

NEWS ON THE GREEN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEN STREET GREEN ASSOCIATION

Charity No. 1172661



May 2020 Issue 28

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

LOCKDOWN POSITIVITY

These are unprecedented times and life will never be quite the same again. This crisis is sprouting new ideas and ways of working in order to keep going when confined to home with little opportunity to go out and about.

However people are becoming very creative and looking out for their neighbours and ensuring those living alone are not entirely isolated. The Trustees have been putting on their thinking caps to come up with ideas to keep in contact with the local community and provide alternatives for activities whilst the Greenwood Centre is closed.

We are now producing monthly online newsletters and the next one is being prepared to be posted online at the beginning of May. Currently we do not have the resources to print and mail hard copies to all our members, but it may be possible for the June edition. If you have interesting stories you would like to share, of your or your family's experience during these difficult times, please email them to us at GSGVillageSociety@gmail.com. Positive articles about how people are coping will be uplifting and informative for those who may be struggling.

If you are volunteering or have information which would be helpful to other members, please let us know and we will include it in the next newsletter.



Another idea is to invite members to a Skype Quiz or just for a chat. Up to 50 people can join at a time, so it would be either the first 50 to sign in or on a rota basis. Do let us know if you would be interested in participating. If you are, please ensure we have your email address so we can send an invite to you. Email as above.

If you are a member of the Association and you have internet access but have not yet let us have your email address, please do so. Then we can update you with news in between newsletters, to draw attention to new posts on the website. It will also mean you can gain access to the Members Only area on the website, where the newsletters are usually posted. However, as we are currently unable to provide hard copies to all members, we are putting the newsletters online for anyone to read.

If you have neighbours who are living alone or are vulnerable, please let us know if there is anything we can do to help support them. The Chelsfield Volunteers - part of Covid-19 Mutual Aid - are providing a wonderful support service (see the article on page 2). A lot of people don't use online services, or cannot get a supermarket slot and they have been delivering groceries to these people to keep them supplied.

Sadly there are scammers about but The Chelsfield Volunteers never cold call - all contact is arranged through the following details. If you need support please contact by telephone on **07767 211891** or by email chelsfieldvolunteers@gmail.com

They are working closely with the neighbouring volunteer groups on our boundaries, and it is great to see that there is now volunteer support across the whole of Orpington.

Margot Rohan

Here is one of the many jokes going viral on social media to raise a smile - just in case you may have missed it!



Association AGM

TBC September 2020 7:30pm in The Greenwood Centre

Visit the website for full details:

www.GSGAssociation.weebly.com/agm.html



CHAIRS' CHATS

Just a quick update on happenings since the last Newsletter, from both our general situation along with the impact Covid-19 is having on the Association.

Our proposals for Greenwood Centre Disabled Access are costed around £75,000 and the application for funds has been submitted. However, it could take around 6-8 months before we have a

decision from the City Bridge Trust so, if this is the case, it may mean delaying any work until the summer of 2021.

We have lost the great majority of our income with the closure of the hall, but outgoings remain a drain (no pun intended) with continued work on drain blockages, along with remedial electrical work. We want to produce extra newsletters during the period of lockdown and have also put in a request for funding from another source, to cover this temporary situation, but again have heard nothing so far.

As an example, since the closure of the hall, we have had repair bills totalling in excess of £1300 with more to come when the work discovered as necessary during the CCTV of our drains is undertaken, and our Hall Manager, as well as utilities, have to be paid for too.

No news on the promised transfer of land to us from Woolwich Homes Ltd, and we still have no information on what is to be done with the adjacent former public conveniences.

Bob Trott
Chairman of the Trustees

Hello fellow GSGA members, I imagine, like myself, a lot of you are semi-isolated or if at risk confined to your homes. There are those of us of more tender years who may remember that it has the feel of the wartime. I remember the latter stages of the conflict and the constraints we all lived under and came to accept.



It has been heartening to see how society has rallied round, voluntary self-help groups getting shopping, greater use of online delivery and social media to keep in contact, to name just a few.

Though our planned social functions and meetings are in a state of flux for the immediate future, I am gladdened that groups and families and friends are keeping in touch by What's App, Messenger, Zoom as well as good old email. Please pick up the phone and keep in touch, as a phone call can mean so much when estranged at this difficult time.

Though nothing can be planned or arranged at the present time I can assure you all we will be back as vibrant as ever, bringing our quiz and talk to the community when the time is suitable and it is deemed safe. I and the committee send our best wishes and good health. Stay well.

