



THE ROYAL CRESCENT SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

www.royalcrescentbath.com

Vol. 2 Issue No. 2

March 2009

**Your attendance is earnestly requested at the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
AT 6.30PM ON SUNDAY 26TH APRIL 2009
at the kind invitation of
THE ROYAL CRESCENT HOTEL
* All residents are cordially invited to attend
to discuss the future of the Society ***

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Chairman's Notes

As usual all residents, whether members of the Society or not, are invited to attend our AGM on 26th April and start or renew their membership. The agenda will be circulated early in April. All attendees may speak, but only members may vote on any issue that requires a decision. This is an annual opportunity to meet your neighbours, express any concerns you may have concerning the Crescent and to raise any relevant issues with our ward councillors, Andy Furse and Carol Paradise.

This year it is particularly important that there is a good attendance, as it will assume the nature of a crisis meeting. Membership numbers remain strong, and the proportion of residents is probably better than for many residents' associations. However over the last few years it has become increasingly difficult to recruit committee members and officers; we still have no Editor, and we now need a Treasurer, as Julie Eyles moved away last year, though she kindly agreed to remain in office to complete the Society's 2008 accounts. This is in stark contrast to the Crescent Lawn Company, which last year had more volunteers as directors than vacancies.

Members will be asked if they wish the Society, founded in 1973, to continue – but assent alone will not be sufficient as the Society cannot function properly without active support in the form of Editor, Treasurer and Committee members. As last year, I am willing to stand down as Chairman, or to continue to serve in that or another position, according to the wishes of the membership.

Allowing the Society to fade away should not be done lightly. While the focus of residents has for some time been on the long-running Ha-ha and Railings project, and Lawn matters are ably handled by the CLC, there have been several times in the past when important issues have been unconnected with the Lawn and this will no doubt be the case at times in the future. The Society also has a useful role to play in fostering community spirit, an important function of any residents' association, by creating opportunities for social gatherings in the form of dinners, outings, etcetera.

Please therefore make every effort to attend and urge your neighbours to do likewise. If you know of any new residents who may not have received this newsletter, or may not receive the AGM agenda because the Society is unaware of their presence here, please let myself or Secretary Martin Prole (no. 2 Royal Crescent) know so that they can be added to our list of residents (which incidentally is used strictly for internal purposes only and never passed on to any other body).

Stephen Little,

Chairman

Rubbish and Re-cycling Collections

Bath and North East Somerset Council is changing the waste collection day for households throughout the district from 8th June 2009. Households will put out refuse, the green recycling box, and cardboard and garden waste on the same day – although the composting service will remain fortnightly.

To increase awareness about the change, the Council has launched a webpage – www.bathnes.gov.uk/wastedaychange –, which is dedicated to explaining the change and also contains a number of Frequently Asked Questions.

Cllr Andy Furse again raised the question of resuming collections from basement areas, but to no avail. However as the Council appears to be gradually recognising the importance to Bath's economy and future well-being of maintaining its heritage and the public realm, every opportunity will continue to be taken to remind them of the damaging effect of littering the pavements with rubbish bags every week.

Crescent Lawn Company Secretary's Update

What a very pleasant change it is to report that, as you will be well aware, work started on the restoration of the Railings and their footings last September. Now the west end through to the double gates has been completed, and a start has been made on the east end. This will continue until the double gates are again reached, when the double

gates will be re-made taking into consideration any small variation in length of the newly completed railings. Towards the end of the railing and footing restoration a start will be made on replacing the tarmac path with pennant stone.

The progress we have achieved is shown vividly in the photographic summary that has been included with this newsletter. And with good weather to follow the recent cold winter spell we should remain on schedule for a later summer completion.

I am sure you will agree with me this is great progress – and we can indeed now see the grand sweep of the railings once again!

By the end of February, we will have paid out over £135,000 in restoration costs and the progress we are making means that we are now committed to spending between £25,000 and £30,000 each month through to the completion of the project.

We do have a £50,000 grant from English Heritage, but this grant cannot be paid until we have completed all of the work. The grant will therefore be used to make the final payments to our contractors, so it befalls all of us to ensure that we can meet the funding and the cash flow needs of the restoration project over the coming months.

Funds are still coming in (and I hope that by the time you are reading this we will be down to the last few thousands of pounds in contributions still outstanding). May I cordially request all of you who have yet to make your contribution to the Railings Restoration to please now do so!

The Restoration Fund is still an estimated £19,000 short of the target we need to cover the costs. Your combined contributions will help to close this gap.

This is a really worthwhile project to support – after all **you** are the main beneficiary of it.

Jenny Hardisty

Secretary of the CLC

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Bath City News

It appears that the Food Festival, also known as the Taste Of Bath, is unlikely to take place this summer. Many Crescent residents have taken advantage of the free tickets distributed in past years, and it remains to be seen whether it is just a temporary victim of the current recession.

The Western Riverside redevelopment is also said to be unlikely to proceed in the timescale originally envisaged. In view of the controversy over tall and unsuitable buildings its plans have caused, many will say that this is no bad thing. Perhaps the delay will allow a solution to the legal minefield that Bath Rugby finds itself in regarding expansion on the Recreation Ground.

The Council has produced, as a consultation draft, a lengthy document explaining its long-term vision for the public realm. This has much to commend it, and is available to download from the B&NES website (broadband recommended!), or can be inspected at the Guildhall, Trimbridge House or the Library. Alternatively the Society has a copy for loan to anyone interested.

