

NEWS ON THE GREEN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEN STREET GREEN ASSOCIATION

Charity No. 1172661



Spring 2020 Issue 27

Village Society Committee Officers

Chair:

William Sear



Vice-Chair:

VACANT

Secretary:

VACANT

Green Street Green Association Trustees



Chair: Bob Trott



Sec: Margot Rohan



Treas: Alan Garelick



Jean Garelick

Our Councillors



Cllr Mike Botting



Cllr Angela Page



Cllr Samaris
Huntington-Thresher

cbs.bromley.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx

If you have any comments or want to get in touch, please visit the website:

www.gsgassociation.weebly.com

AN UNSETTLING AUCTION 100 YEARS AGO

By Patrick Hellicar, who runs both the Chelsfield and Farnborough Local History Groups. Chelsfield meets on the last Thursday of each month (except in July, August and December) in the Brass Crosby Room at St Martin's Church and the Farnborough group meets at Farnborough Social Club on the last Friday of the month. Both start at 10.30am.

A century ago this year, in July 1920, the people of Green Street Green were pondering the prospect of a big change in ownership of many acres of land and numerous properties in and around the village.

Over the previous 10 years they had already seen dramatic upheavals. Fox's Oak Brewery, whose monolithic brick edifice, tall chimney and numerous outbuildings had towered over the High Street for many decades, had gone out of business in 1909, brought to its knees by poor management and huge debts, despite its award-winning ales and stouts.

An established way of life was swept away as over 100 jobs disappeared and locals left to find work further afield.

The brewery, its bricks and mortar assets, pubs and equipment, horses and other paraphernalia went under the hammer after the firm's failure, raising enough to pay off the debts. But the brewery building itself found no buyer. However, during the First World War it provided a billet for regiments of troops – that invasion unsettling the village and its community once more.

The school, founded and funded by the Foxes, still stood, though, and many old brewery cottages were still rented by families with deep roots in the area. Several large properties, once occupied by senior employees of the brewery and since let to other tenants, remained in Fox ownership, along with dozens of acres of land.

Now, it looked as if things might be upset again. By order of T Hamilton Fox and Walter St John Fox – the grandsons of the brewery founders – 16 lots of property on the village's doorstep were up for grabs in an auction sale through agents Debenham, Tewson & Chinnocks. The big day was Tuesday 13 July. Bidding would begin at 2.30pm in Room 30 of Winchester House at Old Broad Street in the City of London.

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Beechwood House is now only remembered by the housing estate that took its name. The view shown is from Church Fields, Farnborough, looking across Shire Lane. The house was built in 1880 by the Fox family, whose brewery was in Green Street Green. It was sold to Mr Cohen in 1909, who moved on in 1928. Little is known of its later history until its demolition in 1939. If anyone has any information about what happened in those eleven years and why it was demolished, please contact GSGAssociation@gmail.com.

Association AGM

Friday 12 June 2020 7:30pm in The Greenwood Centre

Visit the website for full details:

www.gsgassociation.weebly.com/agm.html



CHAIRS' CHATS

Many of you will be aware of our tribulations of 2019, when we lost a number of people from both our Village Society Committee and the Trustees, but I am pleased to say we have been able to return to almost normality as you will see in the new VS Committee Chair's report below.

However, we still need volunteers to fulfil our commitment to improve both the Greenwood Centre and put on events (details on our website and elsewhere) that are hopefully of interest to the community. If you have the time, ability, or interest in getting involved in the Association, please get in touch with any of those individuals listed in the newsletter or website.

By the time you read this, we should finally have submitted our application for a grant from the City Bridge Trust to make a number of changes to the Greenwood Centre that we own and run. Basically we want to carry out work to enable wheelchair access to the hall and provide suitable toilet facilities, but this means digging up the front courtyard area to create level ground, as well as the installation of new toilets and associated works, such as new front doors, that will also solve some of the problems we experience from our current facility for the Pre-School.

Last year we received notification that some land we thought belonged to us was, in fact, owned by Woolwich Homes Ltd. The company went into receivership following the development of the 'Canadian Estate'. Following some negotiations, we are to be given the land in question, along with a couple of small sections adjacent to our frontage. This has not yet been completed, but we are grateful to our solicitors, Manaks of Orpington, who are acting on a Pro Bono basis meaning that we pay only the out-of-pocket expenses. Once this transfer has taken place, we hope to further improve our parking area and avoid any problems associated with the access our neighbour needs to enter/egress her garage area. Internally we need to replace the flooring in the main hall and undertake some electrical remedial work, whilst externally we plan to repaint the outer walls once the other changes are made.

As you can see, we need some expertise and help in a number of areas, so if you want to help decide how we spend our money to the benefit of all the residents of Green Street Green and you can join us, please make contact.

Bob Trott
Chairman Of The Trustees



Firstly, I wish all residents and readers a happy and healthy belated New Year.

I had the pleasure of ending 2019 helping in a small way at the Christmas event held in the Greenwood Centre with Father Christmas, entertainment by some members of the local Community Choir, a free raffle with great prizes, together with a festive glass.

Please join us next December!

