

# **Sopwell Residents Association**

## **Annual report 2013/14**

### **Committee structure and changes**

Ananda Armstrong-King left the committee last summer but we were fortunate to gain Ros Poor. There were no other changes. However, we can still do with some more help. So please come forward to join us if you are able.

The following people have put themselves forward for election/re-election: Barry Bateman, Jack Hill, Willem Hofland, Mark James, Sandy Norman, Ros Poor, Rob Sharman, Adelle Stapleton, Dom Tang, Jennifer Taylor, Rick Taylor and Peter Wares.

The following wish to be re-elected as officers: Rick Taylor as Chair, Dom Tang as Treasurer, and Jennifer Taylor as Minutes Secretary. We still need an Admin Secretary. *I am still in the Acting role.* I would really like to shed this job and concentrate wholly on the More Memories Project. Please come forward if you are interested.

### **Activities and events**

#### **Sopwell Memories Project**

As part of the Sopwell Memories project, Sandy Norman has been writing a monthly blog post so all news about the project progress will be found on [blog.sopwellmemories.org.uk](http://blog.sopwellmemories.org.uk).

The project is progressing well. We have a very good relationship with the University of Herts and they have been most helpful over the past year in organising workshops and lending us equipment for presentations.

We took a stall at the German style Xmas market in the morning of 7<sup>th</sup> December to showcase the project and sell the Sopwell history book. This was very successful.

Sandy Norman has given several presentations to local groups about the project.

Many more people have been interviewed about their memories. These interviews have been transcribed and edited and uploaded on to the website. To date over 100 posts have been uploaded to the website.

The website is now ready thanks to our developer Christoph Lutz and to the sterling work done by Peter Segers. It can be accessed now at <http://www.sopwellmemories.org.uk>. Please let us know what you think of it.

The project finishes at the end of August where we will formally launch the website. We have booked a room in the St Albans museum for the whole of August to showcase the project. We hope to see many of you there.

### **Cedar tree**

We decided to look into the history of the cedar tree in St Stephen's green space to ascertain its age and invited a representative of the Tree Register to help us. See item in Spring 2014 newsletter.

### **Gasworks site**

Several members of the SRA were present when the gas holders were being demolished. See item in Spring 2014 newsletter.

### **Autumn walk**

Our annual history walk took place on 15th September with Councillor Eileen Harris leading. The theme was local industry, mainly watercress growing and hatting. Everyone found it interesting and informative. Thank you Eileen!

### **Litter pick**

We had our annual litter pick on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Thank you to all those who helped pick several bags of litter and recyclables.

### **Willow tunnel**

The willow tunnel in the Nunnery Green Space is looking good and the children love it. The council wants us to be responsible for the tying up and training of the new shoots every year as it is expensive to hire Hazel Godfrey on an annual basis. A few of us were to be given training by Hazel on our responsibilities in the early part of the year but because of the flooding, this was postponed until recently. Please let us know if you would like to be part of this team.

### **Bulb planting**

Last November, a few hardy souls went out to plant daffodils in the area on the bridge in Cottonmill Lane on the other side of the road to the entrance to the level crossing – and the flowers all came up and gave a good display. Thank you to our green-fingered team.

### **Conferences and meetings**

- Adelle Stapleton was invited by St Albans and District Council to attend the annual Green Flag Award ceremony to receive the Green Flag for the Nunnery Open Space.
- Rick Taylor attended two meetings of the Combined Group of Residents Associations.
- Sopwell Residents Association was one of the organisations first co-opted on to the new City and Neighbourhoods Committee of St Albans City and District Council. Rick Taylor attended the meetings of this committee.
- Sandy Norman attended the Eid festival in August
- Sandy Norman and Barry Bateman attended the St Albans Local History Conference on 26<sup>th</sup> October. Barry Bateman spoke about the Arc and Arc WW1 project.
- Rick Taylor attended the St Albans and District Strategic Partnerships Conference.
- Willem Hofland and Sandy Norman attended a thank you party for volunteer groups last December at the House of Commons hosted by Anne Main MP

**Communications** We have produced three newsletters in the past year and held two open residents' meetings. Thank you to our happy band of newsletter deliverers. The website [www.sopwell.org.uk](http://www.sopwell.org.uk) is managed and updated regularly thanks to Peter Segers.

Sandy Norman  
May 2014