

THE BOOKHAM BROADSHEET

The Journal of the Bookhams Residents' Association

November 2001

THE NEW COMMITTEE MAKES A START

Chairman's Message

This is my first newsletter since being elected Chairman of the Residents' Association at the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) in September.

In this issue we report, with sadness, the death of Jimmy Peck who was, since 1966, a member of the Residents' Association and in more recent years our President.

We also pay tribute to Brenda de Bruin outlining her many achievements whilst Chairman of the Residents' Association.

At the EGM I'm pleased to be able to report that a full team of Officers was elected together with five Committee Members (a full list can be found below) resulting in a mixture of the old and the new. However, we are always looking for new members, road stewards and anyone else who has a little time that they can contribute to the work of the Residents' Association. So, if you are able to help, have some ideas on how the Association can work more effectively or, think there are areas in which the Association should be involved please contact any of the officers or members.

Frequent users of the Lower Road Recreation Ground will hopefully notice the planting of a number of trees sometime during November/December, three of which have been funded by the Residents' Association. We still have some funds in our "tree fund" so if anyone knows of an area or space within Bookham that would benefit from the planting of a tree or trees then please let me know.

And finally, may I, on behalf of all the officers and members, wish you and your family a merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Best wishes

Andrew Freeman, Chairman

The New Committee

At the EGM in September eleven people were nominated and elected as Committee members of the Residents' Association. From these volunteers a full team of officers was then elected. The Committee officers and members are:

President:	Bob Foster	01372 454364
Chairman:	Andrew Freeman	01372 454365
Vice Chairman:	Erica Gillespie	01372 454366
Treasurer:	Tony Major	01372 454367
Secretary:	Anne Finn	01372 454368
Membership Secretary:	John Allen	01372 454369
Committee Members:	Gillian Davis	01372 454370
	Gordon Elsey	01372 454371
	Edmund Morgan Warren	01372 454372
	Derek Munson	01372 454373
	John Rose	01372 454374

Please feel free to contact anyone of the above if you wish to help or if you have an idea or concern that you wish to discuss. Highways, Chairman Please Contact Tony Major 01372 454366

Members actively involved in the Association should contact the Chairman at 01372 454365

Jimmy Peck

James Herbert Funston Peck, to give him his full name (which none of us knew!) died shortly after resigning from the Presidency of the Association in September, at the age of 89. He had been a member of the BRA Executive Committee for 36 years which must surely be a record.

Jimmy was brought up in Barbados, where his father was a senior government official, and attended boarding school in this country, returning home to the Caribbean in school holidays. After graduating from Cambridge University, he had an interesting career in architecture and then in civil engineering in the Caribbean and South America before settling in Bookham. It was typical of him to want to give something from his experience and training to his adopted village.

In his younger days he was a very active and enthusiastic member of the Executive Committee and a great believer in the role the Association had to play. He took a prominent part in the Association's opposition to the original siting of the M25 route which would have been a disaster for the Bookhams. He served on the Planning Sub-Committee for many years and always had a contribution to make to their discussions.

Latterly his health had prevented him from taking a very active part in Association affairs although he had attended some meetings of the Planning Committee until quite recently.

Those of us who knew him will always remember with affection his old-world courtesy and keen sense of humour. We shall miss him very much.

Bob Foster

Brenda de Bruin

Brenda recently retired from chairmanship of the BRA after four and a half years in the job. During that time she made an important impact on the affairs of the Association transforming it from the doldrums, into which it had fallen, to its present lively activity. She was constantly looking for improvements for the people of Bookham and once an idea had caught her attention, she pursued it doggedly – and usually got her way!

Perhaps the most important improvement for the village in recent years, which she had a major hand in, have been the long drawn out negotiations – thankfully nearing success – for the new Medical Centre. She had frequent meetings with the doctors, organised a very successful public meeting, brought the whole matter to the attention of the press and generally masterminded the Association's campaign. If the new centre comes into being, the village will owe a good deal to her. Other things she had a hand in over the years include the refurbishment of the High Street and Church Road shopping area, the new parking arrangements in the High Street, the provision of more trees in the Lower Road Recreation Ground (soon to be planted), the new bus shelter outside the Church and a scheme she was working on before stepping down, the provision of new public toilets in the High Street area.

