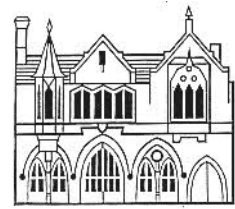


The Citizen



Newsletter of the Berkhamsted Citizens Association

December 2004

For the last issue of 2004, a selection of photographs taken by member Doug Billington at our 80th Anniversary Garden Party

Profile of: Tony Statham



Tony was born in Harrow in 1945, but attended school and lived most of his life in Hertfordshire, with the twenty years in Berkhamsted.

The son of an architect, Tony's initial ideas of going into medicine quickly gave way to a career in finance, starting with the London Stock Exchange in 1964.

During the 1970's, Tony developed his career with a merchant bank in South Africa and returned to stock-broking in London 1978. An opportunity in 1981 to move into the Financial Information industry with Telerate, a rival to Reuters, laid the foundation for a new experience in sales and marketing. Tony spent nearly twenty years in this industry before taking semi-retirement in 2001.

Tony, who has been married twice, now lives on the boundary of Berkhamsted and Northchurch and has a wide range of interests including natural history (especially ornithology), book collecting, gardening and D.I.Y., travel and wine appreciation.

He operates a training course for those seeking an introduction to financial markets and belongs to several societies including the Society of Technical Analysts, MENSA and the Royal Philatelic Society London.

He is a trustee of a UK Pension Fund and serves on the committees of the British Ornithologists' Club and the Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society as well as the Berkhamsted Citizens Association.



This issue of 'The Citizen' (in colour) is now available on our web site - but you will need a password from the address on the back page!

Editors Piece

Your esteemed editor, Norman Cutting, writes:

Our newsletters this year are a bit like buses, you thought you had missed one, then another arrives. The problem is the committee decided that a rule change was needed, so to give the necessary notice, we had an issue a couple of months ago. Then Christmas is upon us and you all need reminding that the 'Christmas do' this year is slightly different as we are combining with the Local History Society for an event that has taken us by surprise and ticket demand is high and if you haven't got yours, then you are most probably too late.

It also means that our usual contributors have forgotten to submit copy, so you are able to read the sort of thing that this editor has to leave out, so let's get on with the show before they all notice.

Owing to a change in personal circumstances, we are looking for a new committee member to take on the task of publicity. In case you are interested, the committee meets about once a month and you should have an interest in promoting the association.

Another vacancy liable to need filling will be of compiling/editing the newsletter by the time you get to the back page of this issue, as I was only offered the job on a temporary basis as no-one else wanted it and I had to give an assurance I would behave myself!

How about becoming a Trustee of the Berkhamsted Town Hall Trust? The present BCA appointed Trustee has resigned due to a difference in attitude, so if you don't mind being liable for the actions of others, it would look good on your CV.

While I'm in the mood for finding others something to do, have you thought about Neighbourhood Watch? I'm the co-ordinator for a couple of roads in my area and we all toddled off to the Berkhamsted School for the annual gathering on 29th September. Did you know there are 168 schemes in Berkhamsted and Northchurch covering 3663 homes. Apparently crime is low in the town (mind you, see next page) unless you have a big and valuable motor. We have a Community Sergeant shared with Tring and a community team covering the 'Berkhamsted' area.

Ward Constable Tel: 07736+

Castle	Mark Proctor	225285
West	Richard Parfitt	225286
East	Richard Austin	225287
Northchurch	Jon Peplow	225290
Ashridge	Andrea Bettridge	225291

River Bulbourne Restoration Project

Tony Statham, our representative reports:

Most readers are probably already familiar with the River Bulbourne Restoration Project (RBRP), which is "officially" the 'Restoration of the River Bulbourne and Wider River Corridor between Park Street and Lower Kings Road'. This project is being managed by a partnership between a steering group including British Waterways, Chiltern Chalk Streams Project (lead partner), Dacorum Borough Council, the Environment Agency, Three Valleys Water, Chilterns Woodland Project, Rotary Club of Berkhamsted, Berkhamsted Citizens Association and the Berkhamsted Town Council. .

The project started in August 2003 with an initial assessment of the restoration options available for the relevant stretch of the River Bulbourne. The project definition is to "produce and implement a plan that will lead to habitat restoration" and "reinstating the characteristic chalk stream conditions by improving flow dynamics, opening up the tree canopy to increase light penetration and naturalisation of the bank line". In summary, Tony Statham says that "we want to improve the riverside environment by cutting back a lot of the overhanging tree growth and re-define the course of the river so that it flows more efficiently to expose the natural gravel bed and remove sedimentation. This will help to re-establish the natural chalk stream environment with naturalised vegetation."

Some of the proposals within the RBRP have attracted controversy, especially the modification of the "lake" opposite St Johns Well Court. There are also concerns that the project will promote flooding, interfere with the breeding cycle of birds, ignore rubbish removal and irrevocably damage the environment that already exists. It is also probable that the public will initially object to the coppicing of trees although this will be a benefit in the longer term. The steering group are sensitive to these issues and a public meeting was held in the Civic Centre on 9th September to address residents' concerns.

The steering group are eager to promote the longer-term benefits of the RBRP (including the removal of Japanese Knotweed and restoration of the river bank near Lower Kings Road). Chalk streams are a unique environmental habitat not present in many parts of the world and it is appropriate that this section of the River Bulbourne should be given the opportunity to re-establish its natural habitat.

