

Wandsworth

**Pensioners'
Forum**



Registered Charity No. 1096332

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Doreen Brading
Deputy Editor: Philomena Menton
June 2006

FREE

Forum 16th AGM

Wandsworth Pensioners Forum Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday 11th April. It was an experiment to revert to the regular Tuesday for the AGM and it was obviously a success with 62 members in attendance and about a dozen visitors, councillors and prospective councillors and MPs.

The business of Annual Report and the finances were dealt with quickly. The Forum has had a successful year with interesting meetings and representations made to the Council and the Local Strategic Partnership on a number of issues. The newsletter has been produced four times and is sent to all members and to clubs and sheltered housing blocks who have requested it. Funding is available for one more issue but the finances are robust and there will be enough money for the rest of the year.

The Forum officers have been glad to have funds to employ a part-time administrator, Su Elliott. Su will be looking after the membership and assisting at the monthly meetings. She will also be available to visit any groups of older people who would like to find out more about the Forum or would like to pass on some of their concerns about local services to the Forum. Liliias and Su have already attended several groups and will respond to invitations.

After the business four representatives of the political parties spoke about their policies for the Borough. Bruce Mackenzie for the Green Party spoke about energy and the looming shortage of oil and gas. Our way of living will have to change. The Green Party emphasises the need to live harmoniously with each other in Wandsworth and across the world and to work for the sustainability of the planet. He felt council tax was unfair and bore heavily on those least able to pay. Wandsworth Council were proud of their low council tax but there were implications of that

Stuart King for the Labour Party emphasised a cleaner, smarter, fairer and safer Borough. He promised that Labour would reinstate the older people's clubs which had been closed. Estate resident caretakers would be brought back. He knew that many older people with difficulty getting around would like to use Dial-a-Ride

but find it unreliable and difficult to book. Labour would work on that and also accessibility of stations so that older people can use trains even if they cannot manage stairs. There would be activities available for older people at Leisure Centres and in Adult Colleges.

Vanessa Graham on behalf of the Conservative Party said they would have regular meetings with the Forum to ensure they are doing what older people want. They want to enable older people to be independent as long as possible. They would not want age discrimination and she would ensure that OAP was not used by the Council. Careline would have more funds to make its services more comprehensive and more accessible. The Well-being day, recently held, would be repeated. The rehabilitation of Council sheltered housing would be completed so that everyone will have their own bathroom.

Stephanie Dearden for the Liberal Democrat Party said they stood for a safer, fairer, greener Wandsworth. She knew older people wanted day centres. She had been horrified to discover that people had to pay to attend day centres. These should be free. She felt there were too many people who were housebound and lonely. Carers come at different times and are not always willing to do tasks requested. Home care charges had gone up more than pensions. This was not fair.

A number of questions were asked and each of the candidates had a chance to answer. There were some problems raised and the existing councillors promised to look into these and sort out what they can. It was emphasised that not every problem can be sorted out by the Council. The Green Party wanted to see Neighbourhood Councils and local referenda so that people would feel more able to put right themselves some of the local problems. A challenge on the cost of Labour proposals was answered by Stuart King who said it would cost just 20 p on the council tax.

The three MPs, Justine Greening, Sadiq Khan and Martin Linton also spoke briefly on some of the issues they had been involved with.

Liliias Gillies



Committee 2006/7

CHAIRMAN	Tony Tuck	(7622 0485)
VICE-CHAIRMAN	Doreen Brading	(7223 9728)
HON SECRETARY	Lillas Gillies	(8672 5592)

REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANISATIONS:

Battersea Org for retired people	Doreen Brading
Wandsworth Black Elderly	Mabel Headley
Furzedown Project	Roland Kitching
Graveney Day Centre	Natalle Gibson-Wilson
Wandsworth Boro Council	
Labour Group	Cllr.Bhalva Joshi
Asian Women's Assn	Clare Kakembo
Elmwood Court	Carmen Angibault

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Lionel Davis, Cyril Marshall, Phyllis Murray, Philomena Menton, Ted Larkin, Taj Qureshi, Edith Ezekial-Hart, Iris Rafferty, Edna Gray, Wendy Saunders-Jacobs.

