

[Philistines don't understand Albert](#)

Friday, June 11, 2010

LETTERS From **David T. Yates, Bandmaster, Wroxall:**

ISLAND heritage is once again sacrificed to Mammon in the planned destruction of Albert Ketelbey's Egypt Hill home, Rookstone.

If this outrage is set as a trend then Farringford and Osborne will surely follow and the fact that Rookstone is modest, ought to be celebrated rather than used as a reason to demolish.

Ketelbey was a giant in music unfairly snubbed by the 'establishment', jealous of his success with his more popular pieces.

Ketelbey is also famous for being the first composer to have a work banned by the BBC!, his *Bells Across the Meadows*, being considered too risky to play during the Second World War, lest it be mistaken as the warning of impending invasion.

In the early 90s, to a capacity audience, at Sandown Pavilion, the band of HM Royal Marines, under my direction, brought the house down with a rendition of *In a Monastery Garden*. In the audience were some who knew Ketelbey and remembered him at Cowes.

As a past member of the planning committee, I may have been in the unusual position of bringing the house down in both its senses! However, those who know me will also know that this would have been an 'over my dead body' episode.

The five members who voted for Rookstone's destruction, together with supporting officers and the developer, should hang their heads in shame.

You are Philistines of the first order and guilty of depleting our future by destroying our heritage past, an act of vandalism vested in no public good and only private gain.

From M. Phillips, Lake:

Musical genius: I read with disgust the proposed demolition of Albert Ketelbey's home on Egypt Hill, Cowes.

Ketelbey was a musical genius who came into prominence at the very early age of 11, when playing his own piano sonata at Worcester Town Hall, among the audience was Sir Edward Elgar who was greatly impressed.

Birmingham-born Ketelbey's *In A Monastery Garden* was published during the First World War and quickly became popular along with his other works, he referred to as his pictures in music.

Other popular numbers were *Bells Across The Meadows*, *In A Persian Market*, *The Sanctuary Of The Heart* and *In A Chinese Temple Garden*.

I am certain his style of music was popular worldwide, as many years later the well-known American composer, Leroy Anderson, sprang to fame with his catchy number *The Typewriter* in 1953.

Whether Ketelbey lived long enough to appreciate Anderson's lively, catchy number, I do not know!

I Ketelbey born in the Lozells area of Birmingham 1875, died IW 1959.