



The Round Hill Reporter

Issue 81
September 2020

Welcome to our returning students – page 5

Heritage Open Door Week *11th – 20th September*

It seems we have a community event coming soon, a self-guided tour of parts of Round Hill to discover an eclectic collection of local history. A number of residents have agreed to display information in their windows or otherwise visible from the street, during some or part of the HoD Week, and details of all the locations will be available on the Roundhill Facebook page, and on the Roundhill website.

There is still time for you to join in. If you know some history of your home and can display it so that passers-by can read it, please consider emailing me with details as quickly as possible.

Like the guided walks last year it will also be publicised on the heritage Open Door website, so we may find more than ourselves strolling through Round Hill.

Rob Stephenson

In recent months a couple of people have left the Round Hill Society committee and we would like to replace them with new folk. No big commitment, but if you might be interested please contact a committee member to talk (back page) and then come along (well Zoom anyway) to a meeting.

Our Round Hill Crescent Giant *will soon be felled*

Dutch elm disease has got hold of our tree and it will soon be removed. Sad to see it go.



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Round Hill Society
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Blooming Marvellous!

Wild flowers are thriving in the cracks in our garden walls, footpaths and gutters. This summer a number of us recorded the plants in our pavements, and labelled some of them with temporary chalk signs. The variety was astonishing. And even though our (admirable) street cleaners weeded soon after, we know the plants will be back now that pesticides are no longer used in our streets.

Sylvan Hall also had a stunning wild flower display this year, in the meadow and orchard area on the corner of Prince's Crescent and Wakefield Road.

On one of the recording trips we were supported by local ecologist (and committee member) Kate Wolstenholme who came armed with her knowledge and a couple of impressive reference books.

Some of the plants we have spotted are garden escapees. Others are more genuinely thought of as wildflowers.

You can see colour pictures of the plants - including photos taken by other Round Hill residents - on the Round Hill website - roundhill.org.uk – and search for 'not just weeds'.

Here is a partial list of those plants seen:

Black Medick
Campanula, Cranesbill
Dog's Mercury
Fennel, Forget me Not, Fox and Cubs, Fountain Grass
Green Alkanet
Herb Bennet, Herb Robert, Hedge Mustard,
Hollyhock, Honesty
Knotgrass
Lesser Stitchwort, Lesser Bindweed, Long Headed
Poppy
Mexican Fleabane, Mugwort, Mullein
Nipplewort
Old Man's Beard
Pineapple Weed, Prickly Lettuce
Redshank, Ribwort Plantain
Sedum, Smooth Sowthistle, Spurge
Three-cornered garlic, Toadflax (ivy leaved and
purple)
Violets, Valerian, Verbascum
Wall Barley, Willowherb
Yellow Fumitory, Yellow Sorrel

Andrew Partington



Redshank above



Black Medick on
the left

Knotgrass below



D'Aubigny Road – where did that come from?

by Suzanne Hinton

Readers of The Round Hill Reporter might well be familiar with two excellent articles from March 2014 about the history of the estate: http://www.roundhill.org.uk/rhr/Reporter_Mar_2014.pdf

May I offer some further insights into the names of the streets in the area?

When the Round Hill Park Estate was first laid out in 1853, none of the newly-traced roads had names, apart from Round Hill Crescent itself. A Lennox Road was mooted but never built. Ashdown Road, created later, is not on the plan.

Gradually the promoters of the new estate, the Conservative Land Society, began to sell plots of land for building. No commercial property was allowed. Houses had to conform to designs laid down by the promoter. The estate was to be genteel.

By 1859 the promoters had hit upon the idea of giving the estate 'class' by paying their respects to the Dukes of Richmond. Despite having grand houses at Goodwood and Portland Place in London, the 5th Duke of Richmond, who died in 1860, seems to have been fond of Brighton: as an enthusiastic race horse owner he could often be seen at Brighton Race course; as colonel of the Royal Sussex Light Infantry Militia he was, according to his brother Lord William, "So devoted ... to his regiment, that when it was quartered in Brighton ... he left a Christmas party at Goodwood in order to dine with his brother officers at mess." That mess was a rather special one. It was in the Royal Riding School (now the Corn Exchange). But the noble Duke had other links with Brighton: he was the Grand Provincial Master of Freemasons and in his honour a short-lived Masonic Lodge was founded in Brighton as early as 1824; he frequently stayed at East Lodge in Egremont Place ... and his sister lived in Brighton from 1831 until her death in 1861. More about her later.

