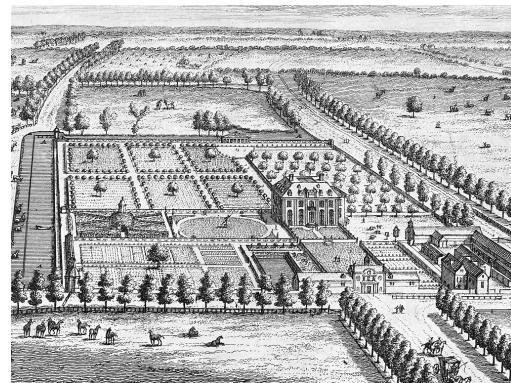


FROM GRAND ESTATE TO MADHOUSE

The land on which the 1970's blocks of the De Beauvoir Estate stand had a chequered history from the 16th to 19th centuries: from rural fields to formal splendour, and from the grand to the very grim.

It appears in various histories because it was the site of a large house, known first as Balmes (or Baumes) House, and in a later rebuild as Whitmore House. The house stood somewhere near the junction of De Beauvoir Road and De Beauvoir Crescent.

In 1305 there was an unnamed house and mill there, but the grander Balmes House was built about 1540. It may have been named after two brothers who were Spanish merchants (the name Balmes is associated with Barcelona), although according to the



Balmes House

National Archives website, the name Balmes may come from Adam Bamme (d.1397), mayor of London, who owned very large estates.

In the 16th and 17th centuries the land around was used by the Company of Finsbury Archers for longbow practice, and was laid out with 164 of their archers' marks. (Rather than shooting at targets, longbow archers aimed at a variety of known marks laid out at different distances, in order to develop their eye for length of shot). Each mark had a name, and one became known as "Pitfield's Repentance": a local cowman of that name had "defaced" it, and was forced by the Artillery Company to replace it. His name now survives in that of Pitfield Street.

By 1593 the estate was rented to William Whitmore, a London haberdasher. It was then

bought for a younger son, Sir George Whitmore, who was the Lord Mayor of London in 1631 and who rebuilt the house. "Noticed as a memorable show place in French and German works on architecture and gardening", it was surrounded by a moat with drawbridges, and was said to have beautiful gardens "watered by streams from Canonbury fields".

The De Beauvoir family bought the estate in 1680.

Less than 100 years later, the house found a very different use. By 1756 it was being used as an asylum for the insane by the physician Meyer Schomberg, then passing to Thomas Warburton. Warburton was unqualified, but had good contacts, supplying keepers for George III in 1788, and he reserved Whitmore House for rich patients.

These included Henry Addington, son of the former prime minister who lodged separately in the grounds, and John Murray, marquess of Tullibardine and later Duke of Atholl.

Conditions were fiercely attacked in the 1820s as brutal and degrading, and descriptions by inmates are ghastly. The asylum passed to Thomas's son Dr. John Warburton and was finally closed in the mid 19th century. Whitmore House was demolished about 1852, as development in De Beauvoir expanded.

The history of the houses is commemorated in the names of Balmes Road (on the De Beauvoir Estate) and Whitmore Road, the continuation of De Beauvoir Road south of the canal. And perhaps, it is said, in the term "barmy".

Kirsty Norman

DBA



Newsletter / June 2014

Sponsored by the Party in the Park

PARTY TIME AGAIN

OUR TENTH annual Party in the Park takes place on Saturday 5 July from 2-5pm and the big change this year is a carnival parade around De Beauvoir Square with locally-based group Tropical Isles from 1.30 to 2pm - so come early.

As usual the party provides lots of fun for all the family including children's attractions which are all free of charge. As in past years we will have a bouncy castle, three face painters (please take a queue ticket) and a stall giving a free book to each child (while stocks last). Magician Chris Nicholson is back too.

Cakes – generously baked and donated by local people – will be on sale as will modestly priced Pimm's for the adults, tea, juice and lemonade.

Personal fitness will be a highlight, with a football kickabout, traditional sports and hula-hooping.

