIES THE FLAG

Photo PETER FAZZANI

FLAGS ALL THE WAY

Photo J MORFETT

UNDER THE FLAGS & bunting, with the Queen looking on from dozens of lace-curtained windows, no less than seven street parties were held in De Beauvoir on Jubilee Day.

In this special De Beaver Jubilee Souvenir Supplement we bring you a record of some of the excitement, ranging from a party for nearly 400 children in the Rose Lipman Centre and the Fermain/Lanresse party in the New Town, to the old fashioned bun-fights in the Old Town at Ufton Rd & Culford Grove. Lockner Rd had a party on the estate, and the teenagers were not forgotten at Mortimer Rd's spread. Rev Bagley & his congregation held a delightful tea party for older residents at the vicarage, and they, like the grown-ups at other parties, seemed to enjoy themselves just as much as the children.

The kids ran races, go-karted, dressed up in fancy dress and watched entertainments, all undaunted by the storm which swept the area for 15 minutes on the stroke of 4 o'clock.

Then on July 6th, the Queen & the Duke of Edinburgh passed along the edge of De Beauvoir (a gaily decorated Ball's Pond Rd) on their way from Hackney to Highbury.

The Jubilee has also been a time of nostalgia for older residents, some of whose recollections & photographs of earlier Royal events are included here.

nos 3-11 GRAHAM PARSEY

PHOTOGRAPHS

- 1** Getting ready to wave to the Queen in the Ball's Pond Rd.
- 2** Winners and contestants at the New Town East party fancy dress competition.
- 3** The young audience at Culford Grove enjoy the entertainments on stage.
- 4** Mums sprint to a photo-finish (Culford Grove).
- 5.6** Calm after the storm, and the sun shines as teas are completed in Ufton Rd.
- 7** Ufton Rd tea was served at 4pm, and the storm broke at 4.5pm.
- 8** Some of the 400-plus children who packed into the Lipman Centre (New Town West).
- 9** For others, a quiet vicarage tea party (St.Peter's Church).
- 10** A refuge from the downpour at the Mortimer Rd party in the old vicarage garden.
- 11** A spread fit for a Queen (Culford Grove)



MEMORIES

1953 DIMBLEBY & THE CATS' MEAT MAN

HORDES OF KIDS piled into the old Beckford Arms on Coronation Day round De Beauvoir Square.

They didn't disturb Maggie and Dick, propping up the public bar - they were just taking shelter in the Beckford upstairs room from the rain storm which had washed out their coronation party in Hertford Road.

Coronation Day was a rainy day and a television day in De Beauvoir. The "box" had just begun to appear and here, as everywhere in the land, the Coronation was the first major happening which the magic of TV made accessible to ordinary people.

Families congregated at the houses of uncles and aunts who had bought one of the new machines, and they shared with the Lords and Ladies in Westminster Abbey and particularly with the incomparable Richard Dimpleby, the high drama of royal anointing and crowning.

Outside things remained much the same. The major changes like the disappearance of Lockner Road and with it the gardens that fronted the square, would come later.

BECKFORD ARMS

The Beckford Arms still presided over the short terrace of shops that flanked the southern corner of Hertford and Englefield Roads. Mr. Botfield the "cats' meat" man, with his black hat and club foot, still delivered his wares every night, kebab-style on a stick, at 2 old pennies a time.

Jack the Plasterer at the Met must have been embarking on his long and honourable career at about that time, and the decline of religion in De Beauvoir was being hurried along by the Anglican vicar who thought christenings could be traded for regular Sunday School attendance.

Which is not to say that a strong Christian atmosphere was dying too. Before the days of community centres and General Improvement Areas, the local spirit was sustained by the sheer closeness of the society. Collections were arranged spontaneously for those suddenly bereaved or in trouble, and it is perhaps the remnants of this intimacy which has encouraged well over half the residents of the early 1950's to stay on.

NEIGHBOURLINESS

It was this neighbourliness that cared for the area before the DBA and the belated appearance of a conservation-conscious council. Time was, years before the Coronation, when only residents of the square had keys with which to get into the central park. Later the gates were thrown open to everyone during the daylight hours. The park was tended by the local residents and a strict park keeper kept a watchful eye on comings and goings. In his day the lilac trees went all the way round.