To refer merely to 'the 5th Duke of Richmond' seems very impersonal. He was Charles Gordon-Lennox. Which brings us back to Round Hill



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Crescent. You may have walked up the 'cat-creep' between Round Hill Crescent and Wakefield Road. The promoters of the Round Hill Estate clearly showed on the plan of the new estate that they intended this thoroughfare to be a road. By 1859 this road is marked in the annual directory as Lennox Road, leading from Round-hill crescent to Richmond-road. No houses at present. Lennox Road remained laid out for building in directory after directory until 1871. In directories of later years, there is no mention of Lennox Road. No houses would ever be built fronting on to it, probably because it was too steep. The road became a cat-creep ... and lost its name.

So where does d'Aubigny fit in? Well, in addition to being Duke of Richmond, Charles Gordon Lennox was Duke d'Aubigny. How did such a respectable English family come to be part of the French nobility? It was all down to one woman, Charles's great-great-great-great grandmother, Louise Renée de Penancoët de Keroual.

It all happened roughly like this: Louise had been Lady-in-Waiting to Louis XIV's sister-in-law, Henrietta.

Henrietta was sister to the Charles Stuart (later Charles II).

Henrietta was sent to England in 1670 by Louis XIV on a diplomatic mission.

Charles had not seen his sister Henrietta for nine years. He rushed to Dover to meet her.

At Dover, Charles caught sight of Henrietta's 21-year

old lady-in-waiting.

He lost his heart to the beautiful Frenchwoman. The king soon installed Louise in Whitehall Palace with the official title of lady-in-waiting to Queen Catherine.

The relationship between Charles and Louise lasted some fifteen years, until Charles' death.

Charles produced a large number of illegitimate offspring, several of them with Louise. Louise's first born was a boy, also called Charles. By the time the little lad was three years old, he rejoiced in the name and titles of Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond, Duke of Lennox, Earl of March, Baron Settrington, Earl Darnley and Baron Torbolton, all bestowed on him by his royal father. However, it was not until just one year before Charles' death in 1685 that he persuaded his cousin Louis XIV, to ennoble Louise. She became duchesse d'Aubigny. At the age of 13, young Charles Lennox added the title of Duke d'Aubigny to his armoury of titles.

But the promoters of the Round Hill estate had even more reasons for wishing to honour the Richmond

family. In the late 1850s, Brighton was decidedly Whiggish. In both the 1857 and the 1859 elections, the Conservatives (Tories) had lost seats to the Liberals (Whigs / Radicals). The Richmond family was, on the whole, staunchly if not even ultra-Conservative.

The promoters, the newly formed Conservative Land Society, had a very clear objective - **Votes**. The plan was simple, as stated when the Society was launched in 1852: The Society was for the purpose of aiding members of all classes in obtaining the county franchise and to counteract the attempts of the Radical Freehold Land Societies in the English counties to swamp the present constituencies.

So the plan was both simple ... and political. Any individual could buy a share in the Society. As soon as the Society had amassed adequate funds, it would buy a large parcel of land to develop. Society members could then apply for an 'allotment' (plot) on the estate as it was laid out. Once you had bought your plot of land, you became a rate payer and as a rate payer you could apply to vote. You did not have to vote Conservative but No pressure was ever brought to bear on plot owners to vote 'appropriately', but at a meeting in Brighton, the Secretary of the company boasted that on one similar development, at Ealing Rectory, of the 161 plots, 15 out of every 16 plot holders had voted in the Conservative cause. By the end of its first year, the Society had bought up estates in Richmond (Surrey), Tonbridge Wells & 15 other towns.

General election results in Brighton over the following few years seem to show that this ploy had very little effect on local elections – but a beautiful estate was eventually created on the Round Hill.

So back to The Duke of Richmond's sister. She was born Lady Jane Gordon-Lennox. She married Mr Lawrence Peel, brother of Sir Robert (twice British Prime Minister). From 1831 until her death, Lady Jane had her main residence at 32 Sussex Square in Brighton. She was much loved in the town for her patronage of the County Hospital (on two occasions she had the honour of laying the foundation stone for a new wing to the hospital); for her support for the Female Orphan Asylum in Eastern Road; for her upkeep of a school for poor children run in her own home in Sussex Square.

