



OPEN
SCHOOL
EAST

This September, a new free art school and communal space opens in the old Rose Lipman Library. Emphasizing cooperation and experimentation, Open School East will develop as a site for artistic learning and for social, cultural and practical exchanges.

Thanks to the support of the Barbican and Create London, Open School East provides a studio-based study programme for 13 associate artists, a shared activity space open to neighbourhood groups and organisations, and a public events programme.

SUNDAY 20 OCTOBER

2-6PM

Community Hall, Rose Lipman Building

Open Day

Meet the associates and get involved in different artistic projects, or come and talk to us about cultural or educational events and activities you'd like to run at the Rose Lipman Building.

Join us for food, music, drinks and presentations.

Open to all ages.

OPPORTUNITY

Force Majeure, a London choral project, is looking for new members with an interest in performance, singing and creative collaboration.

We will be holding weekly rehearsals on Monday evenings. People with all levels of experience are welcome!

To join or find out more information, please contact

Mary Cork: marycork@yahoo.com

07872 629 539

www.openschooleast.org | info@openschooleast.org

Open School East is commissioned by

barbican



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Produced by the De Beauvoir Association
info@debeauvoir.org.uk

Printed by Hanway Print Centre
www.hanwayprint.com



Newsletter / October 2013

Sponsored by Open School East

EVENTS

The Visual Arts in De Beauvoir



Three De Beauvoir artists will talk about their work, what part living in De Beauvoir plays, and how they see the arts developing in this area.

Sophie Dickens (sculptor), Belle Robinson (painter) and Jason Ford (illustrator)

This will follow the DBA's short annual general meeting, where we will discuss what we in De Beauvoir might do over the next year, and elect the committee. All welcome. If you would like to stand for the committee, please contact info@debeauvoir.org.uk

Tuesday 15 October at 7.30pm at St Peter's Crypt, De Beauvoir Road.

Free; no booking necessary. Bar available throughout.



Rêverie



The life and loves of Claude Debussy

Pianist Lucy Parham | Actor Robert Glenister

A biographical programme of the composer's words and music compiled and scripted by Lucy Parham

Tuesday 12 November, 7.30pm

St Peter's Church, Northchurch Terrace, N1 4DA

Bar

Tickets £15/£10 via www.debeauvoir.org.uk

or tel 020 7684 5811



DBA Christmas Fair



Christmas shopping? Do we hear you groan?

Yes, summer is officially over and it's time to think about prezzies for family and friends.

Whether you're a local craftsperson or a dedicated shopper, you'll love the DBA's Christmas Fair.

As usual, there will be an array of gorgeous exclusive goodies from foodie treats, to knits, children's toys and clothes, flowers and household goods, and everything in between.

Put the date in your diary now: **Saturday 7 December 2013, 11am – 7pm**: Crypt of St Peter's Church

Entry: £1 on the door;

Email info@debeauvoir.org.uk for stalls

AROUND THE TOWN

THE ROSEMARY BRANCH

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

Puppet Opera Triple Bill - until 13 October

The Merry Wives of Windsor - 15 October

Yellow Pears - 16/17 October

Armstrong & Bunyan - 20 October

Night After Night - 24/25 October

DE BEAUVOIR GARDENERS

www.debeauvoirdenardeners.org.uk
The club meets in the crypt of St. Peter's Church on the first Tuesday of the month at 8pm.
Annual subscriptions: Single £20; Couple £30;

Concessions £10 and £15

1 October - Talk by Mike Jackson of Camden Garden Centre

5 November - Chris Collins author of *Grow Your Own for Kids*

THE SCOLT HEAD

107A Culford Road
Every Monday 8:00 pm: pub quiz
10 October Honey B Mama
17 October- Jazz with Peter Werth

GROOVE BABY

St Peter's Church; music for all the family
11 October; 1030-1145
Tori Handsley Duo/Trio

MILLIE SWIMS THE CHANNEL

De Beauvoir's Millie Elson was part of a six-girl team, all aged 13, that swam the English Channel in relay on 1 September. They completed the gruelling test in 13 hours, 6 minutes and 19 seconds and are amongst the youngest to achieve the feat. Millie is the youngest deaf person to have ever done it. The girls, four of whom have just started year 9, are raising money for their school, Camden School for Girls, for new science labs and IT equipment.