For those who were here a quarter of a century ago, it is probably the children's party and Richard Dimpleby that stick most vividly in the mind as signifying Coronation time. For the rest, the De Beauvoir years merge imperceptibly together, and who can say whether it was the night before or the night after the Queen was crowned that the cats' meat man took shelter in the laundry shop, for fear of a rolling-pin welcome home from his wife?

Tom Lloyd and Marge Young

MABEL LOOKS BACK

THE 1935 JUBILEE wasn't celebrated very lavishly in De Beauvoir, according to Mabel Hall, because many people were quite hard up at the time. There were red, white and blue electric lights in the windows, flowers, bunting and flags, but parties were on a modest scale. But it was all happening in the West End, says Mabel, and many local people went to Buckingham Palace to join the thousands singing and dancing there.

The 1953 Coronation was much more festive. Mabel and her family attended the Upton Rd street party, which had a piano in the street, performing acrobats, and the Victory Dots, a dancing troupe which included many local children.

Ann Humphry



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- nos 16 17 GRAHAM PARSEY
- 12** JUBILEE 1935 - Tottenham Rd street party outside cottages since demolished (Mrs Olive Claydon).
- 13** JUBILEE 1935 - Ladies-in-waiting (Tottenham Rd) (Mrs Olive Claydon).
- 14** CORONATION 1953 - Ladies-in-waiting (Culford Rd) (Mr & Mrs Haslett)
- 15** CORONATION 1953 - the Culford Rd street party (Mr & Mrs Haslett).
- 16** JUBILEE 1977 - Lady-in-waiting (Upton Rd)
- 17** 'Rest and be thankful'. Mrs Deborah Bunting takes advantage of the Jubilee Seat built by her husband into their garden wall in Southgate Rd.

MEMORIES

KNEES UP THROUGH 5 REIGNS

Memories of the 1935 Silver Jubilee celebrations of King George V are strong amongst the old folk of De Beauvoir. The street parties, for both children and adults, the dancing in the streets festooned with flags and bunting, are still vivid.

"I remember the old ladies doing the 'Knees Up' in the street, and then it rained heavily," said a senior citizen talking at the Kingsgate Club. "Then a week later the Queen came along Shoreditch High Street in a coach and I went down to see her go by."

Plenty of the Club's members remember standing over a hot stove baking the cakes for the hundreds of kids who thronged De Beauvoir in those days. Everybody too recalled the downpour which partly spoiled the day's joy.

Mrs. Florence Penfold, of Southgate Rd, even remembers the 1902 coronation of Edward VII. She was five years old at the time and has a clear recollection of sitting on her father's shoulders and watching the soldiers march by.

1902

Her memory of the 1935 Jubilee is not so happy. While her husband was helping a team erect the flags and bunting in Southgate Road somebody crept into their house, broke into two gas meters and stole £6 - a lot of money for those days. Mrs. Penfold still cherishes the Coronation Mug which one of her children received at school for the great day.

PIANO IN THE STREET

Miss Win England, of Northchurch Road, has a happy memory of the 1935 Jubilee party held in Mortimer Road, where she lived then. "We had a piano in the middle of the street, the children ate lots of cakes, and then balloons were sent up by everybody," she recalls.

"In the evening the beer flowed freely amongst the men and women and there was a bit of a ding-dong," Miss England, who is now blind, remembers fondly.

Recollections of the celebrations of the 1953 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth and much hazier amongst the middle-aged and elderly. It was still a time of austerity and the De Beauvoir area was in the midst of its run-down period.

The consensus of recollections about 1953 is that it was not celebrated in the same cohesive, spontaneous way as the 1935 Jubilee because the character of the district had changed. Most people feel that the pendulum has swung again, with 1977 more like 1935.

Derek Humphry



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HAVE YOU ANY PHOTOS?

WE WANT to borrow your pictures. If you took pictures at any of the Jubilee events, please let us know as we are keen to see them. We are also trying to compile a comprehensive record of all the main events in De Beauvoir, so if you have any photographs of any events or people in De Beauvoir which may be of interest to readers, please contact the Editors. Any photos of De Beauvoir from earlier years are also very welcome. All material will be returned, and will not be damaged in copying.

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