CHAIRMAN NOW DECLARES WAR ON CYCLISTS

Our Chairman Graham Spittle our Chairman writes:

PAVEMENTS ARE FOR PEOPLE

Following my piece in the last edition, I am indebted to one of our members, Mrs. Madeleine Donoghue, who wrote to tell me the organisation I had in mind was probably Living Streets (formerly The Pedestrian Association) and to give me contact details. I certainly intend to follow up this lead. More in a future article.

My sentiments apparently resonated with a number of readers, including former Treasurer of the Association, Colin Garrett, who sent me a copy of a complaint he had sent to the local police station about a particularly antisocial piece of pavement parking; complete with its accompanying evidence of a photograph and car registration number.

In these days of digital photography, it would seem that many of us could easily follow his example.

CYCLING ON THE PAVEMENT

When I was a small boy, folklore had it that only bicycles with wheels of less than a certain diameter (was it 18 inches?) could be ridden on the pavement. I have never checked whether there was any foundation in law for this belief. Nevertheless, it was understood that those old enough to ride machines likely to endanger pedestrians were supposed to ride in the road.

I realise that these days roads are often dangerous places for cyclists of any age, but is it too much to ask that cyclists using the pavements show a little more consideration for pedestrians?

I am increasingly conscious of the number of times I have to take avoiding action on the pavements of the High Street, because of speeding adult cyclists. In some cases, I would estimate the 20 m.p.h. speed limit, which presumably applies on the pavement too, was being broken by a fair amount.

Do other readers share my concern about this?

Editors comment:

Do members think we are expecting too much by expecting the law to be enforced?

I know we are 'policed by consent', and the government are continually bringing in new legislation to address specific issues. The problem is that current laws are not enforced with a degree of consistency.

In the week prior to this piece being written, I hear that a lady had £200 stolen from a bag in 'The Goat'. The poor offender must have thought he had robbed the crown jewels as not only were additional local resources brought in to catch the miscreant, but a helicopter brought in from Bedfordshire - yes, he was caught!

On the other hand, if you are the wife of the Town Mayor, then reporting an attempted theft and being assaulted gains the standard response - yes, they did turn up eventually!

The Christmas Photographic Competition (reminder)

We are waiting for entries for the photographic competition, The Last 80 Years in Berkhamsted, to tie up with the celebrations for the 80th birthday of the Citizens Association. The photograph/s should be taken by the competitors and have their name and address on the back.

The display should not exceed A3 size. Please send or hand in entries to any member of the Committee before November 29th. This is a light-hearted competition for our Christmas festivities, so please have a go.

Activities Sub-Committee - Rita Jones - Chairman reports:

Our season of talks got off to an energetic start when Anna Sims, an extended breathing and voice expert, helped us to 'enjoy breathing' as she had promised. She demonstrated how breathing in deeply and exhaling very slowly not only helped us to sing better, but also climb hills, essential when you live in Berkhamsted. We all joined in the simple exercises and our Chairman showed a hitherto unseen talent when he volunteered to demonstrate how Anna's advice could help an already fine singing voice. Our thanks to him and to one of our visitors, who nobly acted as guinea pig to demonstrate several more of the exercises. Anna Sims has kindly offered to write out the exercises and I hope I can include them in the next Newsletter. She certainly fulfilled her promise to show how enjoying breathing can be an 'Inspiration for Life'

Now, an apology to John Taylor, the speaker on November 17th, who is actually Conservation Officer for Friends of Tring Reservoirs and not as printed in the last newsletter. This has been corrected on the posters and, by the time this reaches you, I hope you will all have enjoyed his talk about the wildlife at Tring Reservoirs.

Saturday 4th December, 7.30 pm, The Great Hall
Derek Fowlds-'A Berko Boy Returns', followed by refreshments.
Joint meeting with Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society.

We had not realised just how popular this talk was going to be when the last Newsletter was written. The decision to ensure that members had a chance to buy tickets by restricting sales to them from Nov. 1st to 6th was made too late for inclusion. Seating in the Great Hall is restricted to 200 people, so if all the tickets are sold in advance this will be announced on the posters. Otherwise any remaining tickets will be sold at the door for £5. Please notice the earlier start of 7.30 pm. A finger buffet, wine and soft drinks will be available after the talk, when the Photographic Competition (see previous page), will be judged.

2005. A Reminder.

Saturday January 1st 10.30 am in front of Berkhamsted Railway Station
The Traditional New Year's Day Ramble, this year to Cholesbury (and back) Leader: Bill Willett.

We shall forewarn The Full Moon that some of you will want lunch, though, of course, you can bring your own picnic. A reminder: - Those intending to do half the walk should provide their own transport from Cholesbury.

The first talk in 2005 will be in the Sessions Hall on Wednesday, February 24th, when Peter Ingram, Chairman of Trustees, The Paper Trail, will be talking on The Paper Trail Project.

Here I am again! Norman Cutting rambles:

One of the few organisations that the BCA doesn't have a representative on, is the Berkhamsted Access Committee.

This group meets every three months at the Manor Street Day Centre to address problems in Berkhamsted that particularly affect the disabled. I managed to forget to attend the September meeting, but should make the December 10th one at 3pm - just in case you want to attend! The sort of issues discussed (without me), included the continuing problem of the 'A' frame advertising boards and the latest idea is that they may contravene the Disability Discrimination Act, although ideas such as a 'quiet' word, prosecution for obstructing the pavement and

the requirement for planning permission have met with little success.

Did you know that there is a lack of 'accessible' taxis and this is being brought to the attention of the Borough Licensing Officer?

Anyway, if you have a relative, or are yourself, in any way handicapped or just interested in helping others, why not pop along in December or get in touch for more information.

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