

Views from the Hill

NEWSLETTER OF THE TEWKESBURY LODGE ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Winter 2019



Carols by Candlelight

'Twas the week before Christmas and up on the heights, the mulled wine makers were stirring and putting up lights!

For the third year running, the Association's carol event took place in the Horniman Triangle on Sunday, 16th December. The enclosed green was once again transformed into a winter wonderland, with strings of lights through the trees and flickering lanterns and candles adding to the magical scene. There was no snow this year but the threat of rain was in the air so it was a little uncertain how many would brave the bitter weather but, lo and behold, through the dark streets they came! A stream of families, attracted by the prospect of mince pies, mulled wine and music, made their way up the hill to gather under the protective gazebos with their candles - a shining throng among the leaves so green.



A group of seasoned singers, ably conducted by choir master for the evening, Dave Lowe, led the chorus and encouraged everyone to join in by providing song sheets. The eclectic selection

of carols and seasonal songs proved very popular, and the gazebo roof was nearly raised



with a particularly enthusiastic rendition of *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer* - oh what fun to laugh and sing a sleighing song that night! The children led the way for the *Twelve Days of Christmas* and we even tackled the parts in *Good King Wenceslas*, without losing the tune, thanks to the 'choir' holding it together.

We managed to complete the planned programme and add a couple of requests before the rude wind's wild lament made itself heard and the rain arrived. Undeterred, many remained to polish off the mince pies and stollen, and to raise a cup of good cheer to the volunteers who had set it all up. In addition, the great glad tidings are that we raised an impressive £402 for *Crisis at Christmas!*
Tina Hildrey

Chair's report

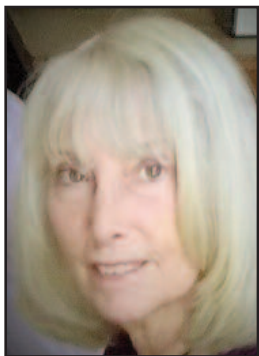
Looking back over 2018, progress has been made in working towards a cleaner, greener, and safer Estate for residents. We have far exceeded our expectations in terms of planting trees more suited to our streets, in terms of both size and colour. In the past year, 28 of 29 new trees have been planted, thanks to Stuart Checkley's hard work and the support of members who have financed a tree and/or are helping to keep them well watered. Dave Leslie together with the support of the traffic sub-

committee, is beginning to make progress towards trying to reducing 'rat-running' through the Estate, now with the support of Sophie Ellis, one of our Lewisham councillors, in our bid to make the Estate safer - especially for children walking to school.

Last year got off to a frosty start with plummeting temperatures. Dubbed the 'beast from the east', it was followed by the hottest
continued on next page...

Inside this issue:

Carols:	1
Chair's Report:	1
Diary Dates:	2
Aircraft noise:	2
Autumn Harvest:	2
Trees on the Hill:	3
Watch this Space:	4
Leafmould:	4
Winter Garden:	5
Traffic Calming:	5
Policing:	5
Horniman News:	6
Museum:	6
Horniman Garden:	7
Subscriptions:	8
Committee:	8



Valerie Ward
Chair

continued from previous page...

summer on record for England, narrowly beating the one in 1976. Which meant perfect weather for the first two outdoor social events organised by the Association. However, then came the rain, much to the delight of gardeners but not for the organisers and the intrepid members who came along in their waterproofs for the Autumn Harvest apple pressing and lunch. There was a collective sigh of relief when the rain let up for the day of the *Carols by Candlelight* event in the Triangle. However, the rain started just as the carols were finishing and members were leaving. Not so good for the

organisers, who then had to fold up gazebos, pack up the equipment, and take down the hundreds of fairy lights from the trees in the pouring rain... My thanks to the Committee who, with the support of many of our members, worked so hard to make the events successful – once again raising over £5000 for various charities – regardless of weather conditions!

Finally, on behalf of the TLERA Committee, I would like to wish all our members a really happy New Year!

Valerie Ward

Dates for your diary

Annual General Meeting:

Tuesday 12 March between 6.30-8pm at Horniman Primary School.

Easter Egg Hunt:

Sunday, 21st April between 10-12noon at 28 Horniman Drive.

