

SLADE AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

July 2013

The new website is here!

The Slade Area Residents' website is still **work in progress** but it's now ready for you to visit, feedback and add to. It includes:

- ✓ Events over the coming months
- ✓ History articles
- ✓ Planning & green issues
- ✓ A photo gallery
- ✓ Information for new residents
- ✓ Your adverts & classified

Log on today at

www.slade-tonbridge.co.uk

Massive thanks to Richard and Marianna Warren for voluntarily giving their time, expertise and patience on this project.

Ray Padain is short-listed for the BBC One Show Art Exhibition



Ray has lived in the Slade for thirty years. He started painting when he retired having looked at all the West Kent College options he chose watercolour, painting, black & white photography and a wild flower recognition course.

He went to the class with no paints or brushes. He did two paintings in the first class and hasn't looked back since. His output has always been about twice his classmates. The teacher would set something for the class and some sketching for homework – go home & draw your clock or eggcup etc. His brush collection is now somewhat larger and includes domestic paintbrushes, sponges and hundred of conventional brushes

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BIG NEWS

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A beautiful evening, 25th April, the directional signs are up and the Council Chamber at Tonbridge Castle is all set up with tables and chairs. The paperwork is done, the microphone is working, a demonstration copy of the SARA website under construction is on the laptop ready to show residents and get their views. A tasty array of food is on the table with wine and soft drinks and the SARA committee have their labels on waiting for residents to arrive for a social evening and the Annual General Meeting. Our two Castle Ward councillors arrive and our Police Community Support Officer. How disappointing, after all the preparation, that only 15 residents turned up representing 12 households! SARA has a membership of over 200 households.

Thank you to those who did come. I hope you found it worthwhile. After various reports, the officers were elected/re-elected. Helen Harrison was re-elected as Secretary and Robin Robertson as Membership Secretary. I stood down as Chairman and Susan Bevan was elected in my place. Susan has been on the SARA committee since the Association's inception and has a thorough approach to all she does. She will make a good chairman/woman/person. Jacquie Wyatt stood down as Treasurer and, at the time of the meeting, there was no successor. However, a few days later, Marco Castellan, who lives in Fosse Road volunteered. A warm welcome to Marco who, I am sure, will be an excellent Treasurer and bring a new perspective to committee meetings.

Jacquie and I are both remaining on the

committee and were re-elected along with George and Jean Haysom, Jackie Davies and David Foster-Smith. I thank all my colleagues for their help and support during my three years as chairman.

Dave Parratt, our local PCSO, then reported on successes in reducing and preventing crime in the area and persistent problems. The use of CCTV cameras had helped to identify the culprits vandalising cars in Lansdowne Road and those responsible for a spate of graffiti last year have been apprehended. Dave warned residents not to buy from door-to-door salesmen and said that there had been a spate of bag snatches and pick pocketing in the High Street using distraction techniques. The majority of those responsible are coming from London on the trains which makes it hard to identify them. People racing motorbikes on the High Street and cyclists on the pavement and jumping traffic lights are continuing problems. He is keen to re-invigorate the Neighbourhood Watch scheme (membership can reduce insurance premiums) and would like residents to come forward as representatives. When the SARA website has been launched there will be a link to the Police website and Twitter account. Please report even minor crimes to the police (see the details on the noticeboard) so that they can help.

Finally, if anyone has any ideas for making the AGM an event which will attract a bigger attendance please contact the committee!!!!

GET IN TOUCH

If you're an artist living in the area or have an idea for a feature.



SARA CONTACTS

Chairman	Susan Bevan 24 Hawden Road Tel 773084 susanbevan@talktalk.net	Newsletter	Jacquie Wyatt 13 Havelock Road Tel 770457 jacquiemyatt@yahoo.co.uk
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Membership	Robin Robertson 15 Havelock Road Tel 353138 rrrob@live.co.uk		



If you would like to see more of Ray's paintings go to www.raypadain.co.uk or contact him on 01732 354081.

After about three years the teacher introduced pastels and acrylics, which Ray mostly uses now. She then nudged Ray out to do his own thing. He already knew how his style was developing; his teacher called him a natural impressionist throwing paint at things. He produced unusual stuff like brilliantly coloured watercolours.

Ray hasn't got to oil paint yet because he likes to work quickly – with acrylic and a hairdryer he can do a painting in a day. He's still experimenting – just tried painting on vinyl records and his latest one was on wood.