When Lady Jane died in 1861 there seemed to be a genuine outpouring of grief. She was described as a lady whose exemplary conduct had won for her the love and friendship of all who had the pleasure of knowing her (Brighton Gazette). This was clearly a good time to have honoured her family and promote the new estate and political project of the Conservative Land Society.



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Charles Gordon Lennox was Duke d'Aubigny because of one woman, his great-great-great-great grandmother, Louise Renée de Penancoët de Keroual.



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Welcome New Students!

A huge welcome to the Roundhill area from the whole Roundhill community – you've just found yourself in a fantastic neighbourhood! My name is Kate and I've been involved in the Roundhill Committee for maybe 3 years now. I first moved to the area the year I graduated from Sussex and was still working in the library there. I first heard about all the neighbourly initiatives in the area when one of these Reporters came through my door. A bit later I then thought I'd turn up to the Annual General Meeting and see what's what, meet a few people and see what actions I could help with or suggest. Admittedly, being the youngest in the room by quite some years (I hope the other folks don't mind me mentioning!), I was somewhat ambushed into joining the Committee ~ and now...

WE WANT YOU!

We're aware we're missing the voice of a student resident on the Committee. If you would like to get involved in any way at all, please drop me a line – we could meet for a bevvie at the Roundhill Pub perhaps? (Where we'd likely see owners Max & Rosie, who joined the Committee about a year after me 😊) or for a Solitary Bee coffee at the corner of Mayo Road?

07547 983 169

kate.wolstenholme@googlemail.com

No requirement to 'officially' join the Committee to get involved with the community of course! Get to know your fantastic neighbours in any way you like. In these ongoing weird times, we can all appreciate a sense of feeling at home in a neighbourhood that looks out for one another – so we hope you'll feel very happy here 😊 This September Issue, as well as being a time to welcome new students (& welcome back existing student members of the community!), we're exploring some of the history of the area – a "Roundhill Old & New" sort of the theme if you will ~ so enjoy!

All the best for the year ahead and looking forward to bumping into you,

Kate.

Round Hill Green Spaces

Action under lock-down

Despite the pandemic delaying our more ambitious plans, we've installed a new planter at the junction of Richmond and Mayo Roads and begun refreshing the planters on Round Hill Crescent.

The "pandemic" planter was installed and planted-up, in a socially-distanced manner, on 12 June. The planter is designed to prevent cars cutting through the no-entry road by mounting the pavement. The photo shows the flowers and plants looking beautiful on a glorious summer's day, with a laminated poster for the Brighton & Hove Mutual Aid community network. Round Hill resident and furniture maker, Karl Weitz, made the planter and very generously gave his time for free -- you can look at Karl's beautiful bespoke furniture at <https://www.kwfurniture.co.uk>. The compost, also free, was sourced from Veolia's Woodlands In-Vessel Composting Facility at Whitesmith, near Lewes, from kitchen and green garden waste. Most of the plants were bought with contributions from the Roundhill "Egg Club" members, but the planting will evolve over time and we'll add some bulbs during September/October.

A short description of how the Round Hill "pandemic planter" came about, together with a photo of it looking its best, was submitted to the Royal Horticultural Society's survey of community greening activities during lockdown. This seemed like a good opportunity to share what we have achieved during lockdown with a wider network. We'll let you know if anything comes of it.

We've also started refreshing the planters at the southern end of Round Hill Crescent. The existing plants and bulbs have been dug out to be re-used or re-homed, and the topsoil replaced with fresh compost from Veolia. New plants have been bought for one of the planters, again using contributions from the Roundhill "Egg Club", and will be planted once the heatwave subsides. Then we'll turn our attentions to the other planter. We've chosen plants that can cope with water shortage, but they'll need

watering until established - to begin with, Kristian of Solitary Bee mobile coffee service has offered to help us by bringing a large container of water down to the site, but ongoing it would be great if some local residents could keep an eye on the water level, before we get going with our "gardening crew" post-pandemic.

Thanks so much to everyone who has helped, directly or indirectly.

