

# Views from the Hill



NEWSLETTER OF THE TEWKESBURY LODGE ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Summer 2017

## Autumn harvest event

Printed on recycled paper



As summer draws to a close, the season of mist and (hopefully!) mellow fruitfulness will soon be with us. Unlike last year, there are reports of bumper crops expected from fruit trees on the Hill so, all being well, there will be even more locally produced food on offer at the Association's second Autumn Harvest lunch on 15th October.

The initial idea for the event was to be a community apple pressing to generate litres of luscious local juice. However, not only was there a dearth of fruit last year but also an absence of a promised apple press. Improvisation being the mother of invention (or so it's said), amid much laughter, two chopping boards and a series of clamps were used to produce enough delicious juice for all present to drink a thimble-full. The Association is pleased to say that two apple presses have been sourced for this year!

But the event is not only about fruit pressing. Once again, a lunch will be provided that will show what can be done with seasonal crops. It will include three seasonal, homemade soups served with crusty bread and English cheeses. The talented bakers living on the Hill will also provide a range of traditional fruit-based cakes: apple and almond, chocolate and beetroot, plum, and pumpkin pie.

There will be mulled cider for the adults to drink while the children have fun using autumn leaves, berries, and seeds to create pictures and decorations; make baskets to fill with rose petals; plant a daffodil bulb to grow at home; play pumpkin-themed games; or listen to traditional autumn-themed stories in the Story Hut.

This year we plan to have garden group members there to advise on growing your own fruit and vegetables; what plants and flowers look good in the garden at this time of the year; and perhaps demonstrate how to take cuttings to grow on.



So do come along and help make 2017 an even more wonderful celebration of the fruits of Forest Hill.

*The Autumn Harvest lunch will be held at Hilltop, 28 Horniman Drive on October 15 between 1-4pm and is free to members. If you need a helping hand to pick your fruit or collect windfalls, one or more garden group members can help out.*

## Another date for your diary

Back by popular demand! Our second *Carols by candlelight* event will be held on Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> December in the Triangle between Horniman Drive and Rocombe Crescent.

## Changes to rubbish and recycling collections

A free food waste collection service will be introduced at the beginning of October; small grey bins and indoor kitchen caddies with some biodegradable liners have already been delivered. At the same time, black bins will only be emptied every two weeks. If you live in a block of flats and use communal bins there will be no change.

The food waste collection will help to increase the Borough's very low recycling rates, and avoid large fines for failing to meet national targets. By recycling, we use fewer natural resources, which helps the environment. By reducing the amount of rubbish that goes into our black bins, savings of £500,000 a year will help to maintain services to residents.

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## Chair's report



Once again everything came together for our National Garden Scheme (NGS) garden opening! The sun shone, and the visitors came to see the six very different gardens, and enjoy delicious homemade cakes while listening to Open Road, our talented musicians who once again gave their services for free.

We are delighted to say that we raised £5360 for cancer and caring charities, slightly more than last year's record takings. It would not have been

possible without all the help from residents and friends who donated plants, loaned equipment, baked cakes, and helped on the day – even driving the less able-bodied visits between the gardens. Our thanks to you all.

The Association still needs someone to cover the first part of Westwood Park. See the back page to discover the benefits of becoming a TLERA road representative!

*Valerie Ward*

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## View from the edge

For the last four years I've had the fun of being a helper at the NGS garden opening. I think we helpers have a wonderful view of the whole occasion and, from that privileged position, here are a few somewhat random thoughts about the event, especially the pleasure the participating gardeners give to so many people. I hope they enjoy it as much as the helpers and visitors do.

This year over 500 people came to the event. Some were neighbours, some came from the outer reaches of Southwark and Lewisham, and some from further away. There was even a young Chinese couple who arrived in London the night before on a flight from the Chinese mainland! They were especially impressed with the roses and asked for tips on growing them in China. Some visitors are experienced gardeners, some novices, some are alone, some couples or groups, many with children. But they all seem to find lots of plants to fascinate them, or are struck by the atmosphere of the very different gardens that reflect the personality of their owners – and which all show the benefits of being loved and nurtured.