A tombola and raffle will help raise funds to pay for it all. The raffle includes great prizes donated by local businesses,
Continued on page 3

CARNIVAL PARADE 1.30 PM BY TROPICAL ISLES

DE BEAUVOIR SQUARE

PARTY IN THE PARK SAT. 5 JULY 2014 2–5 PM : PARTY TIME

FREE ENTERTAINMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FUN FOR ADULTS TOO!

Brass band / Football kickabout Face painting / Bouncy castle Books & toys for children Arts & craft activities / Crazy golf Hula-hooping / Story tellers

Egg & spoon races / 3 legged races / Sack races / Yoga Magician / Raffle / Tombola PIMMS / TEA / CAKES / ICE CREAM

De Beauvoir ASSOCIATION

THE BENYON ESTATE

TROPICAL ISLES

Bringing up Girls: Melissa Benn and Neil Ashman

Tuesday July 15th at 8pm (doors 7.30pm)

Melissa Benn, journalist, daughter of Tony Benn, and author of *What should we tell our daughters? The Pleasures and Pressures of Growing Up Female* and Neil Ashman, De Beauvoir resident and father of three girls, will discuss the pressures on girls and young women today and how we as adults/parents can respond.

The De Beauvoir Association is proud to organise this special event, which will be held in the St Peter's Crypt Cafe. There will be a bar from 7.30pm. Admission will be free, though donations towards the cost of room hire will be welcome.



AROUND THE TOWN

THE ROSEMARY BRANCH

2 Shepperton Road, N1 3DT
www.rosemarybranch.co.uk
Tel: 020 7704 6665 24-hour box office.

Casual Encounters and Manger a Trois - 17-21 June

Twelfth Night - 24-28 June

The Frida Kahlo of Penge West - 1-13 July

There's a Monster in the Lake - 14-19 July

Honey B Mama (Cleo Sylvestre sings blues and boogie) 11 July 9pm

DE BEAUVOIR GARDENERS

www.debeauvoirgardeners.org.uk
The club meets in the crypt of St. Peter's Church on the first Tuesday of the month at 8pm.

22 June - Coach Trip to Spencers Garden, Snares

BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

Many thanks to all the local chefs who generously provided tasty food for the first De Beauvoir Neighbourhood Feast and to everyone who made the night such fun. Around 100 people sampled food from Latin America and USA, Western and Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, Asia, Australia and Britain. Many who took part were new to De Beauvoir and now feel much better connected, including one lady fresh off the plane that very day from Korea.

The DBA organised the event along with St Peter's Community Partnership.

My hearty thanks to all the chefs, but especially to Juliette, of Kenya via Southgate Road. She saw a poster, volunteered, door knocked much of De Beauvoir promoting it, sourced and cooked a great beef stew, to feed all attending and quite possibly half of Hackney besides! Jorge carved and served his wife's Filippino Patotin Duck and did whatever needed doing, with such quiet charming efficiency. Joanna provided wonderful Welsh



Hill Cottage, Langthorne's Plantery.

1 July local garden walkabout

THE SCOLT HEAD

107A Culford Road
Every Monday 8:00 pm: pub quiz
Jazz with Peter Werth - 26 June 8 pm

GROOVE BABY

St Peter's Church; music for all the family
groovebaby.co.uk for dates

THE PROUD ARCHIVIST

2-10 Hertford Road
Every Tuesday 8:00 pm quiz
World Cup football
Many other events - <http://www.theproudarchivist.co.uk/whats-on/>

desserts and her husband's beautiful Basque savouries, then chopped an acre of onions and cabbage with cheerful enthusiasm. Nancy also chopped and prepped her heart out, sourced wine, crockery and set it all up. Queensbridge Primary School very kindly lent and transported the magnificent food warmers for free. Thank you all.

Many people are now asking, "Where can I get the recipe for that delicious dish with the"?

If you are happy to share your recipe, please email me at Samantha.Selmes@gmail.com

Briefly say why the dish is special to you and include your contact details, if you are happy to field questions as people trial your recipe at home. e.g.

"I'm not Italian, but the Selmes bolognese pasta sauce is a family favourite. You can smuggle lots of vegetables in this sauce for the pickiest young eaters. Its hearty rich flavour improves as left overs. If there ever are any....