Garden Opening event:

Sunday, 19th May between 1-6pm.

Aircraft noise



Some aircraft fly only 1300 feet / 400 metres above the Horniman...

Some residents have noticed a change in the pattern and regularity of aircraft overflying Forest Hill as well as an increase in noise levels. Well it seems that SE23 is a community aircraft noise black spot with loud and large

jet Heathrow arrivals creating noise disturbance from 5 a.m. In addition, increasing City Airport

traffic is currently forming up over our Estate, with up to 15 planes per hour on some days. The estimated combined effect from both airports is about 300 planes flying over our homes every day. Sleep is interrupted, and conversation is stopped if you are outside as the planes fly overhead.

This situation is likely to get even worse due to City Airport's expansion plans, and Heathrow Airport's proposal to allow aircraft to land or take off on both Runway 1 and 2 at the same time during busy periods. This will add 25,000 flights a year even before a third runway is built - potentially as early as 2026. Given this, one of the topics at the AGM may very well be aircraft noise.

Valerie Ward

Autumn harvest event

If 'innovation' was the theme of our first autumn event and 'celebration' that of our second, then 'triumph over adversity' was certainly the theme of our third and most recent autumn harvest event. The apple crop failed across the Estate and, after a prolonged drought, on the day of the event it rained without remission. Yet these conditions provided exactly the challenge that was needed to bring out the best in all our members. Gazebos were erected to protect against the elements, delicious homemade soups were warmed up, cakes made from seasonal produce were there to be sampled, the mulled cider was gently mulling, and the apple press was ready. So despite the weather, we went ahead with the event.

Local markets had been searched for apples for the press, towels were on hand for emergencies

and, once the fruit crusher from last year was assembled, apple pressing was underway and an amazing vintage emerged. Given very close parental supervision, children were able to feed the crusher with chunks of apple and even to operate the press itself.

Like the chickens, the children ignored the weather and engaged in creative activities in the garden, using autumnal foliage, glue and paper plates, while the adults made floral decorations using dried flowers and seed heads. And the story hut acquired a charm of its own in the weather for those hardy enough to get there.

There is a sense of belonging to be found in such communal activity, and this simple pleasure could be enjoyed by children of all ages. Some of us were reminded of the last

Christmas carol event which succeeded despite the snow. On both occasions we listened to the weather forecast beforehand and wondered whether we should cancel the event. On both occasions we decided to dress for the conditions, lay on extra hot drinks, and go ahead regardless.

All of us were most grateful to the members who had made the soups, baked the cakes, and mulled the cider, as well as to Frankie and Steve for their generosity in once more hosting the event in their house and garden.

Stuart Checkley

More trees for the Hill

Eighteen new trees were bedded in just before Christmas. The aim of all our plantings is for colourful small trees which will grow on our Hill and not damage our pavements or garden walls. The Association is hugely grateful for the generosity of our residents who have given their time to water the trees, and/or their money to buy them. We are also grateful to the Forest Hill Assembly who awarded a grant to *Street Trees for Living* for trees in Forest Hill, which included some for us.



It is too soon to know how the new trees will develop, but it is not difficult to imagine the possibilities. The red autumnal colours of the *Liquidamber styraciflua* in Dulwich were one of the inspirations for our tree planting project. Could we replicate a little of that in Forest Hill? The regular *Liquidamber* is a bit too large for the size of our pavements but there is a slim-line variety called 'Slender Silhouette' in which the height is always five times the width of the tree. This variety might just fit into our pavements, so we are trying out one of these in Langton Rise as well as one of the more usual *Liquidamber*.

A second tree that will be new to the Estate and



10 apples chopped up,
500 more to go...

to Forest Hill is the Chinese Scarlet Rowan. It lives up to its name in autumn when its leaves are truly scarlet, while its berries are bright red or orange. It has a pretty shape at all times of the year.

A third new tree to look out for is at the bottom of Ringmore Rise. It stands out from our other street trees by still having a large number of green leaves in late November, and it is growing in front of a garden which is warm enough to support the growth of a large olive tree. The new tree is called 'Summer Bells' or *Chitalpa Tashkentensis*, to give it its scientific name. And its flowers are as exotic as its name: they are frilly, trumpet shaped, and white with pink streaks and yellow throats. They flower from late June through to the end of summer when few other trees are in flower.