I was helping out at Canonbie Road. As it is on the outer edge of the Open Gardens area, furthest away from the central PayPoint, the day often begins slowly. Then gradually you see people in ones and twos, and small groups, forming an ever-increasing stream heading to Canonbie Road. It's very exciting - to a stranger it must look as if a great migration is starting, like the early stage of the flight of the Wildebeest! By mid-afternoon everything seems non-stop, and there is always the last-minute flurry, and the occasional very laid-back, very late arrival.

As a helper, it's quite common to get asked questions about the plants in the garden and those

on sale. Usually we just point out June, the garden opener, and pass them on to her. Very occasionally, without pretending to be expert, we may feel sure enough to answer. Once, and only once, I saw this go slightly awry. A fellow-helper (naming no names young FL\_R\_NC\_!) trying to prevent June being completely swamped, decided she could answer a question: when asked the colour of a small rose cutting for sale, quickly and authoritatively replied "blue". The buyer was very diplomatic, smiled, and bought it.



Very few people see the gardens or are able to appreciate them during the rest of the year. The gardeners often work long and hard, and alone, and with great love. To open their gardens to the public takes some courage, and must be nerve-racking. The visitors are invariably enthusiastic and generous in their comments, and the day really strengthens a sense of community for many.

*Alex Coxen*

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## Crime prevention

If you are part of the recent Smart Water Initiative and have a bicycle, moped, scooter or motorbike, don't forget to mark the frame or chassis. It is also a good idea to mark other parts such as the engine, pedals, and under the seat. This will help police to

identify owners should any stolen motorbikes or cycles be broken for spares or into parts.

*Michael Hill, PC159PL*

*Forest Hill Safer Neighbourhood's Team*

*Garden opener and helper enjoy a well-earned rest after a busy garden opening.*

*Don't forget to also mark any equipment in your car and keep any possessions out of sight*

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## Street Tree Scheme: latest developments

As this newsletter goes to press the Council has approved our plans to plant 10 new street trees. These will be on most streets on the Estate including Canonbie Road, Horniman Drive, Liphook Crescent, Ringmore Rise, and Tewkesbury Avenue, and will be planted this winter and spring. The final decisions on the selection of species will be made shortly but most, if not all of them, will bring colour to our streets both in Spring and in Autumn.

The Association is extremely grateful for every offer of help, whether with the funding of these trees or with their watering. Both are equally essential. To avoid the damage to our pavements existing trees have caused, the new trees will be planted with a deep irrigation tube and will be watered much more intensively than were the original trees. Following guidance from *Street Trees for Living*, for the first two summers each new tree will need a weekly watering of 20 litres in one go. During the first two springs and autumns they will need about 10 litres a week. The reason for this is that young roots grow out of the rootball towards water. Normally, at the roadside, the moistest parts of the soil are just beneath paving stones: that is why roots grow towards the pavement and why they cause damage. However, if the young tree is watered using the irrigation tube, then the dampest part of the subsoil will be below the roots, and that is where they will grow.

I am particularly pleased that we shall be able to plant trees on Canonbie Road, which has none at present. My own research could find no good reason for the lack of trees on this road, and fortunately the Council's recent survey came to the same conclusion.

The pavements are narrow, so small trees will be needed to allow pedestrians with buggies or wheelchairs to get past them easily. We plan to

plant the small but pretty Serviceberry *Amelanchier* 'Robin Hill'. The flowers open pink and then turn white early in Spring, followed by dark purple berries before the leaves turn a vivid red in Autumn. If residents like them we could also ask the Council to consider similar plantings on Netherby Road, which has a similar layout to Canonbie Road.



The final details of our plantings should be available in time for the next issue of our newsletter, by which time our attention will be turning to our plantings for the winter of 2018/9.

*Stuart Checkley.*

*Footnote: Details of existing trees causing pavement and/or wall damage, or pedestrian obstruction, have been sent to the Council. The Tree Officer has agreed to action all the instances highlighted, with the removal of two trees obstructing the pavement and severe pruning of the other problem trees.*

*Coming soon to Canonbie Road – Amelanchier 'Robin Hill'.*

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## Butterfly House Opening



If you haven't yet been inside the new Butterfly House in the Horniman Gardens, a visit is highly recommended!

To wander through a tropical indoor garden of flowers, vines and foliage surrounded by hundreds of beautiful free-flying butterflies is a truly amazing experience.