Samantha Selmes

DBA

PROUD NEIGHBOUR

It may be one of De Beauvoir's newest cultural event and café spaces – but the man behind The Proud Archivist is anything but new to the neighbourhood.

Hector Proud arrived here as a student in 1989, living on Englefield Road, though spending most of his time in Islington. It was a different story when he returned to De Beauvoir ten years ago.

"It's been a love affair ever since," laughs Hector, whose elder brother is Alex Proud, owner of the art and music venue, Proud Camden.

"De Beauvoir has all the reasons people cite for moving to a country village," Hector explains. "They want to get to know the local shop, the local pub, the vicar, postman, milkman and so on. I realised within six months that I knew all those people. There's something magical about this place."

Prior to opening The Proud Archivist in November 2013, Hector's career was spent mainly in marketing and PR and running his own consultancy, Idea

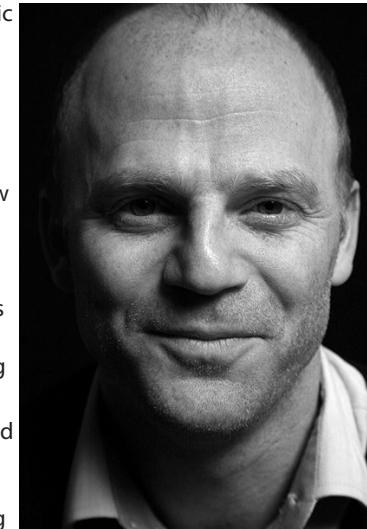
Generation, from 1998 to 2012. In 2008, after many years doing PR for art galleries, he also decided to open his own in Shoreditch.

"At Idea Generation Gallery, we did everything from photography to design and art exhibitions, but our signature became the events we did around them. So, even though we were on a back street, we became very well known."

Success brought consequences, however, his landlord doubling the gallery's rent in 2012. "It was a horrible time but, looking back now, it's probably the best thing that ever happened," says Hector.

Forced to look further afield for a new space, he happened upon his current location on the Regent's Canal in De Beauvoir. A building site at the time, the unique setting, coupled with the fact it came with a food and restaurant licence, made him reconsider opening just a gallery.

He decided to launch The Proud Archivist as a gallery/bar/restaurant/café/event space where both fun and serious things could happen side by side.



Hector Proud

"There is a wonderful exhibition programme, 800 sq ft of library, the longest light wall in London, and a broad range of events designed to bring in the broadest range of people," sums up Hector. This includes everything from weekly yoga classes to in-depth topical discussions, quiz and sports nights to book clubs and child-centric activities – not to mention a changing breakfast, lunch and dinner menu.

"I've organised hundreds of events, so know that side of things. But managing a venue is not quite the same," he admits. "There's been a huge amount of learning."

Come summer, Hector says he'll be a dab hand, and back to splitting his time more equally between The Proud Archivist and his cultural and creative enterprise, Cult.Brand, launched in 2012.

With both his businesses located in the same building, and living just a few streets away, Hector will never be far from De Beauvoir, though. "I love this area. There's a permanence that you don't get in many other parts of London. It attracts people to live here long term, and that's special."

www.theproudarchivist.co.uk/whats-on

Barbara Walshe

DBA

CENSUS REVEALS DIVERSITY

We have been crunching the numbers from the 2011 census to show the profile of De Beauvoir. To do this we have found the data for the area bounded by the Regent's canal, Kingsland Road, Balls Pond Road and Southgate Road.

They show that the area had a population of 9,122 living in 4,053 homes. Of the population, 63 per cent were born in the UK; among the most important other places of birth were Turkey (288), Nigeria (224), Australia (173), Ireland (168), Germany (131), USA (113) and France (110).

The figures show that 7,772 of the popula-

tion were aged over 16. Of these, 1,726 were married or in a civil partnership, 1,297 (yes, an odd number) were cohabiting and 3,747 said they were single. (Separated, divorced and widowed are recorded separately.)

The area used is not precisely De Beauvoir because the Office for National Statistics output areas straddle the canal.