A fourth new species heading this way is the Tamarisk, which is usually seen on cliff tops by the sea but it also grows by the roadside. Its leaves are like those of a cypress tree but are a lighter green; its flowers are pink and appear in summer. If wind on our Hill proves to be a problem for trees on some of the more exposed sites, then the Tamarisk is the tree that we will fall back on.



*Chitalpa and
Malus Evereste*

And this morning on the BBC Radio 4 *Today* programme the head gardener at RHS Harlow Carr was extolling the virtues of her hedge of a crab apple called *Malus* 'Evereste'. Sadly, we don't have space for such a hedge but we have found space on the grassy verge at the top of Ringmore Rise for a single tree and, encouragingly, it has some wonderful red crab apples already.



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No sooner are this year's trees planted than we need to plan for next year - there will be less time, because the deadline for proposing planting plans to the Council has been moved forward to the end of March. In order to give people time to decide whether to sponsor a tree for 2019 we shall be using our own version of the leaflet that *Street Trees for Living* uses to contact potential supporters across Lewisham. These leaflets will be delivered to houses close

to potential planting sites. If you don't receive a leaflet but would like to be involved in the project do please contact me.

And once again, if you have contributed already, thank you so much for helping to make our Hill even greener, healthier and more visually attractive.

Stuart Checkley

Email: stuart@streettreesforliving.org ; Text: 07709 578 417

Footnote: The money for the bluebells has not come from TLERA funds but was donated by Garden Group members who knew Louis and Lavinia Greenbaum, both of whom are sadly no longer with us. It was agreed that the money should be used for a living memorial to this much loved couple.

The magic Garden Triangle Goblins

Watch this space!

On Saturday, November 17 at around 10.30am, a small group dressed in gardening gear and armed with digging forks could be seen assembling in the Triangle on the Hill. Nearby residents of Liphook and Rocombe Crescents and Horniman Drive may have wondered what was about to happen. As did a TLERA member writing at her desk with a view of the Triangle who came to join us!

Our purpose was to prepare the soil ready for planting bluebells 'in the green' (i.e. when the



bulbs are approaching flowering) sometime in March. This method has a better success rate for bluebells, as for snowdrops, than autumn planted bulbs. Adding colour and beauty to the shrubs and majestic woodland trees, relatives of the ancient Great North Wood, was discussed and agreed at a TLERA meeting. Stuart Checkley then prepared the way by contacting Lewisham Council for permission, and the RHS for advice.

On a few test digs during the long summer drought it had been impossible to get a fork into the ground even when standing on it! However, when six of us started loosening the soil we found it quite soft after a spell of rain. Over the years falling Autumn leaves had decayed and produced leafmould – an invaluable soil conditioner (more below). In small groups we each took on one of the three 'beds' and within an hour or so the work was done. As English bluebells happily naturalise, residents can look forward to the sight of carpets of blue beneath the trees for years to come.

Rose Agnew

In praise of leafmould

Leafmould is free - once you have bought or made something to store the Autumn leaves in, preferably so they are in contact with the earth and open to the air. It is Nature's way of recycling leaves. A spadeful of earth from a garden will contain countless visible and invisible organisms (particularly fungi and bacteria) that will break down cell walls in the leaves, release nutrients, and give structure to the soil. Earthworms in particular will drag leaf matter underground to line their burrows and this will aerate the soil and enable it to retain moisture.



It is very quickly formed in my composters, so long as I keep the leaves watered throughout the summer. I find that birch leaves rot completely within a year. Oak leaves usually rot in two, but last summer mine rotted in just one year. Was it the heatwave combined with frequent watering or was there some magic ingredient in the rotten apples that finished up with the oak leaves? I have no idea, but I will certainly try to replicate the rotten apple treatment next year!

Leafmould's other charm is that if it is applied as an autumn mulch, then by Spring it will all have disappeared, and in its place will be a dark brown tilth. While we have been inside by the fire, the legions of fungi in the topsoil have been doing their work to prepare our soil for Spring.