Mum Clare Elson said: "I am so proud of the whole team and of course especially of Millie. They have all shown such incredible strength both physically and emotionally throughout their gruelling training sessions as well

as during the actual swim and we are all in awe of them. The wonderful thing is, they don't realise quite what they've achieved - as a result they've inspired two girls swimming teams (one in Dubai) to train for a Channel swim next year. How's that for

Girl Power!"

The team set off just before dawn, with no wetsuits in water around 16°C with just their sheer determination and the power of their own strength to reach France.

They swam in one-hour slots.

If you want to donate, it's not too late. Go to <http://www.justgiving.com/teams/6Girls0Buoy>

They had recently notched up £17,891.94 of their £25,000 target.

Paul Bolding

DBA



Millie (holding cake) and fellow members of the team celebrate their swim (Photo: Clare Elson)

SMOKIN' HOT

What's in a name? For feted chef and food writer Mark Hix, it can be something special.

His move to De Beauvoir eight years ago may have been about value for money and finding a peaceful haven, but it was also about the name.

"I lived in Great Eastern Street (Shoreditch) for about ten years previously and it was getting pretty noisy at night," he says of his decision to move to Buckingham Road. "I always liked the buildings in De Beauvoir, the houses were good value compared to west London, most had gardens, and the name was very attractive."

In fact, it's a name he's made famous in recent years - especially in foodie circles. Because, after 17 years as chef director of Caprice Holdings, which includes The Ivy, De Beauvoir appeared on the menu of his first restaurant in 2008 and has remained there ever since.

It's a story that started in his garden shed. "When I opened Hix Oyster & Chop House in London's Smithfield five and a half years ago, I wanted to do something unique on the menu, and had just bought myself a Bradley smoker." Playing around with it at home, he explains: "My first experiment with apple and wood worked, and I ended up smoking my own salmon in the garden for

the restaurant."

Today, his De Beauvoir smoked salmon is on the menu at all his establishments - including the Dorset-based Hix Oyster & Fish House in Lyme Regis, and London's Tramshed, Hix Soho, Hix Mayfair, and Hix Selfridges.



Mark Hix photo by Jason Lowe

Although Mark decided to leave De Beauvoir recently, one of his top priorities was finding the right home for his smoked salmon - a process that takes ten hours and he insists is 'very simple indeed'.

Today, that home is the roof of Selfridges, but it continues to be called De Beauvoir smoked salmon, and it is now also sold in Selfridges' food hall.

Salmon aside, he continues to have fond memories of the area. "I loved De Beauvoir and had a great bunch of very social neighbours."

He also discovered a great bunch of ingredients to work with here. "I quite liked foraging different varieties of crab apples from the trees in the streets," he confides, "and picking the tree

strawberries (arbutus) from the neighbours' trees across the road!"

Mark Hix's latest cookbook, *The Collection*, is out in October 2013

Barbara Walsh

DBA

HACKNEY DEBATE THEME IS SOCIAL MEDIA

The 5th Hackney Debate, chaired once more by George Alagiah, will take place in St Peter's Church, De Beauvoir Road on Friday 29th November at 7.30pm. The subject will be "Social Media—Blessing or Curse?". There will be a pay-bar but entry is free. Everyone is warmly invited to come and listen, and to participate if they have experiences to share and debate.

Past themes in the annual series have ranged from food security to foreign aid and all have been well attended. Hackney resident George Alagiah, the face of BBC TV's *Six O'Clock News*, introduces the theme and chairs the discussion with opportunities for people to express their views from the floor. Other speakers this year had yet to be finalised as this newsletter went to press. The debate is organised by St Peter's Community Partnership.

PICTURE MYSTERY

Do you know anything about this picture? The caption says "De Beauvoir Sports and Social Club. Clapton and District League Champions 1935." The ball being held in the back row is inscribed "Culford FC Champions 1933-4". Presumably the sport was football but it doesn't say. The picture was acquired recently on eBay but came with no other information.