Ray's paintings range from £10 to over £500. He's had quite a few commissions and an exhibition in London – Art Elevator – in 2011. Students at London University take over a gallery, paint it out and find unseen, up and coming artists to exhibit. Ray was one of eight artists chosen to appear. He sold 4 out of the 5 paintings he displayed on the night. One lady bought a painting and then told Ray off for selling it so cheap. He subsequently sold another five to people who came to the exhibition.

Closer to home, one of Ray's paintings of the Castle in the snow was recently used by a local

Dentist as their Christmas card. Ray also exhibited at a Taste of Tonbridge and sold four paintings.

Ray's art has been strongly influenced by his travels. He was born in London but only because his family left Guernsey during the war. They went back in 1947 and Ray went to School in Jersey.

He came back to London in the early 1950's & went to sea school. He joined the Merchant Navy as a deck boy & travelled the world for five years; particularly the Caribbean then joined the army for ten and went in to catering. He subsequently did catering for the police before his final job as Catering Manager at Tonbridge School.

He uses his camera to record his work and to take photos he later works from. A lot of his inspiration has come from holidays with his wife and muse Linda 'cake-maker extraordinaire'.

Ray constantly experiments with form – everything from polyfilla to painting on vinyl. He tends to be proudest of his latest work and keeps moving on. He's done the art on the railings a couple of times and will be doing it later on this year.



The site in 1908. It's the patch of trees between the Fosse and the Cattle Market behind the Drill Hall. -182 is next door.

PLANNING

Council ignores concerns over Fosse Area scheme

The development proposals for the wasteland off Lansdowne Road got the go-ahead on 27 June with no modification of the controversial plans that include, in addition to the terrace of nine houses and a small block of flats, a large commercial car park sited yards from the back gardens of Bradley Street (see April issue).

The Council's Planning Committee dismissed arguments by SARA and many residents that the 30-space car park, for use by tenants of the offices at 182 High Street, should not be included in the scheme as it was inappropriate in a Conservation Area, dictated the unattractive layout of the whole development and of course meant considerable loss of amenity to Bradley Street residents.

The developers, CML, maintained the car park was essential as it would replace the parking currently allowed on the area to be built over. This is included in the lease on the offices at 182 High Street, which the company also owns.

We argued that the lease, which apparently terminates in September next year, did not have to be renewed on the same terms. Meanwhile, two of 182's three floors have been empty for several years and were unlikely to be occupied in the current economic climate. When the lease did come to an end the developers might well consider the best course was to convert the building for residential use, for which there would be adequate parking at the rear of 182.

The councillors took the view that the lease was irrelevant to the debate, although the developers' case for needing the car park was entirely based on its lease obligations. While some councillors said they were unhappy about the positioning of the car park, the majority seemed to feel that it was too late in the day to effect a change. And sadly the committee completely ignored SARA's suggestion that, if the parking had to be there, then the impact on Bradley Street residents could be reduced by leaving a bigger gap between their fences and the parking, which could be planted with trees and shrubs.

This could have been achieved by a minor

repositioning of the terrace and an additional benefit could have been to preserve some of the trees which are currently in the area and are all for the chop. As it is, the developers' only concession is an "acoustic fence" along the boundary, which may help a bit.

The area as a whole is due to benefit from the scheme since the entrance road to the site will link up with Annison Street in the Market Quarter and complete the Council's longstanding goal of the Lansdowne-Slade Link Road, providing the area with better access to and from the High Street.

The developers must also tidy up the Fosse (the largest remaining section of the town's mediaeval bank-and-ditch fortification) which is also on CML's land, behind the area to be developed. The land-owners have allowed it to languish for years under dense undergrowth, brambles and unstable saplings causing numerous problems for residents of Fosse Road in particular. This is to be properly cleared so the public can get a sight of this piece of the town's history. Unfortunately, what would have been the best view will be blocked off by the new row of houses.

Susan Bevan

Market Quarter Parking

The long-awaited parking restrictions came into force on Monday 1 July. By mid-week the number of cars taking advantage of free all-day parking had decreased and, judging by the number of yellow tickets on display, the council coffers had benefited considerably. But it should not take long for the restrictions to become well known and ticket sales drop off.

The benefits of the scheme are already plain to see. Ambulances, fire engines, refuse carts, and large lorries can now gain access without being blocked by inconsiderate parking and the area has suddenly gained a feeling of space.

George Haysom