Unfortunately, the figures don't allow direct comparisons with the previous census in 2001. However, for the old boundaries of De Beauvoir ward, the population had risen from 9,928 in 2001 to 13,643 in 2011.

THE SAGA OF THE TWIGS

One of the more bizarre items to sell on eBay recently was a set of twigs gathered in De Beauvoir Square. A buyer paid £62 for the items whose description referred to local property prices. The seller, calling herself whackychop, was not identified further.

The items came with detailed dimensions as well as a note on one: "WARNING! this one is thorny."

The original offering has prompted a number of copycat sales on the auction website. One set of six twigs raised £10.50.



Those twigs (Picture: eBay)

FROM THE ARCHIVES - STARVATION

It is hard to imagine it, but a cutting from The Times of 1862 reveals a very different picture of the area from that we know today.

It is the story of a family who lived in one of the houses since demolished on the east side of De Beauvoir Square, no 45. An inquest into the death of one of the 12 children, Macaulay Josiah Brewer, aged 12, found that he starved to death after a small private school run by his parents failed and all their furniture and possessions were seized by bailiffs.

Several hundred people crowded outside the Waggon & Horses pub in Hertford Road, which stood near the site of the present Boris Ltd

building, where the inquest took place.

"Dr Kitchen said he was called in when deceased was dying. Death resulted from water being effused on the lungs, from the effects of want of food and exposure ... The family were miserably poor and were on that account unable to call in a medical man in time to save deceased's life," the paper reported.

The coroner's officer said he found the family "without so much as a chair or stool to sit upon" and the boy "on the floor dead with the bones almost coming through the skin".

The coroner, the jury and the vicar of St Peters collected £4 13s for the family. DBA

MEET YOUR NEW COUNCILLORS

In local elections last month, two new councillors were elected to represent De Beauvoir, both for Labour. Laura Bunt and James Peters replace the three former councillors, none of whom stood for re-election. A boundary change made the ward smaller.

We asked Laura and James to introduce themselves:

Laura Bunt

Laura has lived in Hackney since she moved to London eight years ago. Hackney and De Beauvoir have changed significantly in that time, and Laura's priorities as a Councillor are to ensure that Hackney's development, creativity and growth brings opportunities for everyone.

Laura currently leads a policy research team on citizenship and social justice at a major national charity, and has previously led research and practical programmes to improve local public services, health and social care at the innovation charity Nesta.

Her goals as Councillor in De Beauvoir are to challenge inequality, raising the quality and affordability of housing, promoting local public health services and improving support



James Peters and Laura Bunt

for young people and families. Laura wants to work closely with residents to bridge interactions with the council and take forward our communities concerns and ideas.

James Peters

James is a lawyer and a governor of a Hackney school for children with severe learning difficulties. He moved to De Beauvoir at the beginning of 2012, before which he had spent much of the previous decade studying and working on continental Europe.

He stood for a seat on Hackney Council representing De Beauvoir because he wanted to become more involved in the community around him and to help his neighbours by contributing to the good functioning of Hackney's local government.

James' priorities, as a councillor over the next four years, are to support the Council in providing the high quality public services to the people of Hackney that it has done for the past 12 years under Labour control, to work to safeguard vulnerable citizens in the face of savage Central Government cuts, and to be of assistance to De Beauvoir residents in their interaction with the Council and other public and private bodies.

DBA

PARTY IN THE PARK

Continued from p1

including restaurant meals, and we thank them for their generosity.

It's a chance for everyone in De Beauvoir to enjoy an afternoon of fun and get to know each other. Tell your neighbours and come along together.

We expect a fire engine will be there and children will be able to get up close; St John Ambulance will demonstrate first aid and police officers and CSOs from the De Beauvoir Safer Neighbourhood Team will be on hand to

get to know everyone. Fingers crossed - one or two police horses will come too.

Musicians from the fabulous RCM Majestic Brass band (who played at the party last year) will be back and delivering lots of favourite brass tunes.

It has all taken months of organisation by a team of local people and we have been generously supported again this year by the Benyon Estate. If it is sunny, don't forget your hat and sun cream.