The Green Street Green Association Trustees and Village Society Committee, together with our members' assistance, seek to protect our village environment, encourage a community spirit and undertake social events at the Greenwood Centre.

The success and ability to protect and improve our community is a joint effort, please help and support us, whether by making suggestions to myself, attending our meetings and events or being an active committee member.

William Sear
Chairman of the Village Society Committee

MERIEL MILLS 1938-2020



We regret to announce that, after a long illness, Meriel Mills died on the morning of Tuesday 7 January, at the age of 81. Being a devoted couple, despite her weakened condition, she was resolute in visiting her husband, Bob, who was in hospital for over two weeks, until a short while before she died.

Bob and Meriel were vital members of the Village Society Committee from 2006 until 2017. Meriel supported Bob as Membership Secretary and they were instrumental in setting up the system of Road Contacts and increasing the Association membership from an initial 40 to 651. Maintaining the Road Contact numbers, in order to collect subscriptions and deliver the newsletters, was no easy task and they both worked tirelessly to keep them motivated and find replacements when any retired.

Meriel, known to many of her friends as Ann, was also an active member of the Friends of Glentrammon Recreation Ground, which emanated from the Village Society Committee and worked hard on improvements, including the children's playground and the orchard.

In her earlier life, Meriel was a keen sportswoman, playing netball, tennis, rounders and hockey. She was a school governor, later becoming Chair. The local authority subsequently asked her to Chair the Governors of a failing school. Within two years, she had helped to turn it around into a success.

Bob and Meriel met at The London and Lancashire Insurance Company, where they both worked. They were married in 1959 and have two sons, Simon and Stephen, four grandchildren and one great granddaughter. After 11 years of looking after the children and Bob, Meriel became a qualified helper for a Lewisham Remedial Creche.

Meriel will be much missed by all who knew her.

Margot Rohan

EDMUND ESTATE AGENT



My team at Edmund meet people from all walks of life on a day-to-day basis, ranging from those looking to start a new life to others wishing to enjoy a fresh lifestyle within Green Street Green.

The Village offers a good mix of versatile accommodation. Transport links include Orpington and Chelsfield Stations within good proximity, direct into London.

Green Street Green itself lies on the south side of Orpington, surrounded by villages such as Farnborough, Chelsfield, Pratts Bottom and Knockholt. Schools in the area are of a high standard and there are plenty of country pubs, restaurants and coffee bars.

Within walking distance of Green Street Green is High Elms Country Park which is a site of special scientific interest, ideal for keen walkers and dog walkers.

Edmund Green Street Green would relish the opportunity to work alongside you, whether you are looking to buy or sell property, or just want to rack our brains over a cup of coffee.

We continue to support local charities and schools within the area, so please feel free to contact us on 01689 850136.

Mark Audino - Manager

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A 16-page brochure flagged the sell-off of “The Beechwood Estate, Farnborough, Kent” and extolled the virtues of the land and valuable freehold properties up for auction. All of it was in, or on the outskirts of, Green Street Green, except the four-bedroom detached New House located two-and-a-half miles away in Wellington Road on the edge of St Mary Cray.

The biggest prize of all was Lot 1, the “very attractive and desirable” 13-bedroom Beechwood*, an “excellent family residence” well away from motor traffic, standing in an “elevated and secluded position” 300 feet above sea level amid finely timbered grounds stretching to almost 39 acres. Included was a picturesque red-brick lodge house. Photographs showed the lodge, the 240-yard carriage drive, tennis lawn, herbaceous borders and a woodland walk.

The other main houses on offer were, the “moderate-sized” The Elms, with five bedrooms, a spacious garage, tennis lawn, well-stocked kitchen garden and “exceptionally pretty and well-kept grounds” of more than an acre; The Poplars, “a charming old-fashioned residence” with seven bedrooms but less than an acre of ground, screened from the road by a belt of limes, chestnuts, pines and other trees; and the picturesque, old-fashioned Wellhurst (still standing today) with three main bedrooms plus one smaller and about three-quarters of an acre of land.

Also on the auction block was Oak Farm, “a capital freehold agricultural holding” of just over nine acres with a frontage to the main road measuring 1,060 feet – “thus affording opportunities, if desired, for development by building operations”. It included two red-brick and tiled cottages, one with two bedrooms, the other with three, plus substantial farm buildings such as a granary, cartshed, cowshed, piggeries, stabling and a variety of other sheds, barns and lean-tos as well as three enclosures of arable and grass land.

The village Recreation Club, along with a couple of brewery cottages and scraps of land, made up Lot 12, while a total of 15 brewery cottages strung along the High Street and three at Old Hill were parcelled up in other lots.

Also off Old Hill, 18 acres of valuable freehold land in a high, desirable position with “exceptionally fine views” to the south-east over “many miles of undulating well-wooded country” was a key part of the sale. Adjoining it was a separate acre or so of building land then being used as 20 allotments but deemed “suitable for the erection of one or more moderate-sized residences or cottages”.

How the auction went, I don't know. So many estates were put on the market in the post-WW1 period that sales were difficult and prices depressed. But at least some Fox property and land was in different hands by the end of that summer afternoon in 1920. Back at Green Street Green, folk braced themselves for the inevitable changes the village would see as a result.



