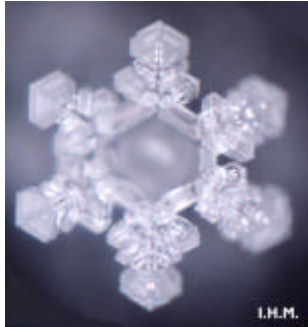




Newsletter

www.hillsamenityociety.co.uk

Winter 2005



We wish all residents of The Hills seasons greetings for Christmas and New Year.

Pub appeal

The application for a late hours extension applied for by The Foresters' Arms public house, Baldwins Hill, will be heard on 9 December. How to object: Page 4

And more inside...

<i>Death of Hills character John Silberrad</i>	2
<i>Future of Dryad's Hall in doubt</i>	2
<i>Planning Update: roof almost meter too high</i>	3
<i>Objections to longer hours at Foresters</i>	3
<i>Steeds Way father rowing Atlantic for charity</i>	4
<i>Clean up messy York Hill 'gateway' plea</i>	4
<i>'Nearer My God' at Sunnybank</i>	5

All go for Neighbourhood Watch

At a well-attended meeting on Thursday 10 November there was unanimous support from residents to start a Neighbourhood Watch scheme for the Hills. Initially this is likely to focus on the York Hill area as two volunteers came forward at the meeting from that

area. However all houses in the community will receive stickers for their windows and residents throughout the area be urged to participate.

At the meeting community police officers explained how simply being aware and having special

numbers to telephone suspicious or threatening behaviour could help to deter "undesirables". The scheme, which is likely to be linked to the Hills Amenity Society committee, will focus on deterring general anti-social behaviour, especially crimes against the person, vandalism for example of cars and property, and extensive or abusive littering of public places.



Well done, Dorothy....



Dorothy Thomson was the winner of this year's Hills Gardens Competition. Acting chairman Peter Tidmarsh presented her with the shield at the Hills autumn lunch attended by some 30 residents.

Details will be circulated early in the New Year of how the scheme will operate, together with window stickers and contact numbers. The new Watch Co-ordinator is Sue Mushtaq who hopes to have local watch officers for every road in the area. If you would like to help with the scheme by being the coordinator for your road please contact coordinator Sue Mushtaq on 020 8502 2665 or email her at hillswatch@mywebpace.co.uk

Carol Singing—Saturday 17 December: meet at The Gardeners 5.30pm

Join us for carol singing in aid of charity around The Hills on Saturday 17 December between 5.30 - 6.30pm. Meet outside The Gardeners Arms. We will start the singing and collecting in the York Hill area. PLEASE JOIN US....



Let's hope disruption was all worthwhile...

Around two months of disruption in York Hill and Staples Road, with the additional traffic pushed on to Pump Hill and Queens Road is the price Hills residents have had to pay for, hopefully, an end to the persistent bursts and leaks which in their turn have caused frequent disruption in the area.

On the whole (pardon the pun) the contractors are to be congratulated on carrying out this difficult work with minimum of mess and a maximum amount of consideration for those of us trying to go about our daily lives. When the work is finished all the old cast iron pipes supplying water direct to homes will have been replaced with modern plastic (well it looks like plastic to your Editor)..

We say "hope" because it is the pipes supplying water to our homes which have been replaced. According to one conversation with the contractors the main trunk pipe which runs, for example, along Staples Road parallel to the domestic service has not been touched and has also been known to "gush" from time to time. So we could be in for another dose pretty soon when "the big one" is replaced.

...and a resident writes

Replacement of the water main in Staples Road - while welcome - has left a number of problems on the road and pavement. Following representations by Staples Road residents, Councillor Chris Pond had contacted Paul Hardy of Essex County Council to report the potholes, damaged bollards, dislodged kerbstones and uneven pavement in Staples Road, plus the lamp-post in Staples Path which has not worked since a trench was dug next to it. He pointed out that the contractor Morrisons should fund these repairs, and not council tax payers. Also, it was unfortunate that the repainting of the white lines in Staples Road was started - but not completed - a couple of days before the road was dug up! Residents await the completion of this work.