MEMBERSHIP OFFICER	Sue Elliott
PRESS OFFICER	Freddie Roth
ENTERTAINMENT OFFICER	VACANT
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Doreen Brading assisted by Philomena Menton, Freddie Roth.
HON ACCOUNTANT	Bill Harper.

Community support organisation gets a grant for 3 years

Last year we reported that the Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network (WCEN) faced closure because its central government funding was to terminate in April this year. At that time, while applications were being made for further grant aided funding, Wandsworth Council, the Government Offices for London and Neighbourhood Renewal Unit were each asked to assist with traditional support. None was forthcoming.

The Forum has been a beneficiary of grants from the WCEN to enable the establishment of the Wandsworth Older Peoples' Network, the funding for conferences and for the funding of Newsletters and other published material. We therefore know the real value of the organisation and its staff.

However we are pleased to report that WCEN will not close.

It has been awarded a grant for 3 years as part of the Connecting Communities Plus Project, which is administered by the Race Equality and Cohesion and Faiths Unit of the Home Office. In addition, other small grants from the PCT and other sources have been secured and major grant applications can now be made.

This is really good news for the communities of Wandsworth and the Forum and the Network look forward to working closely with WCEN in the future, as we have in the past few years.

Necessarily the actual work of the Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network will change, depending on the contracts which it is now able to secure. But its work will be directly involved with local communities and ensuring they have a voice in local decision making. We shall publish further details later in the year once the WCEN relaunches.



A Brief History of The Bolingbroke Hospital

by The Bolingbroke Friends

In the 1870's Canon Erskine Clarke- a popular local vicar. was very much aware that a local hospital was urgently needed. Bolingbroke House, the seat of a Mr William Morris, with it's large grounds lay empty and the Canon raised funds to purchase it for his hospital. In 1880 'Bolingbroke Home - a Home for Sickness' was opened.

Fundraising for the upkeep was essential and many events were organised such as a charity ball at the Royal Albert Hall attended by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII). Local business also gave generous support including Mr. Herbert Arding of Arding and Hobbs, who also sat on the Board of Governors. Prices Candles factory and Sir James and Lady Carmichael (Sir James was the head of a local family firm of builders).

Over the years many changes in the services took place resulting in the need for major building projects to take place in the grounds. In the 1930's the old mansion was demolished and a new and fully equipped hospital was ready to continue providing services to the local community.

In 1948 the National Health Service was introduced and despite the regret of it's patients the Bolingbroke began the changeover. In the same year the Bolingbroke Hospital League of Friends' was officially formed and they have continued working tirelessly ever since for the benefit of the patients and staff of the hospital.

In 1957 a new X-ray Dept. was opened and the old one converted by the 'Friends' into a chapel. Further upgrading of the hospital took place in 1973 and in 1974 the Casualty Dept was closed. In 1980 the in-patients facilities were adapted to the care of the elderly and in 1989 a newly refurbished Out-Patients Dept. was opened which enabled the hospital to cope with a much greater workload.

Sadly in February 2005 the wards and Intermediate Care unit were closed due to fire safety risks but fortunately all other services, including the Day Hospital, were not affected and still continue their much needed work.

In October the Friends of Bolingbroke Hospital organised a special event to celebrate the 125 years of care the Bolingbroke Hospital has given to young and old alike. The hospital has served the local community so well over the years and it's founder would be proud to know that it truly has been to this day 'a home in sickness' and much loved by us all.