William Sear
Chairman of the Village Society Committee

ORPINGTON GIRLS HIT A HIGH NOTE



Singers Record for Christmas: a recording of 10 unaccompanied carols for the Children's Hour Christmas Day Programme was made by the OJS, with Sheila Mossman conducting, at the Civic Hall, Orpington. Inset Mr F J Cooper of The Retreat, Chelsfield, senior recording engineer with the BBC Mobile Recording Unit

In the 1960s, when rock 'n' roll was bursting into teenagers' lives, Orpington girls were on the musical map with a very different kind of sound

The Orpington Junior Singers were heard regularly on the Home Service (now Radio 4) with an extensive repertoire from madrigals and folk songs to Mahler's 8th Symphony, conducted by Leonard Bernstein.

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FILM QUIZ - guess the titles

Answers in the June edition

Here are some online games sites:

[Sudoku](#)
[BigFish](#)
[Solitaire](#)
[Rollic](#)
[Chess](#)
[Quizzes](#)
[Wordstacks](#)
[Scrabble](#)
[Alphabety+](#)
[Bowling+](#)
[Jigsaws+](#)

Downloads from App Store for tablets & phones:

Words2
Jigsaw Puzzle
My Bowling 3D

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.
7.	8.
9.	10.
11.	12.
13.	14.
15.	16.
17.	18.
19.	20.

HELPING YOU THROUGH LOCKDOWN

As this newsletter reaches you we will be into our sixth week of lockdown, and also our sixth week of Chelsfield Volunteers. For those who have to stay in their homes to avoid getting or spreading Covid 19, Chelsfield Volunteers have been fetching groceries and collecting prescriptions, posting letters and parcels, offering phone support and walking dogs. We now have over 40 volunteers offering to help people in and around Chelsfield, Well Hill, and Green Street Green. The generosity and goodwill of all those who have come forward has been a big positive during these difficult times.

We have delivered on 320+ calls for practical assistance, since we started on 23 March, and offered reassurance and advice to many more callers.

We know many older people really want to help but are themselves not able to go out at the moment. One of our callers told us, "I don't like to ask for help but we all need to do what we can to get through this crisis. The best I can do is stay home. It doesn't feel like much but it really matters!" The messages of support for the volunteers have been warm and heartfelt.



We have been working closely with the local pharmacies, Lloyds, Stevens and Rowlands in Green Street Green, and we have a good rota system operating for delivering prescriptions to those who cannot collect. We have also been able to get urgent medication to people who have been very unwell. Mark went on to our Facebook page to say "Thank you so much for collecting my transplant medication".

Photo: Dolle one of the dogs walked by volunteers

Email: chelsfieldvolunteers@gmail.com
Tel: 07767 211891

Pam Temple
Chelsfield Volunteers

LOCKDOWN FOR GREEN STREET GREEN COMMUNITY CHOIR



Our thriving and joyous community choir rehearses on Thursday evenings at St Mary's Church in World's End Lane. We are a true community choir of all standards; working hard to raise money through concerts and sing-alongs for two local charities, [iCare](#) and [The Maypole Project](#).

We were having immense fun rehearsing for our concert on the 4th April, with Langley Park Community choir. 'Musicals through the decades' was the title of the concert and we had mastered West Side Story, Puttin' on the Ritz, Lion King, Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat and a gorgeous version of Over the Rainbow. Then, just two weeks before the concert, lockdown descended.

The next day two choir members suggested that we tried becoming a 'virtual choir'.

How on earth was that going to work? Before the evening was out the choir had suggested that we Zoomed. So on went the 'chit chat' on Whatsapp. How do we zoom? What do we download? Now what do I do? I can't hear anyone? Help?

Everyone helped each other and, on Thursday 26th March, the impossible happened - on Zoom.us we became a 'virtual' choir. At first most members were nervous about using Zoom. One member Zoomed from his shed, others sang softly so as not to wake their sleeping children. But, within a few minutes, laughter echoed in everyone's houses, the joy of being together and seeing everyone's faces. The scary news of coronavirus was swept away for the evening.

Oh my, the teething problems! Trying to sing together with 30 different internet speeds - what a laugh! Rounds of giggling and joking ensued. Thankfully one member had Zoom skills and decided that, when I was teaching, it was better to mute everyone. How scary was this? I could not see anyone's facial expression, or hear anyone singing as I was teaching because the PDF of the music was on the screen. I just hoped that everyone was following. I was in a lonely bubble and then boom, as soon as the song finished, the screen returned to everyone's faces, all smiling and some drinking!



Now, let's mention the drinking: some had a cup of tea (or similar), whilst others had wine or even beer, a few hid drink from sight and only sipped discreetly. Pets appeared on laps, from dogs and cats to even a rabbit.

The energy, fun and togetherness were all-embracing and positive. No mention of hardship, no sad emotional songs; only uplifting songs were on the menu. The outpouring on 'chit chat' resumed and all realised the need for music, positively and togetherness, through these difficult and strange times.

