



The Round Hill Reporter

Issue 75
March 2019

A Play and a Plaque to celebrate the Women's Hospital on Round Hill – page 7

Seasonal Singing 2018

Cut short by torrential downpour

It started well, at the bottom of the Cat Creep, and moved along with lots of bucket rattling and a good response from residents. Must have been on Richmond Road when the heavens opened and people scattered. Some took shelter in doorways, others made for home and dry clothes, but the event was over after just 40 minutes. The downpour didn't even last long, but made up for it in intensity. Afterwards most folk made it to Ted and Jane's, and enjoyed warm mulled wine and mince pies, courtesy of Sainsbury's at the Gyratory. We drained the rain out of the buckets and counted the wet cash – a total of 170 pounds! Not bad for 40 minutes work. Half of it went to the First Base Day Centre run by Brighton Housing Trust. A 'thank you' card from their Jo Berry said our support was much appreciated, and the money would go towards daily running costs. The other half went to the Real Junk Food Project to help them collect and use foods that would otherwise be thrown away by grocery stores.

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Schoolkids Climate Protest page 5 • Valley Gardens greening page 6

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Hidden shoes = Good Luck and a witch-free zone?

We had an interesting find recently – or rather, Nigel from Roundhill Solutions did. He was lifting some hall floorboards for us and found a “cache” of shoes. A child’s hobnail boot, a woman’s boot with buttons and loops up the front and a pair of woman’s shoes. They looked as though they could be as old as our 1860’s-built house.

I tentatively wrote to Brighton museum – “would you like some shoes” and received a reply from the curator of local history, Dan Robertson.

“Your find is very intriguing. Concealment of shoes within buildings is associated with folklore and superstition. In some parts of the country, two left shoes were thought to keep witches away.”

He referred me to an article which details similar finds and talks of shoe superstitions – they’re associated with good luck, or to keep witches away and are also linked with fertility. (www.apotropaios.co.uk ‘Concealed shoes in buildings’ by June Swann)

If the museum’s acquisitions panel approve, the shoes may eventually be transferred there. In the meantime, I’ve replaced them with one of my own, plus a photo of the original shoes and details of when they were found. Hope that will keep the witches away...

Jane Power

[The article by June Swann is worth reading – it talks of hidden shoes being found in all kinds of homes, from cottages to grand houses like Haddon Hall, and hidden not just under floors but also in chimneys and thatched roofs.]



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If you would like some advice about your sash windows, or if you would like to arrange a free quotation, please feel free to contact us on the following.

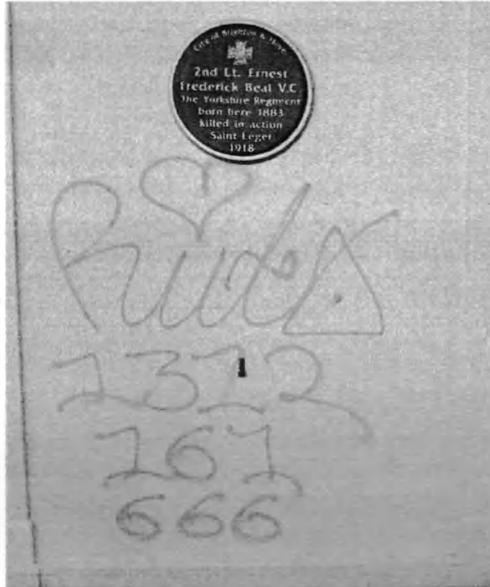
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Beal VC Blue Plaque vandalised *Council quick to repaint*

The Blue Plaque to Ernest Beal was unveiled with much ceremony on 16th March 2018, and had remained in perfect condition until January this year when its setting was subject to the same selfish scrawl that infects all Brighton.



The damage was spotted by Paul Clark of the nearby Clarks Meats and Poultry, and he raised the matter with the Argus and Council. A Council spokesperson was reported in the Argus as saying, 'we aim to remove offensive graffiti within 24 hours'. And it seems they did, because the plaque location is fine now, and there is a Royal British Legion wreath below it.