Jenny Edwards
Hon. Secretary

Wandsworth Museum

The Courthouse, 11 Garratt Lane, SW18 4AQ

Tel: 020 8871 7074

E-mail: wandsworth_museum@wandsworth.gov.uk

Website: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/museum

Open: Tuesday - Friday, 10-5

Saturday - Sunday, 2-5

Admission FREE

Exhibition:

The Big Blue: The story of Tooting Bec Lido, 1906-2006
17 May - 16 July 2006

When Tooting Bathing Lake opened to the public on 28 July 1906, one VIP said he hoped it would be 'a benefit to the public for a long time to come.' A hundred years later, and thousands of people still flock to Tooting Bec Lido (as it became known in the 1930s) every summer. One of its original purposes was to be a communal bath for the newly arrived residents of the Totterdown Estate. But within a few weeks of the opening, a group of swimmers had got together to form the South London Swimming Club. The club still holds its Sunday morning races at the lido and has played a major part in the long-term survival of this council-owned amenity. Wandsworth Museum is marking this extraordinary double centenary with a special exhibition from 17 May - 16 July.

Talks:

To accompany the exhibition, there will be two talks by Janet Smith, author of *Liquid Assets the lidos and open air swimming pools of Britain*

The Big Blue: The story of Tooting Bec Lido, 1906-2006.
Thursday 8 June at 7.30pm

A talk about lidos in Britain. This will focus on the 1930s, the heyday of the lido and the era of Art Deco architecture.
Saturday 8 July at 3.00pm

Tickets for both talks cost £2.50

To book phone 020 8871 7074

or email museuminfo@wandsworth.gov.uk

It's our Birthday!

In 2006, it will be 20 years since Wandsworth Museum Service was founded and 10 years since the Museum moved from its original home in Putney Library to the Courthouse building in Wandsworth. We will be celebrating our double anniversary on Saturday 17 June with a day of special activities. This is your chance to see our birthday suits!



Summer Fun

This August, the Museum courtyard will once again be transformed into an activity area for our youngest visitors. Under 6s will be able to enjoy informal activities on the theme of animals (tying in with our Animal Magic exhibition). These will complement the workshops held in the Education Room and provide those children who are unable to attend a workshop (demand for places is always high) with an alternative.

Support Services for Older People

The office for the Peabody Trust - Support Services for Older People - has moved from Grayshott Road to the old estate office on the Clapham Junction Estate.

Now known as The Gate House - the telephone number is 020 7021 4340 and the full address is The Gate House, Peabody Estate, Eckstein Road, Battersea SW11 1TY

Contact them for information on Outreach and Transport Support, the St. Johns Hill Activity and Support Centre for frail elders, the Neighbourhood Activity programme of Tai Chi, Chair Based Exercises and Line Dancing as well as volunteering opportunities and details of outings and social activities.

LONDON MARATHON



Derek Harrison son of Lily and Bert Harrison, took part in the London -Marathon to raise funds for the St John's Hill Centre and Battersea Community Support Project.

Derek completed the marathon - with a great time of 3 hours 15 minutes and 30seconds breaking his previous best and ensuring he gets an automatic place in the race for the next 2 years.

Nearly a thousand pounds has been raised for these two centres. Well done and many thanks to Derek Also thank you to all those who contributed to this funding.

Muggins and Muggings in South Africa

Whoosh - three hours to Madrid. Whoosh - ten hours to Johannesburg. Whoosh - two hours to Cape Town. Oh, boy - that glorious January sun!!!

I only go to Cape Province. That's the bit on the West coast with Cape Town at the bottom. 'Cos on the east side of South Africa it can be cloudy. Also can be malarial in parts. Mind you, you don't swim on the West coast unless your 'thing' is being beaten against sharp jagged rocks by ten-foot freezing waves. (Antarctic waters sweep up the west coast while warm Indian Ocean waters and White sharks sweep along the south coast - they literally divide at Cape Point so a few miles up west from the point it can be quite fun swimming among the penguins at Boulder Beach. I tried to touch one but luckily failed. I say 'luckily because I learnt later they pack a nasty peck!)