Please phone 020 7684 5811 and ask for Kirsty or email info@debeauvoir.org.uk if you can help.



De Beauvoir Sports & Social Club. Clapton & District League Champions. 1935.

MEET RICH, THE NEW CURATE

Hello. I am Richard Springer, the new curate at St Peter's Church, where I began work in July. It's great to have the opportunity to introduce myself at the start of my time in the area. I have always lived in London, but for the past two years my family and I (I'm married with two small children) have been in Cambridge training for ordination to the priesthood in the Anglican Church.

Hackney is pretty different to the middle of Cambridge, although there may be as many bikes here! Before that I worked for the NHS as a child and adolescent therapist, and before that in all sorts of charity roles, with children, teenagers,

vulnerable women and older people in Whitechapel and Kilburn. I've always enjoyed working with people of all kinds, so the parish of De Beauvoir is an ideal place to start out in the church.

I'm looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the next three years and making a contribution to the life of this interesting – I've already been hearing about some of the history! – and distinctive place.

God bless, be well, and look out for us.

Contact me at the church or by

email, richkspringer@gmail.com



ROYAL COURT COMES TO DE BEAUVOIR

As you read this on what is likely to be a rainy autumn day, it may be difficult to imagine that for part of July this year, London experienced a heat wave. I will remember it because it was the backdrop to a visit to the theatre to see *Circle Mirror Transformation* by the contemporary US playwright,

Annie Baker, staged by the Royal Court in one of the landmarks of De Beauvoir, the Rose Lipman Building.

The play, set in Vermont, was written in 2009 and its run in De Beauvoir was the first performance in the UK. The staging was part of the Royal Court's Local season and featured the well known actors, Imelda Staunton and Toby Jones. Perhaps partly as a result of their fame, the run (from 5 July to 3 August) was sold out. But it was also a thoughtful and interesting play worth seeing for the production as a whole and the use of the venue.

The aim of the Royal Court Local season is to put on

site-specific productions across London. In this case the setting of the play is a dance studio with a single entrance/exit. The main hall of the Rose Lipman served as the bare studio with the audience on a bank of seats built in front of the stage. The site chosen meant, of course, that no scenery was required and we could focus on the characters in what were familiar surroundings for De Beauvoir residents.

The uncomfortable heat in the hall caused by the weather was reduced by the use of large air conditioning machines brought in by the Royal Court. These were blasting cold air into the hall as we arrived but were switched off during the performance. Although it gradually became warmer as the two-hour staging progressed, I found

myself absorbed by the performances and the play itself despite the heat. It helped that our group all had bottles of water - as did everyone else in the audience.

Despite the conditions (made worse by the stage lights) the actors gave us an intense and emotional performance. The play follows the interaction of five people who meet once a week for a creative drama class led by Marty (Imelda Staunton). Except that very little conventional acting takes place and we learn via various "exercises" about the lives of the characters and about their preoccupations as they prepare for the classes. The performances were understated, which suited the cautious mood of the play. As the weeks of the course advance, each character starts to reveal something of themselves - their dreams, disappointments and hopes for the future.

The text of the play contains a author's note, which tells a would-be group of performers that the pauses and silences are of great importance. These were lengthy

and had the effect of reducing the humorous impact of some of the situations. But they make the play into something close to reality that is not often seen in the theatre. The actors appeared able to create dramatic tension despite the prescriptive directions and to ignore the sweltering heat. The cast worked as an ensemble to create, as Annie Baker specified, "a strange little meditation on theatre and life and death and the passing of time."

De Beauvoir and the Rose Lipman were fortunate to host the production and I think we can forgive the Royal Court for referring to the venue as being in Haggerston. We would welcome another visit - in Haggerston or De Beauvoir.

Andrew Brooke

DBA



Imelda Staunton (Wikipedia/ Manon Presne)

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST. We send emails about De Beauvoir news and events once or twice a week to more than 450 local addresses. They are brief and available in plain text only. If you are not on the list, you could be missing out on something important.