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Ill-contained refuse

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If this mess was caused by your household it is most likely you are new to Brighton. Established folk know plastic sacks are unsuitable for our streets because if the foxes don't get them the herring gulls will.

But every home is entitled to a free wheelie bin. Two sizes available, depending how many live in your house. Request a wheelie bin (if you have seen them in your road) or a bigger one (if yours is clearly the smaller sort) or a black box for recycling on the Council website: brighton-hove.gov.uk/get-wheelie-bin-or-black-box

If you have a wheelie bin but it gets over-full you might check you are not throwing away recyclables. Your black box can take clean cans, plastic bottles (no other plastics), clean paper and cardboard (cut to fit). A second box can take your glass containers.

Saunders Park Gardening Group

Fortnightly from Wednesday 13th March

Join the regular volunteers to maintain and extend this delightful piece of park behind Shabitat (access through the gate in Hollingdean Road), every fortnight from 9.30am. Not just regular vegetable beds but a new edible hedgerow is planned.

If you plan to attend please take gardening gloves and something to drink, and e-mail Rosie Linford to say you are coming (helps with biscuit planning) rosie@bhfood.org.uk

Mr Agnihotri (Jig), the owner of Shakti Stores, generously provided several bottles of red and white wine to help a fundraising dinner run by ex-Roundhiller Rowena Gerrett go all the better. The meal benefited the Calais School Bus project, which helps bring a little normality into the chaotic lives of Calais's homeless refugees. Thank you Jig.



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The B Project comes to the Upper Lewes Road

B for Bees, Beautification and a Better place to Be

We are residents of Upper Lewes Road that enjoy living in the area but would like to help create a greener more attractive environment. We feel it would be easy and beneficial to the local community to invest some time in making Upper Lewes Road a more beautiful and green space. We are hoping to get some people involved in the process by either joining us in the project or by donating bulbs, plants, soil/compost or pots.

Our main aim is to clear up rubbish from front gardens, tidy up overgrown existing plants (if required) and provide plant pots with bulbs and flowers that in spring will make our street more inviting to bees and butterflies. We also hope to plant flowers in the hollow tree stumps lining our road. Due to the nature of some short term tenancy agreements and lack of time, some of the front gardens on Upper Lewes Road could benefit from a little TLC. That is where our B.Project comes in; with a bit of sprucing up, free ashtrays for houses with smoking occupants and plant pots.

Along with this we would distribute leaflets about local recycling, with the aim of making our road a little tidier. If your front garden is paved then we can provide you with potted wild flowers and a general clean up. Please email us if you want to make a donation of equipment, plants or time, and/or or simply drop them outside of 66 Upper Lewes Road, also please get in touch if you want your garden to get a bit of free love from the B Project. We currently require pruning shears, secateurs, pots, compost and plants (bulbs or seeds welcome) so anything you can donate would be most welcome.

Recha and Natalie

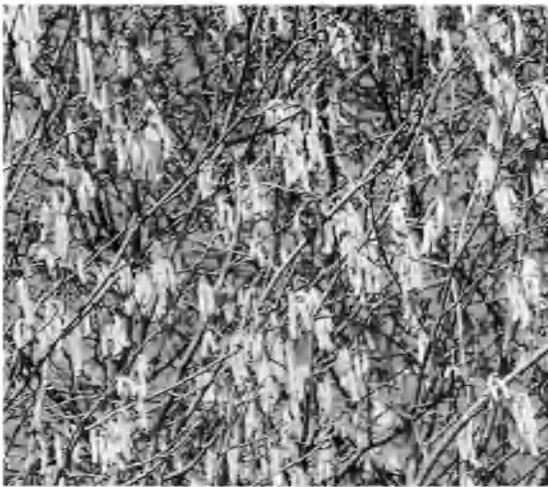
One stump planted with daffodils and tulips



Spring is on its way

Are you ready for it?

The first daffodil is up in the front garden, neighbours have seen newts in their pond, we had a hummingbird hawkmoth feeding on our Daphne odora last week and the blue tits have had a look in one of our nest boxes. Speaking of nest boxes, they should have been emptied out and (ideally) scalded with boiling water to get them parasite free for this year's brood. One website suggests it's illegal to empty them after January, but if you are sure it's unoccupied I'd get on with it soonest.