We are now on week 7 of 'virtual' choir. We have evolved to meet in this way and are learning repertoire for when we can have a concert again. We have introduced a few fun elements to the evening, such as 'Cheese of the week song' and 'whose birthday'. Recently we have even had a few special guests zoom in.

I have always been immensely proud of the choir but, during these unprecedented times, I am so grateful and delighted to be musical director of Green Street Green Community Choir.

Amanda Butler

If you would like to join email: butlermadhouse@talktalk.net

OUR SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

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

Meetings of the local Ward Panel are currently suspended due to Covid-19. However you can visit the local police website for up to date information on crime in our area:

www.met.police.uk/a/your-area/met/bromley/chelsfield-and-pratts-bottom/.

Does anyone know if our local PCSO, David Lillywhite, is still walking our streets? If you want to contact the local police team, please use the website contact form:

www.met.police.uk/a/your-area/local-policing-team-contact/contact-your-local-policing-team/



Please do not call 999 unless it is an emergency. Crime in our area is very low and crime rates generally have been decreasing during April. Nevertheless, online criminal activity has increased and residents need to be wary of scams and hoaxes, both off and online. If you are made an offer which seems too good to miss - it probably is best to avoid it!

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

Margot Rohan – Secretary

COVID-19 ONLINE NEWSLETTERS

During the lockdown, the Association will be producing monthly online newsletters. If you have neighbours who do not have internet access, please do print a copy for them.

The newsletters will be available in the Members' Only area, as usual, but we are making them available to all, on the home page, during the lockdown.

Please do submit articles, quizzes, puzzles - anything you would like to contribute for the enjoyment of the community. Positive stories and hints about coping with this situation will be particularly welcome.

In addition to The Chelsfield Volunteers, there is also a local group in Green Street Green, whose organiser, Vicky Braddon, can be contacted by phoning 01689 220195 Both groups come under Orpington Covid-19 Mutual Aid - Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/orpingtoncma.

If you are able and willing to offer help and support for more vulnerable residents, please make contact and volunteer.

However, any over 70s, even if fully fit and well, should take particular care with social distancing, as the death rate amongst those who contract the virus is much higher than younger age groups. If in any doubt Stay Home. I am sure we all want to help where we can but no one should risk their health, or worse still, their life..

For those looking for new avenues of entertainment, there seems to be any number of Zoom quizzes, TV programmes to stream, virtual music concerts and groups to join online. But we must not forget those who have no access to these devices, so do check on your neighbours and make sure no one living near you is totally isolated from the rest of the world. The phone is still useful for having a conversation with someone who may not be speaking to anyone for the rest of the day.

Margot Rohan

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2020-21 STILL ONLY £2

Please note payments can be made direct online - but there's no rush!
Sort code: 30-96-31 **Account:** 02088234 **Name:** Green Street Green Ass.
Reference: Surname and Membership number or House number

The screenshot shows the GSG Association website with a newsletter sign-up form. The form asks if the user is able and willing to help those more vulnerable with shopping, walking dogs etc. and provides contact information for COVID-19 Mutual Aid Orpington. There are also links to the Village Society Committee Next Meeting, a 'NEWS ON THE GREEN' section, and a 'STOP PRESS!' notice about a newsletter coming soon.

INFORMATION FROM YOUR LOCAL WARD COUNCILLOR



The current Covid-19 pandemic has brought out the very best of community spirit in the local residents and beyond. Everyone has risen to the occasion with neighbours rallying around to help the more vulnerable members of our community. We have an active Chelsfield Volunteer group and Bromley Council have a volunteer group with over 4000 members who have now assisted nearly 1000 vulnerable residents.

So many people have given so much already since the lockdown began, that it would be tragic to throw all that sacrifice away by abandoning our collective responsibility prematurely.

This virus remains absolutely merciless. No-one, no family and no group of friends are safe from it so please stick with the programme and continue to keep doing the right thing for the greater good, no matter how tedious that routine has become. This moment will pass all the sooner the more we comply. Being a selfless team player has never been more important, or had greater meaning in our lifetimes. Please remember that one of the easiest and most rewarding things that we can all do is simply talk to others, whether that be family, friends or neighbours. Thank you all for your efforts. Please stay safe

For Business Support: www.bromley.gov.uk/COVID-19BusinessSupport

[Councillors' Facebook page](#)

Councillor Mike Botting

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Choirs, particularly of young girls, were not unusual post war but the Orpington Junior Singers stood head and shoulders above most. Their success was due to the dedication and musical talent of Sheila Mossman, a concert pianist who had a high flying musical career in her own right.

Sheila was born in 1923 and her musical abilities were spotted at an early age. A press report from 1932 described her as "an eight-year-old music prodigy". Eventually she went to the Royal Academy of Music where, at the age of 13, she was awarded the Associate of the Royal College of Music diploma, gaining a silver medal. She then went on to compose and arrange music and also played the violin, cello and organ.