Hills character's death puts Dryad's Hall future in doubt

John Silberrad, one of the Hills' most enigmatic and characterful residents of recent years, has died. Often to be seen in his ancient "D reg" car or striding, brief case in hand and immaculately tweed-jacketed, around the Hills, John Silberrad was the sole resident of the mysterious Dryad's Hall off Woodbury Hill. For many years a prominent member of Loughton and Epping Forest Conservatives, Mr Silberrad was president of the association until he died in September. He was a member of the Hills Amenity Society. According to the Loughton Guardian-Gazette, Mr Silberrad, who was in his late 70s, lived in Loughton his whole life and had a hugely successful career as a barrister as well as being very active in the local community. He was a regular member of St John's Church, Loughton, supporter of the Army Benevolent Fund and supporter of many local charities.

So what next for signature property?

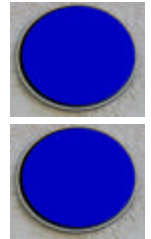
Dryad's Hall sits off a track leading into the forest just off Woodbury Hill and cuts a huge swathe into Epping Forest. The House and its adjacent buildings are of a very special character and adjacent is the large laboratory (pictured above right) used by Dr Oswald Silberrad and probably Barnes Wallis the Dambusters' Bomb-maker.

The future of Dryad's Hall is likely to be a talking point for months if not years to come. Developers will no doubt yearn to build a new estate, or (dreaded thought) blocks of flats.

In his lifetime John Silberrad said he would like to see the land returned to the forest.

Let's hope that this site, designated as marginal land to the forest, is treated with special consideration by whoever inherits or subsequently purchases it.

Case for two plaques?



Dr Oswald John Silberrad (1878-1960), father to John Silberrad, was the industrial consulting chemist in Silberrad Research Laboratories. In 1901 he was appointed chemist to the newly-formed Explosives Committee of the War Office at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich. An establishment which needed to solve the problems relating to weaknesses in British munitions, revealed by failures during the Boer war, like the non-detonation of high explosive shells. After the war Silberrad 'gradually cut down his consulting practice withdrawing himself more and more to his laboratory where he occupied himself on problems of a more purely scientific character. Local legend has it that Barnes Wallis did some of his development for his famous Dambusters' bomb in this laboratory (pictured courtesy Science Museum). Surely both John and Sir Oswald Silberrad deserve plaques?

How one house has been restored to former self...

21 Baldwins Hill was at some point in its history externally painted white (bottom picture) and the charming soft red bricks were lost under layers of paint from years of previous owners re-painting the front of the property.

The bricks have recently been cleaned (centre) using an environmentally sensitive paint removing chemical and a water pressure jet wash, due to the softness of the bricks, sandblasting was not an option. Removal of the paint revealed the letter 'W' formed in the pattern of the brick courses in the gable apex, although less noticeable due to weathering, a letter 'S' is visible at the other end of terrace.

The original deeds, dating back to 1909, revealed the name of the builder as *Samuel Wilkes of Church Hill, Loughton*. The brickwork has now been re-pointed and the original character of the entire terrace of cottages re-established (top picture).

Local architect Melanie Clear of Cleardesigns bought the property with her husband Dan Brooks in April 2004 and have since extensively refurbished the property.

If you have a conservation story, please send to valerie.locks@ntlworld.com



Planning Update...

12-30 Church Hill -The appeal by Chapel (Redbridge) Investments Ltd against refusal of permission to build an apartment block, retail units and car park at 12-30 Church Hill was heard on 29 November. Many individual residents, as well as the Hills Amenity Society, have lodged objections against this huge development which would mean the demolition of the current ten properties.

26 Stoneypath/Wroths Path—Plans for the erection of a pair of semi-detached houses on this site has been refused following strong local opposition and a letter from the Hills Amenity Society. The development was judged out of character and inappropriate for the site.

6 Baldwins Hill—An application for a loft conversion with three dormer windows and to raise the height of the chimneys has been approved following submission of a revised plan.

109 York Hill—Plans for extending have been approved.



Foresters' Arms, Baldwins Hill—The hearing for extended hours will be held on 9 December. To object, write to Ms Leigh Cole at Epping Forest District Council Legal Department, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping Essex CM16 4BZ

Tress and hedges

Several of the roads in the York Hill conservation area have no pavements and overhanging trees and uncut hedges constitute a hazard for traffic and pedestrians. Householders with hedges fronting public roads are reminded of their responsibility to keep them in good order....please!

Almost one meter too high? So now what...?