Hazel heavy with catkins, soon to spread their pollen.

Rob Stephenson

Schoolkids Climate Rally

Clocktower to Level march

Climate Change has been on the school curriculum for many years now, but of late it seems only Brexit has been on the political agenda. Elsewhere there is a government moving away from supporting renewable energy.

It's probably true that there are no votes – well not enough to form a government – in sustainability. Who wants to be told they can't drive or fly abroad for holidays? But maybe the next generation sees the truth better than those who are on our way out.

The nationwide rallies of schoolchildren on Friday 15th February might be the start of something new – if only the enthusiasm for gathering is matched by a good old-fashioned 70's student approach to minimal consumption. And it may be happening – the rise in vegetarianism and veganism both take the pressure off climate change, and is driven by the younger generation (but do check for air miles on Californian vegan mayo).

Caroline Lucas was a big hit with the marchers on the Level, and this park may yet see more action for wildlife and sustainability after the AGM of the Level Forum (people who live near and use it) agreed to explore ways to plant more trees and extend existing hedgerows – tying it into the Valley Gardens improvements to the south (see page 6).



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Crime on Round Hill

Latest statistics

Here are the latest for the Round Hill area, including Sylvan Hall, bounded by the Ditchling, railway line, gyratory and Upper Lewes Road.

Crime	October	November	December
Anti-social behaviour	4	6	4
Bike theft	1	1	1
Burglary	0	0	0
Criminal damage	2	3	2
Other theft	7	5	4
Shoplifting	8	7	8
Violence and sexual offences	6	8	6
Other	9	6	4
TOTAL	39	36	29

Nearly all the shoplifting is at the gyratory petrol station. The 'other' category includes 3 public order offences, 3 vehicle crime and 2 drug-related offences.

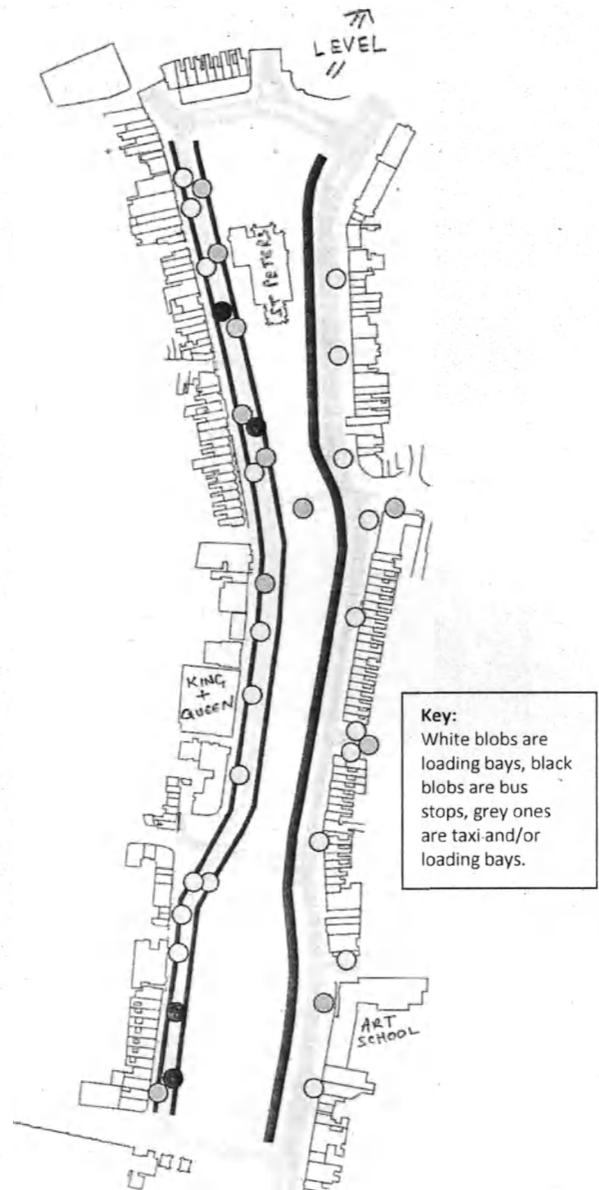
Valley Gardens Redesign

more trees, better plant life, cleaner air

A big step towards sustainability and tackling climate change – but less road space for private vehicles, of course. 280 new trees, half of the amenity grass replaced with natural grasses and wildflowers, and swales (linear planted depressions, like shallow ditches) to collect rainwater runoff and allow it to soak into the earth rather than rush to the sewers, will all help create a more park-like feel to the Valley Gardens – returning them to their original 18th century promenade purpose.

