

De Beauvoir Association

All our readers, I'm sure, love living in this very pleasant London "village" but it's only thanks to the original DBA that we do. In 1963 Hackney Council flattened the area between Downham Road and the canal replacing Victorian terraces with the De Beauvoir Estate. In 1968 they threatened to demolish the rest of the Town between Downham and Balls Pond Roads. Luckily a group of residents got together, started the DBA and campaigned vigorously and in 1971 managed to stop the wholesale destruction. Having won this notable victory the DBA rested on its laurels although long-time residents will remember the De Beaver newspaper the Association produced until 1984.

In 2004 because of local concern over a proposed phone mast in Downham Road and the Edith Cavell development in Hertford Road, the Association was re-formed. We have a committee of a dozen or so residents that meets frequently to discuss local issues and plan events. The highlight of our year is the free summer party for children in July in De Beauvoir Square funded in the past by Living Spaces, Hackney Council and the Benyon Estate.

The current newsletter (this is number 15) was started in 2005 and we are very grateful to various local sponsors who have paid for the printing of over 3000 copies each time and it is now professionally laid out by Jonathan Bannister of Ardleigh Road and his staff at Typhoon Creative Partnership. If you would like to get involved or contribute to the newsletter, please email info@debeauvoir.org.uk or call or text **07962 422149**. New faces and fresh ideas would be most welcome. **DB**

Graham Parsey's articles in October 2007 and 2008 about the DBA's early days can be seen under the Newsletter Archive on our website at www.debeauvoir.org.uk
Paul Bolding & Carol Lee

**Come to our
wine tasting and
social evening on
Saturday February
28 at 7.30pm
in the Crypt of
St. Peter's Church**

**The wines we will
be tasting are
from Spain and
Portugal. Tickets
are £10 payable
in advance. Please
call Jonathan
Bannister on
07974430558 to
book your place.**

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AROUND THE TOWN

THE ROSEMARY BRANCH

2 Shepperton Road, N1 3DT
www.rosemarybranch.co.uk
24 hour box office
Tel: 020 7704 6665

Edinburgh Fringe Sellout Shows 2008!

Handpicked from the very best of this year's Fringe. Book 4 and get 1 free!

Beyonce – Stop punching Robbie!

Written and performed by Cecilia Delatori
12,13 and 14 February 7.30pm

Dick Biscuit – Private Eye

16 February 7.30pm

In the smoke

17 February and 7 March 7.30pm

Living room

Christoph Pepe Auer and Manu Delago
18 and 19 February 7.30pm

Serendipity

20, 21, 22 February 2,3,4,5,6, March
7.30pm. Matinee on 22 Feb at 2.30pm

Madame Bovary:

Breakfast with Emma

by Fay Weldon
(Highly recommended
by Cec Darker) A Rosemary Branch
production directed by Helen
Tennison. Full details on website
soon inc. dates when Fay Weldon
will be holding a Q and A session
and book signing after the show.
11 March-9 April
Tickets for all shows £10/£8.00
(concessions)

Street art

For young people, aged 11-24.
Take the chance to learn street
art in a totally legal environment.
Pick up new skills from one of

Hackney's best graffiti artists, and help to
touch up a disused urban outdoor space
while you're at it.

Saturdays from 14 February to 14 March,
11am-1pm and 2-4pm
Basketball Court, St Lawrence Court,
Downham Road, N1 5TR
Tel: 020 7102 1677
Contact: Danny, 020 7729 6970,
danny@skyway.uk.com. Free.

Skyway 4-a-side-football league

For young people aged 16 - 25.
Fridays from 6 February to 24 July,
6pm – 9pm at the Britannia Leisure Centre,
40 Hyde Road, Hackney, N1 5J.
Tel: 020 7102 1677
Contact: Steve/Marlon 020 7729 6970
steve@skyway.uk.com
marlon@skyway.uk.com. Free.

Travel expenses refunded up to £3.50 for
Street Art and Football.

Bike polo

First introduced to London in 1895
on grass, even included in the 1908
Olympics! Recently enthusiastically
revived, it's now played on hard surfaces
and London has numerous leagues fielding



AROUND THE TOWN

3 a-side and will be hosting the European Championships this summer. Our local league can often be seen playing on the small football pitch at the corner of Ufton and Downham Roads at weekends and would be pleased to have new players. Have a go in a "throw in" – mallets and possibly bikes provided.