Her cheerful, hardworking persistence and her ability to get on with everybody were an example to us all. We wish her well in her retirement.

Bob Foster

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is vital to the existence of the BRA, not only does it provide the funds to enable it to operate but without sufficient members we cannot claim to raise local issues on behalf of the community.

It is for this reason that road stewards are highly valued as they are the first line of contact with our members who we hope will pass on to us matters of concern that require attention. This year a number of road stewards have had to retire and at present we only have about 800 households on our membership list, which is far from satisfactory. We are anxious to recruit new road stewards and although your road is probably covered as you have received this Broadsheet, there is nothing to prevent you from becoming responsible for a road nearby. I should add that to be a road steward is not very onerous, as the main duties are to collect subscriptions once a year and deliver the broadsheet and any other notices that need to be distributed. Many people find it a worthwhile experience and it enables them to become friendly with their immediate neighbours, as well as provide a valuable service to the community. So please telephone me if you feel you can help and/or let me know of anyone you think would be prepared to become a road steward.

JOHN ALLEN – MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Association Objectives/Campaigns

In the short term the Association has decided to concentrate on a number of issues of concern, starting with drainage/blocked road gullies, hedges and trees obstructing the pavements and access for the disabled throughout the village. Posters are being displayed on the notice boards outside the Old Crown Public House and the Post Office in Church Road.

Quoting Robert Frost, 'Mending Wall 1914', "Good fences make good neighbours". It is responsible house owners who keep their hedges, bushes and trees under control, so do be a good neighbour and if necessary cut them back without delay as it is a criminal offence if you do not. However if you know of a property where overgrown vegetation poses difficulties for pedestrians and people in wheelchairs or motorised buggies please let us know.

It must be said that over the past few years wheelchair access at road junctions and the like has been greatly improved, but a number of difficulties have been noted and reported to the Mole Valley District Council, who have been very receptive to our phone calls. Obviously this includes people with prams and pushchairs, as it can be particularly dangerous at a road junction if a ramp has not been constructed. Here again your co-operation would be appreciated.

Last winter was the wettest on record and many areas were flooded throughout Bookham. It has been noted that some work has been carried out to alleviate the situation, but blocked road gullies are a contributory factor. A number of these have already been reported to the Highways Authority, but we feel sure there are many more requiring attention. If whilst you are on your travels, you notice a blocked gully please take a note of it and let us know where it is.

We have spoken to representatives at both Mole Valley District Council and Surrey County Council Highways Departments and we have received a positive response from them. However they have suggested that we should co-ordinate any observations you have to make on the above topics and let them have written reports. John Allen who is on our committee, has agreed to undertake this task and his telephone number is 01877 454355. Please make sure you are able to give him the exact location of any problems and date reporting.

Your co-operation will be much appreciated and will help to make the Bookham area a safer and more pleasant area to live in.

Be a Good Neighbour this Christmas

For most people Christmas is a time to relax, enjoy the company of loved ones and to eat and drink a little too much. But for many it can be a lonely and depressing time, particularly for those people who:

- live alone;
- live far away from family and friends;
- have a disability that restricts their lifestyle;
- are old with deteriorating health;
- are recently bereaved;
- have a limited income.

So, if you know of a person living nearby who may need some help this Christmas, be a good neighbour, pop in with a card and say hello. And while you're there you could check that they have everything they need, for example,

- have they done their food shopping yet?
- do they have sufficient medication to get them through the holiday period?
- is their house warm and do they have sufficient heating?

Asking such questions could be embarrassing but you should be able to gauge whether they are coping and prepared for the holiday period by merely having a little chat. And don't worry about knocking on their door - if you were experiencing difficulties wouldn't you like someone to care?

So, enjoy yourself this Christmas and spread a little bit of good cheer to others. And don't make it a one-off either - people need help all year round.