There will be a new square at the south end of St Peters, and several hard-surfaced footpaths passing through the trees between the Level and the seafront, plus a proper width cycleway with fewer road crossing points.

The map (right) shows the traffic route on the east side of the valley, and on the west the bus and taxi route running over a new surface with lots of room for people. The section opposite the Royal Pavilion is shown below, looking south.



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The main traffic route will be narrower than today, and bends will have a smaller radius to encourage slower speeds. Because the route is simpler there will be fewer signs, further reducing the negative impact of the road. This kind of planning, often even more drastic, is happening across the world as people recognise the damaging effects of traffic. Evidence from Oslo (reported in *New Scientist*, 27 Oct 2018) suggests that traffic reduction measures lead to more visitors, not fewer as we often hear. Walking or cycling into town should soon be a real pleasure.

The Lewes Road Hospital for Women and Children

A Blue Plaque and a Play

In 1889 the 20 year old Helen Boyle applied to study medicine at the London School of Medicine for Women. In 1893 she took a Triple Qualification in Medicine, Surgery and Obstetrics in Glasgow. Between 1895 and 1897 she developed her life-long interest in women's mental health whilst working at the Claybury Mental Asylum in Essex.

Melancholia was a well-known affliction of women of the wealthier classes, and could be cured with good food, exercise, clean air and rest. But among the majority of women these cures were not available. Dr Boyle noted that constant childbirth, poor housing and onerous physical labour led to incipient mental illness, and she intended to do something about it.

Having established a medical practise in Hove in 1898, to tend to the ailments of the wealthier residents, she and her partner, Dr Mabel Jones, went on to become honorary medical officers for the charitable 'Lewes Road Dispensary for Women and Children', in Islingword Road in 1899.

The dispensary could not offer residential care, and the necessary break from stressful lives, so in 1905 Helen Boyle took a 7 year lease on 101 Round Hill Crescent, to run as a hospital for up to 12 women, serviced by a qualified Matron and 2 assistant nurses, to treat 'borderland nervous disorders' with a full medical check and treatment followed by activities 'to make life bright and interesting'.

Local playwright Sam Chittenden has recently written a play about Helen and the working women in Round Hill laundries, and it will be performed here on Round Hill during the May Festival. Meanwhile the Round Hill Society is trying to contact the freeholder of 101 to get support for a plaque celebrating this early important hospital.

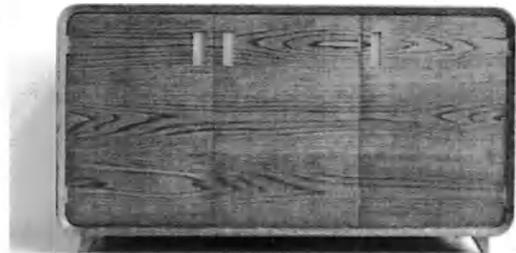


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Brighton- Andrew Keeffe 01273 641894 a.w.b.keeffe@brighton.ac.uk

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“There is nothing of nature in these felines. They're kept by cosseting human masters, pampered to perfect health and then turned loose on the neighbourhood to terrorize poor wildlings who worked so hard to make a nest and brood their young”

Spoken by Mrs Treat, a character in Barbara Kingsolver's new novel, 'Unsheltered', pub 2018

(It's not just birds, slow-worms and frogs suffer as well.)

The Round Hill Reporter is published by the Round Hill Society to keep residents in the area in touch with local news, events and each other. We try to present a fair and balanced view but the opinions expressed in this paper are not necessarily shared by all.

Letters or ideas for articles are welcome – please contact the editor at the address shown above.

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