For more information phone Harry on 07854 817 614 or Bill on 07896 421 555.

De Beauvoir Gardeners

March 3 – AGM followed by a good-humoured quiz!

Meetings in the crypt of St. Peter's Church,

De Beauvoir Road first Tuesday of the month at 8pm. Annual membership £20 or £30 couple at same address, £15 concession or £20 couple at same address. www.debeauvoirdenardeners.org.uk

The Scolt Head

Pub Quiz on Monday nights-starts promptly at 8pm. Teams of 6 (max.) can join in at £2 a head. Kitchen open 6.30pm-10pm every evening and special Valentine's Night dinner on 14 Feb.

107a Culford Road

Tel: 020 7254 3965

www.thescolthead.com

THE EAST LONDON LINE

A local station under construction.

As work advances on the East London Line extension, which will serve De Beauvoir, it is a good time to look at the history of the original Haggerston Station. The station opened as part of the North London Railway with its entrance in Lee Street, behind what is now Tesco on Kingsland Road, in 1867. It closed in 1940 when it was damaged in an air raid. A very small part of the original street level station can be seen in Dunston Street, just to the east of the bridge carrying the railway. The route on which it stood, between Dalston Junction and Broad Street, was abandoned completely in 1986; it is now being largely rebuilt as the East London Line, which is due to open in June 2010 between Dalston Junction and Crystal Palace and West Croydon. By February 2011 the northern terminus is due to be extended to Highbury and Islington. The new station is being built

at Arbutus Street, slightly north of the original one.

The original Haggerston Station served the Poplar branch from Broad Street, on which passenger trains finally stopped in 1944. According to one railway web site, it had been due to be called De Beauvoir Town but this plan was dropped before it opened. In the 1890s the line was carrying 46.3 million passengers a year from east London into the City of London but then began to decline because of competition from tramways. There was talk of reopening the line to Poplar in the 1960s but the car park of Dalston shopping centre was built across the route, ending that possibility. Broad Street was closed in 1986 and its remaining routes switched to Liverpool Street. The Broadgate office development stands on the site. **DB**

Paul Bolding

ONE TO WATCH ... JACK PATEL, J.T. BACHELOR & CO.

Jack Patel can't smell the leather anymore. After 20 years running J.T. Bachelor & Co., he doesn't get the waft of it from his company base at 9-10 Culford Mews. "Give yourself two weeks here and you wouldn't either," he laughs. "You just get used to it."

His customers love the smell though. They're mostly small companies or freelance designers who buy leather to make shoes, belts, cases, bags – anything – which they then sell in shops or on their market stalls.

Jack has enjoyed seeing the local area change over the past two decades. "It's become a lot nicer, but also more difficult for business," he admits. Previously, people could pull up in their cars, pop into his shop and then drive away with

their goods. These days, with parking no longer allowed on the Mews, customers are forced to carry their purchases away. "And leather is heavy," he points out.

He's also noticed the financial squeeze on his customers in these tough economic times, which is why he opened a new workshop recently to support them. Just a few doors down from his shop, Jack has kitted out an area with leather machines which he rents out to graduates, fashion designers or small businesses who can't afford the business overheads.

"They design their samples then come here, buy the leather and make the pieces. It's times like these that we need to give our people a bit of support," he smiles. **DB**

Barbara Walshe

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM NEWS

Last November officers from the Team were successful in closing a crack house at 29 De Beauvoir Square where antisocial behaviour and drug taking was taking place. After taking statements from local people and applying to Thames Magistrates Court closure was granted and the property boarded up until new tenants moved in. In December a further satisfactory outcome when the Team heard that their prosecution of a man dealing crack-cocaine and heroin on the Colville Estate had resulted in a 3 year prison sentence.