Stuart Checkley

The delights of the winter garden

Looking out on my garden in Winter is a series of daily surprises. One day I notice the first bell shaped flowers on the evergreen climber *Clematis Cirrhosa* 'Freckles' looking delicate but they are very robust and love the cold. The clematis has formed into a scented hedge along the fence. On another day the winter flowering Cherry *Prunus* 'Autumnalis Rosea' produced a few pale pink flowers in late December and



there will be many more into January and February to look forward to. The catkins suddenly appear on the corkscrew hazel that I keep pruned as a shrub. The wonderful *Rosa chinensis* 'Bengal Crimson' gives a single tissue paper crimson pink scented flower (or two or three!) almost every day through the coldest, darkest days and any amount of wind and rain. Winter flowering *Lonicera* honeysuckle is shaped into a round bush, with the lower branches pruned back to the centre raising it up so it can be seen covered with white heavily scented flowers that will continue until Spring. *Sarcococca* 'Confusa' is another favourite, a small compact evergreen that shines with white 'knock out' scented flowers – good to bring a few sprigs indoors. On the last day of 2018 I noticed the hellebore is flowering below its large outer leaves that I have cut back to reveal the little beauties! And finally, some very early daffodils have sprung up over Christmas and will flower in the first weeks of January. I love walking up and down our roads, looking into neighbours' gardens for more delights!

Alice Hutton

*Clockwise from top left:
Winter Clematis
Flowering Cherry
Bengal Crimson
Sarcococca confusa*

Traffic calming update

Two traffic sub-committees were formed at the November Forest Hill Assembly meeting, each chaired by a Lewisham councillor. Our area is being covered by Sophie Ellis. Sophie attended our 2018 AGM where traffic calming was discussed and recognises that the issue is (a) important (b) not easy. Our area includes the TLERA Estate, as well as the neighbourhood below Honor Oak Road to Devonshire Road. This is sensible as it is not possible to introduce traffic calming measures in one part of our area without impacting on traffic flowing through the other part.

TLERA is particularly interested in the safety of children walking to the local junior schools – Fairlawn, Horniman and Cabrini. We think 'walk to school' benefits everyone. However, it is vital that those walking are not at risk, and we are particularly concerned with the junction of Honor Oak Road and Canonbie Road. We therefore intend to bring this to Sophie's attention, in addition to our on-going correspondence with Lewisham Council on the matter.

Dave Leslie



Crime and policing

The Association merged the TLERA police liaison and crime cascade roles in September in order to provide a greater connect between the residents on the Estate and the police. Residents should now contact me to report any crimes so that other residents can be made aware of any criminal activity that could potentially affect them.

A number of crimes on the Estate were reported to me around August and September but it is difficult to know how these relate to the number reported to the police. (I cannot compare these with the statistics held by the police as they have not yet published them for this quarter).

There was a lot of theft from cars as well as some burglaries. I am currently recording the crimes reported to me so that TLERA can have an overall sense of the extent of the number, frequency, and type of crimes. Obviously, non-members of the Association are not going to notify me, and I am aware that a few members have not. However, I do receive occasional third-party reporting of crimes committed against neighbours. I will send out a crime report on most occasions, particularly if there is either a pattern, or information that might be helpful in the protection of property or personal safety. I won't if there is immediate repetition and there is nothing new to note.

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*Christine Noon
Crime Cascade /
Police Liaison*

Being able to attend the police liaison meetings with a full awareness of your concerns has been really helpful and has, I believe, led to positive developments. I am pleased to note that residents have reported an increased police presence on the Estate in either marked or unmarked cars, as well as some foot patrols.

In terms of crime prevention, overall basic pointers seem to be:

- If there are no lights on in your house, you are more likely to get burgled than neighbours who leave lights on.
- Houses without alarms are more likely to be targeted.

Interestingly, residents sometimes know, or instinctively feel, that they have been watched leaving the house.

Keep contacting me if you have any information, queries or concerns to help to keep the Estate safe.

Christine Noon

News from the Horniman Museum and Gardens

Since I joined as Chief Executive in May 2018, the one phrase I am greeted with most often is 'Oh I love the Horniman!' Many of the people I have met reveal a pattern of visiting that goes back over generations, and it is a joy to see this love and loyalty which has been built up over time as a result of the close involvement and co-operation of the local community.