First things first - get a car. So a couple of days after staying with my partner's cousin (why do you think I partnered her?) I was belting down the 100 miles to Pearly Beach on the south coast to see my friend Yannie, an Afrikaner of my own age who I'm very fond of and is the only democratic racist I know. Next to Pearly Beach they'll take you out in a cage so you can swim safely with White Sharks - so they say, though I've never met anyone who ever came back. As a potential suicide I'll add it to my list of options. It's certainly different!

Then to Clanwilliam, 120 miles from Cape Town up the west coast (albeit some 40 miles inland). It's on the edge of the Cederberg mountains. No sharks here - just baboons. (I'm not sure what they do to you and I'm in no great hurry to find out.) Stayed at a guest house which has a big tree. Apart from sitting drinking beer under the tree (my needs are very modest) I'd walk now and then into the town (one street only) to buy beer and wine, and once to visit the bar in the local hotel. (Other guests visit the local rock native rock paintings but my passion is visiting local hotel bars because outside city centres their hotel bars are the worst in the world - excluding, perhaps, Scotland, Wales, Australia and the USA.) For my first evening meal I ordered the cheapest wine they had - and spent the rest of the holiday trying to work out why South Africans buy the dearer wines when the cheap ones are so good.

Then after two weeks, back to whooshing. Shame.

Oh, yes - the muggings. Well actually there was only one. Around 9.30 at night in Cape Town. Busy main road and lights and people but these guys were desperate. In a relatively dark spot three of them wrestled my shoulder bag off me. Lots of violence - I kept walloping them with my walking-stick. So they pinched my passport, driving license and glasses from me. Still, I suppose one can't grumble too much. After all, we did pinch their country from them.

CARE Information Centre
Line for Wandsworth
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

020 8875 0500

Minicom: 020 8643 8985 Fax: 020 8643 8531

www.careline.org.uk

e-mail: careline@clara.net

Monday to Friday 10am-8pm

Saturday 10am-1pm

The Biggest Coffee Morning

The photograph was taken at the Grosvenor Entrance of St George's Hospital on the last Friday in September 2005 to mark the annual celebration of the Biggest Coffee Morning in the World, one of the main fundraising events for Macmillan Cancer Relief.

I joined the Wandsworth Committee in 1991 (then called Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund). Very sadly, the committee of which I had been the chairperson for ten years, has recently been disbanded because of our inability to attract volunteers to help raise money to assist people suffering from cancer (and similar conditions such as Motor Neurone Disease) and their families.

The charity title has recently been restyled as Macmillan Cancer Support as this is considered to reflect more accurately the role of the organisation.

The Coffee Morning which had the support of Tooting M.P. Sadiq Khan (pictured), Councillor Ayonrinde, and Lib-Dem candidate Stephanie Dearden, together with staff from Macmillan Cancer Support and hospital staff, raised more than £700, and was considered so successful that it is hoped to repeat this event at St George's this year on September 29th.

Anyone interested in setting up a coffee morning of their own to raise funds for Macmillan can apply for an introductory information pack from:

M.C.S. Cambridge House, 4th Floor, Cambridge Grove Hammersmith London W6.



GRAFFITI

The graffiti removal section can be contacted on the numbers given below, they are currently reprinting their leaflet but they aim to be a very responsive service with targets of 24 hours for racists/abusive graffiti, and 3 working days for other forms. However this is subject to receipt of an indemnity for private properties, which may of course extend timescale.

Their contact points are Tel. 8871 7049, Text 07797 805456
www.wandsworth.gov.uk/graffiti

Greater London Forum/AGM

Greater London Forums AGM / Conference was held on the 28th April 2006. The morning session dealt with the business of the meeting, all officers were returned unopposed..

Afternoon Conference, this was chaired by Claire Rayner,

Changing Attitudes to Older People

Lynn Strother gave the introduction to Amanda Waring who had made a film 'What do you see' With Virginia McKenna. This came about after the death of her mother Dorothy Tutin from leukaemia.

The experiences which Amanda had witnessed prompted this initiative, Ammanda paid tribute to all those who contributed to the making of the film but especially Virginia, who was a personal friend of her mother.