Epping Forest District Council's enforcement officer has confirmed that the roof level at 21 Baldwins Hill is being constructed at almost one meter above the level for which permission has been given and to a height for which permission was refused. Ignoring planning permissions has been a consistent battle point for The Hills committee: what is the point of planning procedures if developers are able simply to ignore them? Hills planning representatives are in touch with EFDC's enforcement officers in what could prove to be an important test case for the conservation areas.



Tackling problem youths

How the Guardian-Gazette reported the initial meeting of the Hills Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Residents of the Hills conservation areas - Staples Road, York Hill and Baldwins Hill—who met at The Gardeners' public house heard how a string of complaints about anti-social behaviour and nuisance crimes had prompted the meeting to be called. Recent incidents had included slashed tyres and broken windows on cars, verbal abuse and two cases of purse and bag snatching, one of which involved a mugging. The person who stepped forward to lead the new initiative, Sue Mushtaq, said: "We want to work together, with the police, to stop the problems getting worse. "What I want to do is to keep a central log of incidents so we can report them to the police and they can update me and I can feed the information to the right people."



The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, while having its own structure, will form part of the Hills Amenity Society and information will be published in society's quarterly meeting. If you would like to act as a co-ordinator for you road or area please contact Sue Mushtaq on either the number below or the email address which has been established especially for the purpose.

Meet the police...

...community surgeries will be held at Loughton Methodist Church every Saturday 10.30am- 12.30pm.

Special e-mail 'hotline' for Hills Neighbourhood Watch at hillswatch@mywebspace.co.uk ..or phone Sue Mushtaq on 020 8502 2665

Please clean up messy area at 'Gateway to the Hills'

A letter has gone from Acting Hills committee chairman Peter Tidmarsh to the owners of commercial property at the bottom of York Hill urging them to help clean up the area.

At a meeting of the committee attention was drawn to broken fences along the Zizzi's car park and the Wheatsheaf Garden, rubbish not properly bagged and litter generally making this potentially attractive "Gateway to the Hills" a thorough mess.

In his letter Mr Tidmarsh reminds the owners that the neighbouring York Hill and Staples Road areas are conservation areas and there were a growing number of complaints about the "unkempt condition" of the area at the bottom of York Hill.

He said it was the intention of the Hills Committee to approach Epping Forest District Council on the matter "but in the meantime we would appreciate your help in improving the condition of the street scene in this part of the Hills." He concludes: "Thank you for your help in this matter."

Boy (and girl?) racers at large



Loughton police are aware that moped riders, some without helmets and some with pillion riders, are racing along Staples Road and around York Hill and Queens Road. If you see this activity going on, you are invited to report it to them at this email address: Piers.Quinnell@essex.pnn.police.uk

Good luck, Phil!

As wet snow dusted The Hills on Sunday 27 November Hills resident Phil Harris was to set off on his epic journey to row the Atlantic from the Canary Islands to Antigua—a distance of almost 3,000 miles, reported the *Guardian Gazette*.

Phil, from Steeds Way, and his companion Charlie Woodward-Fisher expected to complete the journey in under 60 days and raise more than £1m for the *Row4Life* charity. While he is away his wife, who came close to losing her own life and that of her first baby, is expecting twins. All the funds raised will go towards



research into the causes and prevention of premature and still birth. To make a donation visit the *Row4Life* website to be found at www.row4life.com. *Cutting from Guardian-Gazette.*

Comment

The decision by almost 40 residents attending the open meeting to give backing to the launch of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for the Hills is an important one. While it is easy to say “we look out for each other” - and many, of course, do—it is the introduction of a structured approach to this mutual assistance that is significant.

As we have pointed out a number of times, at the very least we can now legitimately claim the lower insurance rates which come from living in an area with a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

Sue Mushtaq is to be congratulated on stepping forward to agree to co-ordinate this scheme and on joining the Hills Committee so that the scheme is plugged into the Hills Amenity Society network. We will be keeping up with its progress in future editions of this newsletter.

In the meantime, let us wish the Scheme every success.