And it's not just the butterflies to admire. Garden lovers can see over 60 plant species commonly found in the native habitats of tropical butterflies. Fishtail palms (*Caryota*

*mitis*) inter-mingle with passion flowers *Passiflora*, and the vibrant flowers of harlequin glorybowers (*Clerodendrum*), hibiscus and jasmine provide food for the butterflies. Look closely, and you can see butterflies laying eggs on the leaves, as well as the caterpillars from hatched eggs – just find a plant with holes in the leaves that have been eaten by them! There is also a zone where you can see the next stage of their life cycle – butterflies emerging from their chrysalis before your eyes.

The Museum and Gardens staff are to be congratulated on this wonderful addition to the Horniman that will be enjoyed by both adults and children alike

*Entry to the Butterfly House is necessarily by timed ticket, as there is limited capacity inside. Tickets can be bought on arrival, but by booking them at [horniman.ac.uk/butterflyhouse](http://horniman.ac.uk/butterflyhouse) you can avoid the queues!*

### **Subscriptions**

*Our thanks to those of you who have already returned your subscription. If you've lost the envelope, just let your road rep know - he or she will have a spare envelope.*

## **The TLERA way to self-fulfilment?**

Are you feeling listless, tired and bored? Lacking motivation and stimulation in your life? No reason to climb out of bed in the mornings? TLERA has the answer to your problem and can solve it at a stroke by enrolling you as one of their fully authorised and highly respected Tewkesbury Lodge Estate Residents' Association road representatives, which will put you at the heart of the action in your corner of the Estate and restore your joie de vivre.

You'll get to know all your neighbours, be first to hear the local gossip, news about social activities, and prospective property sales, renovations, and

developments, not to mention a host of other fascinating subjects. You'll soon become a positive mine of news and information about your locality and at the same time will be supporting a valuable local asset in the form of TLERA itself. Altogether, highly recommended by a road rep of 20 years standing!

*Tony Branchini*

*Editor's note: We urgently need another road representative to cover the first part of Westwood Park (the section between Honor Oak Road and Horniman Drive). If you can help, please get in touch on 8699 8432.*

## **A Horniman Mela – Drums, Dancing, Dosa, and Dye!**

The Horniman Museum does it again with yet another brilliant event. The end of the Museum's successful Indian Summer season was marked on Sunday, 4th September in spectacular style with a Mela – a celebratory event inspired by South Asian festivals and traditions.

A full programme of performances and activities was laid on throughout the afternoon and drew a large crowd of adults and children, despite the distinctly un-Indian Summer weather. There was certainly something for everyone: dance and art workshops; storytelling; shadow puppetry; screen printing; face painting; henna tattoos; and even a tiger-themed bouncy castle. The Bandstand Terrace played host to a food market which had visitors eagerly queuing for delicious snacks, ranging from expertly prepared dosas to aloo tikki chaat, and the drinks on offer included mango cocktails and lassis. A range of crafts were on display and visitors were able to pick up anything from a recycled sari basket to a henna tattoo.

Nish, in particular, provided an inspirational mix of traditional and modern sounds that had everyone up on their feet to join in the celebration. The drums and dancing created a joyful atmosphere, full of energy and fun, with all generations joining in together.



Then for the finale - a Holi festival inspired colour throw. Visitors had been warned not to wear Sunday best and were about to find out why. A group of musicians and professional dancers led a procession through the gardens. When the parade neared the Bandstand there was a sensational explosion of colour as pots of powder were thrown into the air. The air was bright with coloured clouds which descended onto the crowd and the rainbow powders covered hair, faces, hands and more. Children delighted in the sanctioned shambles, but the anarchy was contagious and all ages participated to create a dazzling, jubilant display.

A truly wonderful event that brightened up a dull day in south-east London in sensational style.  
*Tina Hildrey*

*Standing in a very long queue was rewarded with a delicious masala dosa, a South Indian thin, crispy pancake with a spicy potato filling – well worth the wait!*



But it was the music that set this Mela alight. From beginning to end the Bandstand vibrated to an infectious beat, with a series of marvellous performances. The Bollywood Brass Band and DJ

This newsletter was compiled and edited by Valerie Ward and proof read by Carole Abrahams. Contributions from members are very welcome and can be e-mailed to us at [secretary@tewkesburylodge.org.uk](mailto:secretary@tewkesburylodge.org.uk)