Our Neighbourhood Team is headed by Sgt. Shaju Bhaskaran supported by PCs

As a result of successful police activity the recent crime figures are down.

| 2008 | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Burglary | 8 | 5 | 9 |
| Robbery (inc. pickpocketing & snatch) | 5 | 8 | 6 |
| Theft of motor vehicles | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Theft from motor vehicles | 13 | 22 | 6 |
| Theft of bicycles | 4 | 1 | 5 |

Steve Cahill and Adam Rowe as well as PCSOs Jenice Gunning, Paul Hartley, Shybu Sasidharan and Mohammed Gani – familiar sights in our area with their bright yellow jackets – and bikes sometimes. They are based at 12 Oarsman Road. Tel. 0300 123 1212 for non-urgent crime. E-mail debeauvoir.snt@met.police.uk or the Police in Shepherdess Walk, 020 7161 9236/07879 435146. **DB**

THE NIGHT SHELTER AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH

The night shelter at St Peter's church has been running for 12 years now, but for many homeless people, it will be their first time indoors.

"The majority of people we serve have been homeless for less than three months," explains Mark Brennan, who coordinates the Cold Weather Shelter project on behalf of CARIS Islington. "But they're at the end of a longer road and are usually in pretty dire straits". They range from what people might call a 'stereotypical' vagabond to an actor last year and a man who was 22 years a criminal barrister before his marriage broke down, his mother died, he lost his job, turned to alcohol and found himself on the streets. "There's often some kind of trauma behind people's stories. They're dependent on something or someone, and when that's taken away, their anchor is

gone and they lose their grip." St Peter's on De Beauvoir Road is one of seven churches opening its doors on rotation each week between 1 January and 31 March, giving food, warmth and shelter to 15 homeless people. Last year, 137 people stayed there after being referred by 94 different agencies, including prisons, hospitals and various charities.

But many more see the inside of St Peter's on Monday nights. "Even though we are restricted with beds, we always serve more meals," says Mark. "As well as shelter, we're giving people a social network here and a way to find friendship. For some, that makes all the difference." **DB**

Would you like to help out? To volunteer, contact Karen Greig on 07742530414 or email diddychops@hotmail.com

Barbara Walshe

ROSE LIPMAN

Have you ever wondered about the person who gave her name to the building on the corner of Downham Road and De Beauvoir Road? Rose Lipman was a Hackney Councillor from 1959 to 1974; she was also a scholar, a pioneer in bilingual education and an active socialist. Rose Stifel was born in London in 1903; she studied at universities in London and Vienna and spoke seven languages fluently including classical Latin. In 1928 she married Leonard Lipman. He had studied political science at the London School of Economics, became an officer in the merchant marine and sailed round the world before going into textile marketing. Both were active Zionists and Rose Lipman introduced Hackney to Haifa with which it is now twinned.

A teacher and later a headmistress, perhaps Rose Lipman's greatest achievement was setting up a Jewish day School which was supported entirely by the Zionist Association and the Federation of Synagogues. It started in Clapton with nineteen children and by 1970 had 320 pupils and a 60% pass rate at the 11 plus examination. Three years later the school moved into new premises on Cazenove Road and was renamed Simon Marks School after a director of M&S. Rose Lipman died in January 1974 leaving a son and two grandchildren. The Rose Lipman library and community hall opened in May 1975. Hackney Archives now occupy the former library. **DB**

Fiona Darbyshire

THE DE BEAUVOIR ESTATE AND A MOTORWAY

It all started in the 1950's, when there was an acute shortage of housing accommodation in Hackney. A plan was devised to redevelop the area between Downham Road and Regent's canal, bounded on the east by Hertford Road and on the west by Southgate Road. It was argued that, with a few exceptions, the properties within the area were over a hundred years old and many were in poor condition. If the area was cleared and rebuilt there would be a 70% residential gain which would help to alleviate the very unsatisfactory housing situation in Hackney.

There were two Compulsory Purchase Orders, one issued in 1956 for the properties to the south of Benyon Road. The other for the remaining 159 houses, seven factories, shops and flats was issued in 1959 and the De Beauvoir Town residents association raised £750 to fight the Council at a public enquiry in 1960 which lasted four days. Seven residents appealed to the High Court a year later but all to no avail, the Minister for Housing confirmed the second order without modification.