My first few months at the Horniman have seen the opening of two new spaces, in both of which our links with our neighbours and community are evident. The World Gallery includes videos of local people talking about objects they love, a display curated by the members of our Access Advisory Group – local people with lived experience of disability – and even new objects in our collection, purchased from shops in Forest Hill. Our first exhibition in The Studio, *The Lore of the Land*, was co-curated by a Collective of people drawn from local community groups and reflects their voices alongside that of the Horniman and our commissioned artist.

The people of Forest Hill, and especially our closest neighbours, continue to be important to us, as they were in Frederick Horniman's time. Looking to the future has been a big part of my

role thus far, and in time we'll be sharing with the local community our plans to make the most of our estate, buildings, and collections in the years to come.



I am really proud to be leading the Horniman at a time when, increasingly, museums provide rare spaces where people from all backgrounds can come together to share what it means to be human and to try to work out how to shape a better future for the planet we all share.

Nick Merriman, Chief Executive

What's on at the Museum

Once the winter weather arrives some people want to embrace it and others yearn to escape to sunnier climes. Whichever one sounds more appealing, the Horniman has something for you this winter.

Whatever you feel about the changing seasons, it's just one way that nature influences our lives. This is the theme explored in *The Lore of the Land*, our newest exhibition which opened in The Studio in October. Co-curated by a

Collective of local people and artist Serena Korda, it looks at humans' relationships with the natural world, focusing on plants and water. It's rather different to our usual exhibitions but there's plenty to enjoy – look out for plants from the Horniman Gardens throughout. They inspired Serena Korda's ceramic pieces that dispense scents inspired by the Gardens, and even feature in the sound piece, created from chemical signals in our plants and trees that were 'translated' into musical notes. The

exhibition also poses the rather intriguing question ‘what do plants think of us?’

A new temporary exhibition *Brick Wonders* will open on 16 February. You can discover 50 models depicting amazing wonders from



around the world made entirely from half a million LEGO® bricks. They range from an ancient Egyptian pyramid to Old London

Bridge, and from the natural wonder of a coral reef to the modern marvel of the international space station. As well as a mini-cinema showing short LEGO® animations, visitors can build their own brick wonders in interactive play areas including a graffiti wall, a tower-building challenge, a magnetic mosaic puzzle, and big bricks for little hands.



Coral reef and old London Bridge in Lego

We hope to see you soon. Have a wonderful New Year.

Alison McKay

What's happening in the Gardens

The Horniman Gardens team has spent the last few weeks distributing our wonderful homemade compost across the Gardens. Over the course of a year we generate a lot of green waste, 99% of which we recycle. Woody plants are chipped up and composted, and leaves and soft waste all thrown in together, along with the used bedding from the Animal Walk. The only thing we can't recycle are New Zealand Flax leaves (*Phormium tenax*) because they are so tough and leathery it takes years for them to break down sufficiently. The green waste goes into our compost yard at the south west corner of the Gardens (closest to the London Road/Wood Vale junction). We have two piles: one is fresh and constantly being added to with the help of our tractor; the other is about a year old and by now in perfect condition for going back out into the Gardens. As we clear this pile in the autumn and winter, we use the tractor to transfer the current year's waste into this space – the movement helps mix it up and adds more air and water to speed up the composting process. Ideally, we would want to turn and mix the compost every few weeks but we don't have the room. Despite this we still manage to build up high enough temperatures to often see steam rising from the pile.

As I'm writing this, at the end of November, we have colour in the Gardens thanks to the plants still flowering in our new Grasslands Garden – the beautiful South African bulb *Nerine bowdenii* and *Hesperantha coccinea*. The

Grasslands Garden was designed by Professor James Hitchmough to provide a long flowering season and winter interest. You will have seen how it has developed through the year, with a succession of flowering plants from May right through to late autumn.