The film lasted 10 minutes and showed an elderly patient being looked after but basically ignored by the carers. The thoughts of the patient about her past life and all she had achieved was interspersed with carers talking over her head.

The aim is to have this film shown in care homes and hospitals in the UK and possibly world wide. The hope by Amanda is to make two more follow up films.

The comments of the panel were very favourable and they emphasised the need for patients to be treated as individuals. Penny Banks said the lack of funding had an adverse effect on staff. Proper funding was needed for training and support for those in the front line. Professor Raynes said the film opens doors to care homes which was worth more than any words.

Margaret Hayward who runs a care home in Sheffield and made an expose film for Panorama said it was a moving experience.

There were a number of comments from the panel basically advocating more understanding of people with dementia. Also taking time just to talk and listen to people. Nutrition was also mentioned again - if people leave food find out why.

From the floor - a suggestion that lay Inspections should be restored. Friends and relatives of all patients should meet on a regular basis to discuss any problems patients may have.

There was also a comment from the floor that sheltered housing was being transferred from local authorities to housing associations in the course of the next 18 months.

This session was close by Virginia McKenna who gave an impassioned speech on the treatment of the older person. It was a very moving and succinct oration.

Jean Cordwell

A VISIT FROM JONATHAN ROSE

Jonathan Rose, director of Rose Optical Services, came to our 14th February members' meeting to expand on the information on his firm's services, which were detailed in a previous number of this newsletter.

Rose Optical Services is working through the Greater London Forum for Older People to contact local forums in a process of offering its services to local communities. The firm specialises in providing free eye tests at home for the housebound, targeting the following issues:

- The dramatic increase in the probability of eye problems in people over 60;
- The eligibility for NHS eye testing at home - the government provides for eye testing for housebound people.

One of the major issues is to counter age-related vision deterioration, as central eye cones wear out sooner and the centre of the eye loses vision. Another issue discussed was cataracts, when the lens at the front of the eye becomes clouded, a condition correctable by a simple operation.

Other conditions are diabetic retinopathy is common in diabetics over the age of 65 and should be checked every six months and eye haemorrhaging, causing a massive loss of vision.

Jonathon handed out special spectacles to demonstrate to the audience the effects of sight problems. Based on these, he explained that an optician should be consulted to check what glasses each condition requires, as well as to check for the degenerative conditions simulated by the spectacles. Rose Services allows doing this at people's own homes, and the NHS pays the organisation for its services.

In general, you should have your eyes tested once a year, but if required it can be done as often as necessary. An important point in this context is that vision can be extremely prejudiced by defective glasses, such as a pair with scratched lens' surfaces.

Audrey Lees

a life enjoyed to the full

Earlier this year, in February, the Forum lost one of its staunchest supporters and friends. Audrey Lees was in her 100th year when she died. She had been a regular attender at the Forum's monthly meetings for some years. Latterly she was brought by Wandsworth Community Transport - an organisation that she originally helped to form and of which she was the initial Chair.



What was truly remarkable about Audrey was the energy and engagement that she brought to all that she did. I only knew her in her late 90's but even then, like Tigger, she always bounced !

Listening to those who knew her at her Memorial Service, it was clear that she had a real commitment to improving the lives of others. In practical terms, this was apparent in her continuing support for the Alzheimers Society, which she helped to found in 1982 and through which she became known and loved by many local people. Earlier, during her working career she had been a an almoner for St Thomas' Hospital, a childcare officer in Berkshire, a social worker and an elected member of the London County Council and the Inner London Education Authority. Here in Putney & Wandsworth her long 'retirement' was spent in community work - and in giving, and enabling, and having fun.

Her home hosted many support group meetings for those with dementia and their carers, and support including musical evenings and cultural enjoyment. Her work for the Crossroads respite care service and the Community Transport all helped others to lead fuller and more social lives. She believed passionately in creating circumstances which enabled people to cherish and exercise their own independence.