Check out our website too on www.debeauvoir.org.uk; email info@debeauvoir.org.uk

A SHORT HISTORY OF FIREFIGHTING IN HACKNEY

Unless the decision is revoked, Kingsland Road Fire Station will close later this year. There has been a fire station on that site since 1895 and before that an engine was kept at the De Beauvoir Town Station in St Peter's Road (now St Peter's Way). The devastation caused by the Great Fire of London in 1666 encouraged merchants and citizens to begin a system of fire insurance and Nicholas Barbon started the first private fire brigade fourteen years later. In 1707 an Act of Parliament required churchwardens in all the parishes of the City and inner suburbs to fix stopcocks on water mains in the street and to show the location of these by a mark on a nearby building. The following year fire engines were required by law and Francis Thyssen, one of the principal Hackney landowners, offered to supply one cheaply and a rate was levied to pay for its maintenance.

There was a reward of 30 shillings for the first parish fire engine to arrive at a fire and this was later extended so that anyone who owned an engine was eligible for the reward. A number of insurance company brigades had been

established and the firms' engines had their own distinctive livery, often in bright colours, to distinguish one from another. They employed mostly Thames watermen

and competition was fierce although the work was hard and not particularly well paid. However all watermen firemen were immune from Press Gangs which seized men to serve in the Royal Navy. Every insurance policy holder was provided with a mark to identify

his property and one can be seen on the wall of the Geffrye Museum in Kingsland Road. If firemen arrived at a fire and found a plaque that didn't belong to their company they would watch the building burn.

By the end of the eighteenth century London streets were patrolled by The Fire Watch which was operated by the Royal Exchange, Sun and Phoenix Insurance companies. Their principal concern was

to save property in order to keep claims to a minimum; however the companies' interest waned in the face of increasing costs and in 1832 the London Fire Engine Establishment

was created. James Braidwood was appointed as Superintendent and instructed to safeguard property; the saving of life was incidental. Public concern about the loss of life led to the formation of the Fire Escape Society which was funded by private donation and provided six wheeled escapes which were strategically placed in streets to be 'run' to a fire by conductors.

An engine house was sited to the south of

the churchyard of St John at Hackney and in 1774 a second engine was acquired. When a new larger engine was purchased in 1823, the



IN HISTORY: The former fire station at the corner of Downham and Kingsland Roads in a 19th century postcard.

Columba in the Kingsland Road and fire alarm apparatus in Culford Road. The newly built Kingsland Fire station at 333 Kingsland Road had a steam powered fire engine, a horse-drawn and a manual fire escape, a long ladder, horse cart, canteen van, a station officer and sixteen firemen, six coachmen, three pairs of horses and a dog. The Victorian fire station was demolished in 1975 and a new one built on the same site with a compliment of one station officer and seventeen firemen, a fire engine, fire escape and turntable ladder.

The most recent statistics for 2011/12 indicate that there were 846 fires in the borough but the fire service also attended 1874 other incidents ranging from dealing with flooding, freeing people trapped in lifts, road traffic accidents and animal rescue. There were also a total of 1888 false alarms. In the last ten years the number of fires in the capital has reduced by half and the controversial plan to close a total of ten fire stations with a loss of 552 jobs was initiated by the Mayor, Boris Johnson.

Fiona Darbyshire

DBA

existing one was assigned to Kingsland. By 1861 the parish had five engines tended by eight men. The Metropolitan Fire Brigade was established in 1866, funded by the ratepayers of London. London was subdivided into four and Hackney together with Bow, Poplar, Whitechapel and all the docks north of the Thames was in C District. By the beginning of the twentieth century there was a fire escape station by the Church of St



IN FUN: Firefighters spray children at the 2013 Party in the Park. Firemen told us they enjoyed coming to the event over the past nine years.



IN ACTION: Firefighters from Kingsland tackle a fire in a shed in De Beauvoir Square in August 2013.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPONSOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THIS NEWSLETTER?

It's delivered to more than 3,500 homes in the area. If you are interested, email info@debeauvoir.org.uk for the current costs.