Dominic Furlong and Jane Power



Electric Car Chargers update

The first electric car lamp post chargers have appeared in our streets. Installation was delayed because of the Covid-19 restrictions, but now the scheme is up and running again. The latest map of chargers on the Electric Brighton website includes one on Round Hill Crescent with more planned for Prince's Road (near Mayo Road end) and on Upper Lewes Road.

Longer term, the council has proposed fast chargers on Richmond Road, close to Mayo Road, but so far these have not appeared on the council's list of planned sites

The map of chargers is at <https://electricbrighton.com>

No Man's Land Lockdown

Because I am not stupid I am scared,
like a wounded soldier in no man's land
where a man becomes again a boy crying for his mum,
pride, shame, bravado gone at the report of a gun,
just another luckless mother's son.

The fear is real yet this is not a war.
I am not a soldier and my Mum and I,
she in a Yorkshire carehome, me in Brighton,
are but two hapless souls among millions such
living the reality of virus lockdown.

My Mum, Jose, aged ninety-six, is a war veteran,
a London blitz nurse.

As a teenager she braved Nazi bombs,
had one dig destroyed whilst on night shift,
housemates, neighbours, all possessions gone.
Scrubbed up in operating theatres made
chanel houses by exploding bombs and falling
masonry impacting with soft human bodies.
Rode her bicycle full tilt into fresh
bomb craters in night-time blackout.
Stood lookout duty on hospital roofs
wearing tinhat helmet and binoculars.
That time's where t comes from
the pride when she says "I'm a Londoner".

Now she's away with the faeries
a lot of the time.

A phonecall two weeks ago:

"I'm looking out the window dear. It's very quiet."

"Yes Mum. There's a global viral pandemic."

"Really!?" "Yes Mum, really."

Last Sunday though (19/4/20) she was herself.

I told her I love her.

She said "I love you too."

and that made things alright.

I am aware of the scared boy within
but am able to shoulder the reality
of being the sixty-year-old man I am.
She has always been my hero
and I can die out here
in no man's land if need be now
wrapped in a blanket of her love.

On April 24 (one month after the
declaration of lockdown) my Mum was
taken from her carehome to hospital
where she was diagnosed with Covid 19

On April 28th (yesterday) she was
declared recovered and sent
back to her carehome. Yay!

A local poet's tale seen written on open space of a billboard.



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www.roundhill.org.uk

We Tweet :

Follow us at: @RoundhillSoc

Yahoo Roundhill Community Group: a forum for local info and advice (Google or find the link on our website).

On Facebook at:

Round Hill Community Noticeboard

If you want to keep current, check the Facebook page or register with the **Friends of Round Hill** group email for updates. Send a request to Stefania (see details on right).

The Round Hill Society Committee

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Veolia Waste Plant issues :

Smell, noise and dust problems – Environment Agency 0800 807060

Illegal parking in the CPZ

Report it on 0845 603 5469 and select option 3 for a traffic warden.

Student liaison officers :

Sussex- 01273 678220 or housing@sussex.ac.uk

Brighton- Andrew Keeffe 01273 641894 communityrelations@brighton.ac.uk

Non-emergency police reporting: call 101 if your issue is not urgent or you have a question, alternatively report a crime or incident on www.sussex.police.uk/reportonline.

Snippets

3 Upper Lewes Road

The developer of this 5 apartment unit has been granted 3 on-street parking permits, to the 5 requested.

Drug & Alcohol Services

The new provider of the city's service is no longer being asked to leave Richmond House. The freeholder has decided an existing tenant is better than none.

Covid 19 - supporting the community

When lockdown started six months ago your committee had to cease all group and public activities. We are now starting to get back into gear but we are still restricted in what we can do by the official guidelines on running events.

We also know that Covid is not going away - and is likely to grow as we head towards the winter months. Our local Covid-19 Mutual Aid Group is part of the city-wide network supporting people affected by the pandemic. They do a brilliant job and rightly deserve our thanks. We plan to work with them to provide the best possible support to people in Round Hill.

Find out more about the Covid Mutual Aid network in Brighton - and read the latest newsletter - on their website at <https://brightonmutualaid.co.uk>

The Round Hill Reporter is published by the Round Hill Society to keep residents in the area in touch with local news, events and each other. We try to present a fair and balanced view but the opinions expressed in this paper are not necessarily shared by all.

Letters or ideas for articles are welcome – please contact the editor at the address shown above.

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