In her 100th year she continued to „twinkle“. When chairing our monthly Forum meetings I always had to keep a wary eye out for Audrey, for her innate curiosity would often lead her to ask challenging questions. Right to the end, her huge love of life affected all those around her. We shall surely miss her - but certainly remember her for her infectious sense of joy and laughter, and her sprightly wish not only to have fun, but to encourage others to have fun too.



Tony Tuck: Chair WPF

A NEW LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Andrew McConnell, head of the Policy Group of the Local Development Framework of Wandsworth Borough, addressed Wandsworth Pensioners Forum on its 14th March meeting on the new standards for development to replace those adopted in 2003. Normally, the framework would not have to be reviewed so early, but government policy from 2005, with a more descriptive and detailed legislation but essentially moving towards the same ends, requires new guidelines, and the first part of the new framework, its core strategy, will have to be produced by January 2008.

The new guidelines will have to provide for sustainability, mainly in accordance with EU policy. Community strategy must be, to meet government requirements, integrated with planning strategy. The current plan was prepared with public consultation and adopted through committee approval. In the new scenario, the Inspector will decide whether the framework reflects community requirements and government policies and his decision will be binding on the Council. This public examination previously was not required and renders public opinion more critical for the approval procedure, as evidence that the planning included extensive public consultation has to be provided before it is submitted the Secretary of State.

Mr McConnell stressed that the public should respond when consulted - currently its response is somewhat weak, mainly amongst younger people - in order to ensure its requirements will be included in the framework. A paper on preferred options would be submitted in June, then undergoing public referral. All material will be made available on the Internet and in public libraries. Wandsworth currently targets intermediate housing and the Mayor envisages the availability of more affordable social housing and this will probably be scrutinised by the Inspector during the public examination.

A lively session of questions, dealt with lucidly and openly, followed the presentation, covering issues ranging from the closure of local amenities to the process of selection of the Inspector. At point stressed was the appalling state of the facilities at Clapham Junction, compounded by the fact of the station being the busiest in London. Andrew was invited to return later in the year to present developments to the Forum.



NEWSLETTER

Editorial Team

Editor: Doreen Brading
email: doreen.brading@tesco.net
Tel: 020 7223 9728

Deputy Editor: Philomena Menton

Press Officer: Freddie Roth

Correspondence to Hon Secretary

Lilias Gillies, 6 Fircroft Rd,
London SW17 7PS
Tel 020 8672 5592 (and FAX)
e-mail L.Gillies@care4free.net



MEMBERS MEETINGS

All at Anchor Church Centre,
273 Garratt Lane, SW18. 2pm-4pm
Buses 44 and 270 pass the door

Tuesday 13th June

Energy use and sustainability:
Speakers from Warm Front on how to reduce our energy
use and keep warm

Tuesday 11th July

TO BE ARRANGED

No meeting in August

Tuesday 12th September

Denise Haugh on Volunteering Overseas in Retirement

Meetings are held the second Tuesday of
each month (except August)

Wheelchair Access, Loop System,
Refreshments

All are welcome - bring a friend

If you want to join the Wandsworth Pensioners' Forum,
please fill in the subscription form below and return with
your payment to:

Membership Secretary, Wandsworth Pensioners' Forum
25 Linstead Way, London SW18 5QA

I wish to join the Wandsworth Pensioners' Forum.

Individual Membership £5 per year

Name

Address

..... Postcode

Telephone:

Organisation Membership £5 per year

Organisation Title

Contact name

Address

..... Postcode

Telephone:

Cheques payable to 'Wandsworth Pensioners' Forum'

Anchor Church Centre Friday Drop-in for Older People

Coffee and chat followed by lunch

Every Friday from 12 - 1.30pm (except school holidays)

273 Garratt Lane SW18 Cost £2.50

The Forum wishes to acknowledge
with thanks that this issue of the
Newsletter has been funded by
Young's BREWERY



John Young
Chairman of Young's Brewery
with his champion black
Shire Horses