The 'drive' up to Beechwood House as it is today

OUR SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD WARD PANEL

Our Safer Neighbourhood Team

PC Mano Vidamo, PC Aaron (Jock) Hewit, PCSO David Lillywhite

Meetings of the local Ward Panel are every three months and open to everyone, to ensure that our police team is meeting residents' needs in preventing crime, advising on security and generally engaging with the local community.

Currently our police team is encouraging residents to use Smart Water to protect their property. Burglars avoid houses which have Smart Water stickers (which you can only obtain if you have a Smart Water pack) and the conviction rate for marked property is 100%. If you would like a FREE pack, which includes window stickers to deter burglars, please contact PC Mano Vidamo by telephoning 020 8721 2605.

For further information about Ward Panel meetings, please contact margot.rohan@yahoo.co.uk.

Margot Rohan – Secretary

INTRODUCING THE NEW VICAR AT ST MARY'S

As some of you may already know, my name is Susan and my husband is Byron. I was licensed as Priest-in-Charge of St Mary's, Green Street Green and All Souls, Pratt's Bottom just before Christmas on 12 December.

It's been wonderful joining in here over the Christmas season and now having the opportunity to start to get to know everyone.



I come originally from Acton, West London. However, after several years working in a library, I went off to Cardiff to study Theology. It was there where I met Byron (studying Graphic Design at the time) and eventually went on to set up home following our marriage in 1992.

After going on to complete my training at theological college I served as Curate in the Rhymney Valley before moving to Sanderstead in 2005 and then eventually here.

I am gradually finding my way around town and even venturing as far as Orpington.

I am looking forward to meeting you all and exploring the area. We've already discovered some of the huge garden centres and a couple of the local restaurants.

The beauty of the Kent countryside on our doorstep is stunning and the local wildlife in our garden is keeping us entertained. On days off in the summer you will probably find me in the local theme parks or enjoying the sea air in Brighton.

Do stop me if you spot me and say hello.

Susan Atkinson-Jones

Quiz – 21 March postponed

Visit the Members' Area on the website for further details

Orpington's New MP



My name is Gareth Bacon, and I am the new Conservative Member of Parliament for Orpington.

I was born in Hong Kong but was raised, went to school and still live in Sidcup with my wife and daughter, close to the boundary of the Orpington constituency.

I took my Bachelors Degree at the University of Kent in 1996, before studying for a Masters Degree in European Politics at the same university the following year. The subject of my Masters Degree dissertation was an examination of the democratic deficit in the European Union – I concluded that this was a problem that could not be resolved and that Britain would be better served by leaving the European Union. This forms much of the foundation of my support for Brexit.

After university, I worked in financial services before moving into financial recruitment, latterly as a Director of a large financial recruitment business.

I have been a London Assembly Member since 2008, initially as a London-wide Member but for the past four years I have been proud to represent the constituency of Bromley and Bexley, which includes Orpington, holding the Mayor to account and delivering for outer London.

On the Assembly, I led the GLA Conservatives and worked tirelessly to protect our green spaces, keep our communities safe, and ensure that every penny of taxpayers' money is well spent.

In the final 18 months of Boris Johnson's mayoralty, I served as Chairman of the London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority. This body oversaw the London Fire Brigade and co-ordinated the emergency planning work for London.

In 1998, I was elected to serve as a local councillor in the London Borough of Bexley. For a total of nine years I served as a Cabinet Member in a number of positions including as Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, and Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm.

I will be standing down from my London assembly and Bexley Council responsibilities as soon as practicable.

Now as your new Member of Parliament I will be a strong voice for Orpington in Parliament and deliver for this beautiful part of historic Kent. I understand the challenges facing Orpington: crime and the fear of crime are rising, calls for building to be allowed on the greenbelt are getting louder, and like the entire country, people want politicians to stop dithering and get Brexit done.

I am proud to be your new Member of Parliament, so I can help Boris Johnson get Brexit done and deliver on the people of Orpington's priorities.

MEMORABLE MOSAIC WORKSHOP



On the 8th of March, Carmela Nola provided a most enjoyable afternoon teaching an audience of mixed ability to produce mosaic coasters with designs chosen by each of the eight attendees. A course of 3-4 sessions is planned in the future, for learning how to cut tiles and to work on a larger item, such as a flower pot or large picture, either individually or as a group for a community project.

Anyone interested in joining the group should contact GSGVillageSociety@gmail.com.



Greenwood Talks

Dr Brian Philp on 'The History of Madeira'

date TBC May/June 2020

visit the website for details

CORONAVIRUS

KEEP SAFE - CHECK GUIDANCE ON:

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION WEBSITE

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

AND LBB WEBSITE

https://www.bromley.gov.uk/news/article/1551/coronavirus_covid-19

DON'T PANIC AND AVOID MISINFORMATION



Monthly on third Monday
2.00pm - 4.00pm
Crofton Halls, Crofton Road,
Orpington.

www.u3asites.org.uk/orpington/welcome

If you have any comments or want to get in touch, please visit the website:

www.GSGAssociation.com