Elsewhere in the Gardens, we have been tree planting in the last couple of months and have

Nerine bowdemii- still flowering among the grasses



two lovely additions to our collection in the shape of a North American Pecan tree *Carya illinoensis* and the Chinese Foxglove Tree *Paulownia tomentosa*. Both can be seen beyond the Sunken Garden as you head away from the museum and although they may not look like

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much during winter, they'll be beautiful from Spring. It is always a thrill to plant trees because we hope they will be here for a very long time and provide a lot of pleasure to the next generation of Horniman visitors. Both of these trees are sponsored commemorative trees, planted to celebrate a special event or remember a loved one. If you are interested in sponsoring a tree at the Horniman and creating a similar lasting, living legacy, more information can be found at www.horniman.ac.uk/get_involved/gardensponsorship.

Wes Shaw
Head of Horticulture

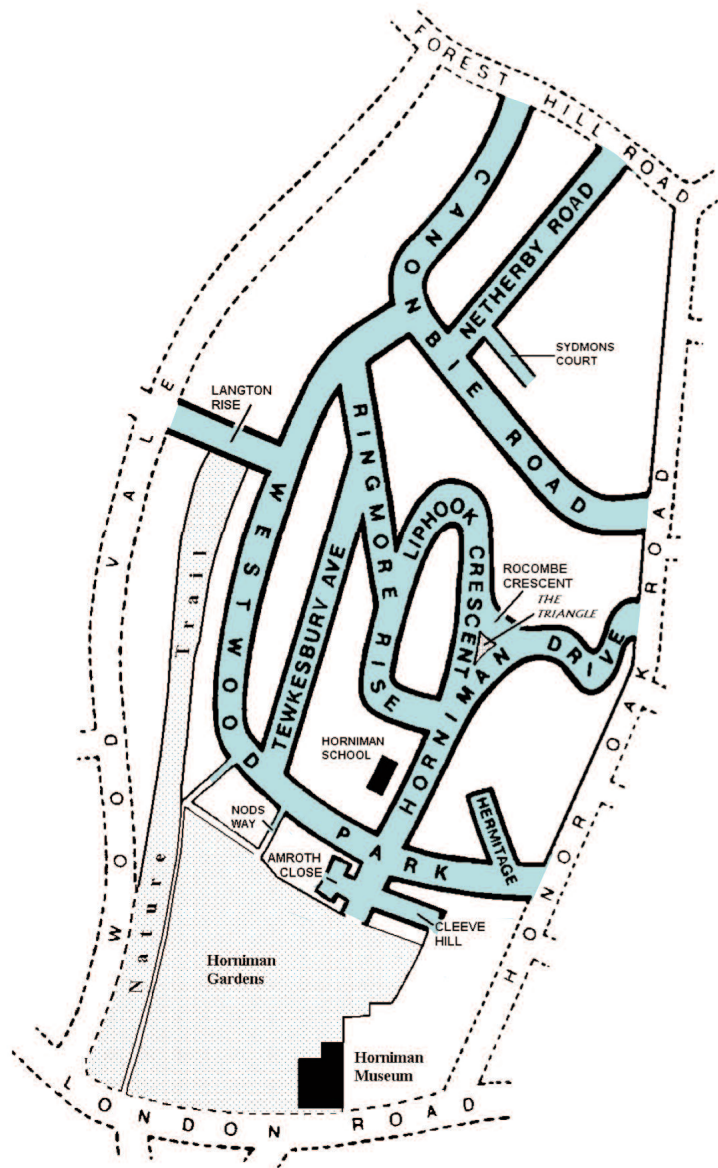


*Hesperantha coccinea-
aka schizostylis*

Subscriptions

Unavoidable delays with the last newsletter, together with problems in printing individual subscription envelopes for every household, may have led to members not yet renewing their membership. It is not too late! There is still time to put £5 into an envelope clearly labelled with your address and return it to your road rep.

The annual membership subscription remains unchanged and covers everyone in your household. It is used to cover the cost of printing information for residents, organising social events, and other expenditure that enable us to make our neighbourhood an even better place to live. We hope you agree that this represents good value for money.



This newsletter was compiled and edited by Valerie Ward, and proof read by Carole Abrahams. Design and layout by Michael Schlingmann. Contributions from members are very welcome and can be e-mailed to us at secretary@tewkesburylodge.org.uk