DBA

FOCUS ON DESIGN

When Marion Deuchars and her cohort of artist, illustrator and graphic designer colleagues moved into 100 De Beauvoir Road Studios in 2000, they thought they'd be moving on soon.

It was their fourth studio space – having moved in the 1990s from Hoxton Square to Curtain Road in Shoreditch, then on to Clerkenwell before settling in De Beauvoir. "I remember thinking, if we're moving here, other artists must be too, so we don't have long," says Marion, who hails from Scotland but has lived in London for more than 20 years. De Beauvoir turned out to be different. With none of her fellow artists acquainted with the area, Deuchars remembers how residential it felt compared to previous studios, how they struggled to get lunch venues, and how clients simply couldn't find them.

Illustrator Jason Godfrey, a resident of the studio since 2001, laughs: "You'd either have to say you were in Dalston or people didn't know where you were. So we'd tell them to get a tube to Old Street and a cab from there."

Fast-forward 14 years, and many things have changed. None of their clients, from The Guardian newspaper to literary agents,

struggle to find De Beauvoir, thanks to its growing popularity and the arrival of the London Overground. There's also a plethora of lunch options, with Marion laughing: "I spend half my wages at De Beauvoir Deli!"

Meanwhile, creatives now throng De Beauvoir Road and the surrounding area – from artist Belle Robinson on the De Beauvoir Estate to fashion designers Robert Wun and Michael Van Der Ham down the road at number 90.

The biggest surprise for Marion and her colleagues, however, is that they're still here – and will be for another next five years at least. In an industry where office locations, technological requirements and types of clients change constantly, this is unique.

"It's a well documented thing," says artist Ian Wright, also a studio resident since the beginning. "We move to cheaper areas and then have to move to somewhere further out and more affordable. But it's not been the case here. Like Arthur's Café on Kingsland, which has been around since 1935, and where we eat lunch often, we're still knocking about!"

Occupying the top floor of the building, and joined by architects, photographers, art administrators and animators today, Jason Godfrey says they've created 'a homely, family atmosphere here' and would love to stay long-term.

"We're at the top of our building's three floors and have seen amazing sunsets from our windows because De Beauvoir is so low-rise," says Deuchars. "It's a secret space, a gem in the middle of neighbouring areas, and a haven of young energy."

Illustrator Jason Ford, a studio resident since 2000, agrees. "It's a special, almost Victorian bucolic neighbourhood here - a pocket that

Marion Deuchars



exists in its own world. It would be nice to stay."

...

MEANWHILE, down the street at 90 De Beauvoir Road, fashion designer Robert Wun knew the studio space there was perfect for him. Graduating from London College of Fashion in 2012, and boasting clients such as Lady Gaga, his business moved in last August. "I always really liked the mood and vibe of De Beauvoir, and a lot of my peers and interns work in this area."

Now sitting amongst music labels, a

ceramicist, hair stylist, shoe and fashion designers, he says the secret of De Beauvoir's artistic pull is 'its eclectic mix'. "You're surrounded by creatives from all different industries and that really appeals."

Barbara Walshe

DBA



Jason Ford

Jason Ford and the DBA bag

Working in De Beauvoir since 2000, and passing St Peter's Church thousands of times, illustrator Jason Ford was sure he had the right image in his head when it came to designing the latest DBA tote bag. Yet it was only after a quick Google search, and walk around the corner from his office to double check, that he realised: "I had the church spires completely wrong!"

Also featuring a bird – a trademark of his De Beauvoir depictions – Jason laughs off his inspiration: "I'm not a bird spotter by any stretch! But it's a special neighbourhood here, and birds are a constant presence. "It helps having roads closed off to traffic. Whenever I'm walking through, I kind of slow down, look around and hear the birdsong. Add the church, with its fantastic new crypt facility, the trees and leaves, and they're at the heart of this great little community."

The canvas tote with Jason Ford's exclusive design for the DBA goes on sale at the Party in the Park on 5 July for £5, and follows on from last year's hit 'I ❤ De Beauvoir' bag.

The Super Book for Superheroes by Jason Ford is available at bookshops and online



The design; the canvas bags are colour printed in Hackney