Gull grant

As part of the efforts to control the problems caused by gulls, as explained in the last issue, B&NES Council is now making 50% grants towards the cost of preventative measures taken by private property owners. CARA, the Circus Area Residents' Association, is currently taking advantage of this, and has suggested that we should join them. This is a subject that can be explored at our AGM if there is sufficient interest.

UNESCO/ICOMOS 'Mission' to Bath

A joint UNESCO/ICOMOS 'reactive monitoring mission' visited Bath from 5-7th November 2008. The visit was recommended by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in July 2008 in response to major developments proposed in the City. The inspectors were particularly interested in the Western Riverside redevelopment and the (now withdrawn) Dyson School of Technology.

The visit was extremely positive, with the two inspectors undertaking tours of the city and receiving presentations on management of the site and future proposals. They also had an opportunity to meet interested groups and discuss developments with them.

The inspectors left Bath to undertake a similar visit to Edinburgh. Their report was due to be submitted to UNESCO by 15 December 2008, and should be available to the Council in January 2009. ICOMOS inspector Professor Manfred Wedhorm was happy to go on record with the local press saying how impressed he was with the city, and added "A city which lives needs new architecture and new spaces. New buildings and new possibilities are absolutely needed".

The UNESCO website should contain interesting background to the mission.

Car chase

This Chronicle story will have familiar echoes for those who lived here before the western closure:

Royal Crescent car chase drama Monday, February 09, 2009, 13:02

Residents in the Royal Crescent were awoken by a high-speed car chase in the early hours of this morning. Three police cars and a fire engine attended the aftermath of an incident outside the historic landmark at around 1.40am after a car believed to be stolen crashed into a bollard.

The driver had failed to pull over for a police patrol and it was pursued towards the Royal Crescent where it collided with a three-foot high bollard. Later a 25-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of theft of a motor vehicle, failing to stop and an assault on police. The fire crew was called to the scene after reports that the car bonnet was steaming, but it did not catch fire.

A resident at the Crescent said: "I awoke to a lot of commotion going on and when I looked out of the window I saw the car wedged between the bollard and the railings. "I thought it was a car racing up and down Marlborough Buildings but then I heard the police car. This

morning there was still visible damage and the bollard has been snapped in half."

Police are still investigating the incident and are urging anyone with information to contact them on 0845 456 7000 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

New Lamps for Old – The Crescent Enhanced

In mid-December last year, the Southern Electric Company (SEC) replaced the street lamps which have disfigured the Crescent for decades with a more appropriate design, as it had already done in other heritage streets in the city. Here, they also replaced the whole of the curved suspension arm and in so doing provided an extra curlicue to the arm's already elegant design.

Each post was also completely re-wired. The entire operation was very fast and the Crescent's five lamps were finished in about half a day.



Festive Dinner 2009

This year's Festive Dinner was held in Woods Restaurant in Alfred Street.

Although a less grand and more intimate occasion than when held in the Royal Crescent Hotel, it was an enjoyable evening nevertheless. It had been felt unlikely that there would have been sufficient support for the traditional event in the Hotel at prevailing prices, but the possibility of a similar summer event in the Hotel will be examined, and if well supported, that will encourage a return to the usual format next January.

Our thanks are due to Julie Eyles for her efforts in organising the evening. As Julie has now left the Crescent, we now need volunteers to help with future social events.

Forthcoming Events

RVP/Middle Common – Rogers Fun Fair Thurs 2 – Sat 18 April

Contact: Stephen Rawlings. Tel: 07831 117193

RVP - Bath Spring Flower Show Sat 2, Sun 3, Mon 4 May - 10am to 5.30pm

Contact: Sarah Giovannini, B&NES Council Tel: 01225 394041

www.bathnes.gov.uk/bathspringflowershow

Summer Band Concerts programme from May to September in Parade Gardens and RVP – programme, available from mid-April, contact B&NES Council, Parks and Green Spaces. Tel: 01225 396386/394041

Queen Square – Brunomart Continental Market Fri 22 - Mon 25 May – 9am-7pm

Contact: Bruno Giradeau Tel: 01737 832718

RVP, Botanical Gardens – The Lord Chamberlain's Men 'Twelfth Night' Fri 29 May 7.30pm Sat 30 May – 3.00pm and 7.30pm

Tickets available from: Bath Festivals' Box Office 01225 463362

www.tlcm.co.uk

Queen Square – Bath Boules Tournament Sat 20 and Sun 21 June

Contact: Simon Harrison. Tel: 01225 329494

RVP, Botanical Gardens – Shakespeare in the Park 'The Taming of the Shrew' - Rondo Theatre Co. Wed 15 to Sat 18 June – 7.00pm

Contact: Will Edwards Tel. 01225 310105

Queen Square – Continental Market Friday 28 - Monday 31 Aug –
9.00am-7.00pm

Contact: Bruno Girardeau. Tel: 01737 832718.

Queen Square – Jane Austen Festival Sat 19 Sept 10.00am – 6.00pm

** The Newsletter is published by the Royal Crescent Society, 22 Royal Crescent, Bath, BA1 2LT and is sent to all residents. Communications proposed for inclusion in a future issue, or commenting on matters reported, are welcome and should be submitted to altcar@btinternet.com, to Stephen Little at 22 Royal Crescent, Bath, BA1 2LT, or to Martin Prole, 2 Royal Crescent, Bath, BA1 2LR.*

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