In 1948 she married John Brown, who was 20 years older than Sheila, and very involved within the musical community in the town. He started the Orpington Festival in 1947 and acted as the festival secretary. He was also honorary secretary of the Orpington Concert Society and set up the Orpington Girls Choir. Their first rehearsal was on 28 August 1949 in the Youth Centre in Knoll Rise (now replaced by an office block). The Kentish Times reported: "Sheila Brown, a well-known local concert pianist, took over in September and the first public performance was on 20 January 1950 at the village hall."

Only 18 months later the choir successfully auditioned for the BBC and it was the start of "a long and fruitful association with the Corporation". In those few months they had already performed at several local concerts and were in the finals of the National Competitive Music Festival part of the Festival of Britain.

In 1952 the choir was re-named the Orpington Junior Singers, with 100 girls aged from eight to 19. John Brown said: "From the start [I was] determined that the girls should sing only classical items. The new name conveys the fact that we really are a junior choir".

Over the coming years they were to be heard on all the BBC radio stations, then ITV, won national competitions, appeared at the Royal Festival Hall under the baton of Leonard Bernstein and acquired Lady Churchill as President. Later, in 1960, the Master of the Queen's Music, Sir Arthur Bliss, took the role of President.

By late 1955 they had given 200 performances and made 44 broadcasts. Sheila Mossman explained her philosophy for creating a choir that was a household name in Kent Life in 1960. "It's largely a matter of psychology," she said. "I have to remember that they are ordinary girls with ordinary preoccupations – school, exams, cinema, games and boys. They are not highbrows and musical geniuses, they just have a healthy love of fun, and, for them, the choir is fun – I see that."

In the 22 years she conducted the choir, 1,000 girls were trained in the unprepossessing halls of Knoll Rise youth club and Charterhouse School. (Now demolished and replaced by a housing estate). There were around 80 girls in the choir at any one time, though for performances the choir would be around 30. While Sheila trained, conducted and did the musical arrangements, John Brown managed the choir's appearances.

Their regular BBC radio and TV work made them nationally known, with "an enviable reputation for the beauty of their singing and distinctiveness of their performances". In 1960 the senior girls came first in BBC's Let the People Sing contest. There were also private engagements, including a Christmas recital for Sir Winston and Lady Churchill at 10 Downing Street.

In 1966, when the choir was running at a financial loss the Peter Stuyvesant Foundation gave John Brown £100 to cover the deficit. Things improved financially and the following year the annual carol concert at Midfield School, St Paul's Cray, was broadcast by the BBC and attended by Sir Arthur Bliss and his wife. He wrote five pieces for the choir and gave them the income from the performing rights.

In 1968 Sheila was awarded the MBE for services to music. Two years later the first colour recording of BBC TV's Songs of Praise came from Orpington's All Saints Parish Church and featured the Orpington Junior Singers. In March that year the choir gave their 1000th performance at a celebration concert and reunion for present and former members.

In 1971 the senior choir was a guest on Radio 2's Eric Robinson's music Club. This was Sheila's last public appearance. She died shortly after and Lesley Summers took over as conductor. In The Times Sir Arthur Bliss said: "Sheila Mossman was an inspired teacher of young singers. Under her guidance the Orpington Junior Singers, though constantly changing in personnel, maintained always the high standard of singing that made this choir famous. She herself was a dedicated musician, thinking only of how to impart to others her own high ideals, and this she successfully achieved through her selfless devotions."



Sheila and her husband with some of the Orpington Junior Singers

In October, 900 people attended a service of remembrance at All Saints Church which was broadcast on Radio Kent. Sir Arthur Bliss gave the address. He spoke of Sheila's "intense love of music...which so plainly meant to her something of unique beauty, which could transform a sad or dull day into a happy and radiant one".

The Orpington Junior Singers continued as an independent choir until 1999 and since then have operated under the auspices of the Bromley Youth Music Trust.

Christine Hellicar
Bromley Borough Local History Society

Sources:

50 Years of the Orpington Singers 1949–1999 by Sheila Seppings (1999)
Scrapbooks of the Orpington Junior Singers
Kent County Music Committee – 1956 50th bulletin
Notes and talk on Orpington Junior Singers by Paul Rason

Visit www.bblhs.org.uk to find out more about the society or to dip into the extensive online resources of articles and photographs from around the borough.

CORONAVIRUS

KEEP WELL - STAY SAFE AT HOME

Website links for reliable information:

Orpington Covid-19 Mutual Aid

www.facebook.com/groups/orpingtoncma

World Health Organisation

www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

Bromley Council

www.bromley.gov.uk/Covid-19

For emergencies only there is a helpline: 020 8313 4484

DON'T BE MISLED BY MISINFORMATION

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

www.GSGAssociation.weebly.com