After some delays, the plans for the De Beauvoir Town South area were finalised in early 1965. However the London County Council (LCC) had been planning a new motorway system for London and in the spring of 1965 they asked the borough architect to protect the line of the proposed Eastern Avenue Extension through Hackney. The plan was to extend the M11 southwest through Hackney Wick and then to Angel, Islington to meet the A1 and the inner ring road. Two routes were indicated, one along the north side of Victoria Park and then, elevated some 20-25 feet above the ground, along the top of a filled-in Regent's canal; the second across the western tip of the park, along Hackney road to the north of Bethnal Green, across Hoxton and up City Road. The second route was thought by the LCC to be more destructive, but the first would cut through two of the proposed blocks in the De Beauvoir Town South development and necessitate re-planning of another four blocks.

The borough architect recommended that the layout should be altered to provide the blocks with an east-west aspect



because southern aspect dwellings facing an elevated motorway would not be acceptable. Ultimately two tower blocks were substituted for the low rise blocks originally planned in the section of the development near the canal. Despite a general recommendation in a report on noise from motorways that housing development should not take place within 300 feet, these blocks were to be sited 65 feet from the road line. The openings in the buildings were to be insulated, the kitchen windows double glazed and window frames fitted elsewhere to allow double glazing at a later stage if required.

The first residents moved in to their new homes in 1969 and the De Beauvoir New Town was completed in 1972 although the Rose Lipman community centre and library (now Hackney archives) was not finished until 1975. Huge reconstruction costs and widespread public opposition led to the cancellation of most of the London motorway scheme in 1973, the West Cross Route and West Way were the only significant parts to be built. **DB**

More about the history of the De Beauvoir Estate will be on the website shortly.
Fiona Darbyshire

DE BEAUVOIR GARDEN BIRDS

So far as garden birds are concerned I am, perhaps, somewhat eccentric and one of my great pleasures is feeding and watching birds in my garden. Two problems though. Squirrels and feral pigeons that plunder the food provided for my many birdy tastes. Over the years I've purchased all sorts of bird feeders to foil their attacks, mostly to no avail. Various deterrent stratagems have been devised, for instance plastic domes, upturned wire plant baskets or fat cylinders wired in to the holder to prevent squirrels making off with them wholesale – and even then my wiring efforts have been bitten through. The other downside to feeding birds is that they are messy eaters, consequently in the spring my garden is covered with

sprouting birdseed, particularly carrots it seems!

Why continue with this frustrating pursuit? Well – occasionally there is a thrilling sighting of something unusual, to my garden at any rate. A coal tit, cock and hen blackcaps, a sparrowhawk, four long-tailed tits and a goldcrest as well as the odd chaffinch. So far no sign of a very unusual visitor to the UK – the Siberian chiffchaff that appeared in Stoke Newington recently but you never know... it might find its way to Lawford Road – but would I recognise it? **DB**

Always keen to exchange birdy notes with other enthusiasts so do contact me at carol@crystalclear.it **Carol Lee**

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM POLICE PANEL

The SNT Police Panel would be pleased if more people from the local community would come to their meetings to raise problems they may have in their particular area, such as antisocial

behaviour, drug dealing, theft etc. The next meeting is on 3 March at 7pm in the Rose Lipman Library (entrance in De Beauvoir Road). **DB**



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Local plumbers in De Beauvoir

Go with the flow is a CORGI registered [222173] family run company specialising in gas work and central heating design and installation. We also provide boiler service and maintenance including emergency repair, break-downs and landlord safety certificates.

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Unit 40, Belvedere Court, De Beauvoir Crescent, London, N1 5SL

Paul Bolding (who has a very fancy hat and conceals his sources under it) keeps all those on the DBA mailing list in touch with what's going on Around the Town. Paul is a former Reuters editor and spends much of his time with his ear to ground and thus picks up all sorts of items of interest to us all. He is also the DBA website guru so – thank you Paul for our excellent site and flow of information. If you are not already on our mailing list and would like to be please get in touch at the e-mail address above.

There is much of interest on our website, **www.debeauvoir.org.uk**, including a local Trade Directory,

the history of De Beauvoir, previous newsletters and photographs to name but a few items. Do have a look!

DBA COMING EVENTS

April 24 – a musical Salsa evening.

July 11 – Party in the Park

Early April – our next Newsletter

Join the dba e-mailing list

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