*Fourth in a new series featuring Hills celebs
by Jane Bowen*

Nearer my God, to thee

The blue plaque on the wall of ‘Sunnybank’, 9 Woodbury Hill, commemorates Sarah Flower-Adams (1805-1848, a poetess who lived in an earlier house on this site with her husband William Bridges Adam, a “man of letters”. The earlier Sunnybank Cottage was demolished and replaced with the present house in 1888. It was Sarah who composed the words for the hymn “Nearer my God, to Thee” which was sung on board the *Titanic* as it sank in the Atlantic. Sarah’s



Sunnybank, 9 Woodbury—home of famous hymns

sister Eliza Flower, a musical composer, also lived there and both sisters were admired by the poet Robert Browning. The main tenant of the house was Dr Thomas Southwood Smith (1788-1861) who was attached to the London Fever Hospital and deserves to be remembered for his work to improve housing for the East End poor, encouraged by William Blake.

The best £4 you will spend this year!

Throughout the year the Hills Amenity Society works to protect the very special environment in which we live—The Hills Conservation areas of Loughton. The Society undertakes a number of functions and services including:

- review of local planning applications
- publication of this newsletter
- AGM with talks by guest speakers
- summer gardens competition
- an informal Autumn lunch
- carol singing for charity

It has also published a [Discovery Trail](#) of the area and initiated a number of environmental improvements, including the replacement of concrete lampposts, installation of wooden bollards to protect the greens from vehicle damage, renovation of the Pump Hill pump, and projects to maintain the area’s hedges.

Tell us what you think

The Hills Amenity Society would like to know what you think about the area in which you live, what are the things you would most like to change—and how you believe The Hills Amenity Society might help. Also, would you be prepared to lend a hand?

<p>Is the environment of The Hills:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Improving</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> About the same</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Getting worse</p>	<p>Do you feel the Hills Amenity Society</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gets it about right</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Could do more</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</p>	<p>Comments:</p>
<p>Are you aware of the of The Hills Amenity Society</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully aware</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Just about aware</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not previously aware</p>	<p>Would you be prepared to lend a hand</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Delivering newsletters</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Attending events</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> On the Committee</p>	
<p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Phone _____</p>		

HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY

Acting Chairman:
Peter Tidmarsh
111 York Hill, Loughton

Tel: 0208 502 2370;
E mail: Petetid@yahoo.com

HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY

Acting Chairman:
Peter Tidmarsh
111 York Hill, Loughton

Tel: 0208 502 2370;
E mail: Petetid@yahoo.com



*A wintry view from the top of York Hill, Canary Wharf lost in the haze.
(Photo: Matthew Geyman)*



*Working to protect and enhance the
Conservation Areas in which we live*

Now over 30 years old, the Hills Amenity Society, which is affiliated to the Civic Trust, was formed in 1972 as a result of the interest shown by local residents in their environment. Its aims are to preserve, protect, develop and improve features of both historic and public interest, and to promote higher standards of planning and design, in keeping with existing amenities and the rural character of the area. The Hills' unique blend of building styles and materials, set in narrow lanes hedged with hawthorn and holly, and enjoying spectacular views across the Thames valley to the Kent hills, was further recognised in 1977 when Epping Forest District Council created the York Hill conservation area.

The Hills Committee

Amanda Gotham, Treasurer, 5
Staples Road, 8508
1153; amanda.gotham@phoncoop.coop

Brenda Harris, Planning;

Valerie Locks, Newsletter, 2 Pot-
ters Close, 8502 3998; email: Valerie.locks@ntlworld.com

Peter Wynn, 37 Woodbury Hill,
8508 4873; E mail: Petead-suewynn@btinternet.com;

Jane Bowen, 91 York Hill, 8508
9689;

Peter Tidmarsh, chairman, 111
York Hill, 8502 2370; E mail:
Petetid@yahoo.com;

Toby Scrutton, 4 Queens Road,
07957 424233;

Matthew Geyman, 22 Pump Hill
07970 610002 email: mattgeyman@hotmail.com

Carol Francis

Lisa Godsalve, 21 York Crescent,
Loughton, Essex IG10 1RW 8508
2363 e-mail: lisagodsalve@rnib.org.uk

Juliette Harvey, 15 Woodbury
Hill

Sue Mushtaq, 8502 2665
sue@mywebspace.co.uk

***If you would like to help
with the work of the Hills,
please contact Peter Tid-
marsh.***

Petetid@yahoo.com;

Date for your Diary

Saturday 17 December
Christmas Carols: Meet at
the Gardeners Arms at
5.30pm

Subscriptions are now due for 2005—new members welcome

*Membership of The Hills Amenity Society costs just £4 a year.
Subscriptions are now due. If you have not already done so,
please pay promptly. New members always welcome.*



Join up now

Hills Amenity Society