

# THE COCKPIT



NEWSLETTER OF THE CHISLEHURST RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

*The Cockpit, on Chislehurst Common, has been the traditional meeting place for Chislehurst people on all great occasions from time immemorial.*

*Chairman:* T. A. Bushell, A.M.Inst.T.  
*Vice-Chairman:* Alistair Gunn, M.D., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G.  
*Hon. Treasurer:* Alex Drage, A.H.A.

*Hon. Secretary:*—Mrs. M. S. Holt,  
13 Oakleigh Park Avenue,  
Chislehurst, Kent.

No. 6

January, 1969

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Twenty-third Annual General Meeting of the Chislehurst Residents' Association will be held at the British Red Cross Hall (Hornbrook House), High Street, Chislehurst, on Monday, 10th February, 1969, at 8.0 p.m.

## AGENDA

1. Minutes of the 22nd Annual Meeting.
2. Committee's Report for the Year 1968.
3. Accounts and Auditor's Report for the Year 1968.
4. Election of Officers.
5. Election of Committee.
6. Any Other Business.

(Mrs.) MARY S. HOLT,  
Hon. Secretary.

January, 1969.

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1968

Arising from the Minutes of the last annual meeting we report as follows:—

(a) **Chislehurst Caves:** Since the passing of the Private Places of Entertainment (Licensing) Act, regular entertainments within the caves have ceased and the position, from the viewpoint of residents in that vicinity is much more satisfactory.

(b) **Commons Boundaries:** The Commons Conservators invited our representatives to two special meetings at which full agreement was reached as to the boundaries in Cricket Ground Road to be registered under the Commons Registration Act. The Conservators stated that the existing boundary posts would be moved to the agreed positions. We express our cordial appreciation of the cooperation of the Board of Conservators with whose present policies and upkeep of the commons we are in the fullest accord.

(c) **Walls of Excessive Height:** The second public enquiry resulted in a compromise solution by the Minister as the result of which the walls facing Ashfield Lane and the Meadow have been partially reduced in height.

(d) **Camden Place Ltd.** did not accept our offer to apply (and pay) for an "Historic House of Kent" plaque.

(e) **Seat on Site of Water Tower:** The Borough Council has agreed to make over to the Association the armorial shield and certain other stones from the Water Tower and the Commons Conservators have agreed to lay the concrete base when the plans have been approved.

(f) **Masonic Homes:** A welcome to the incoming residents of the Prince George, Duke of Kent, Court was extended on behalf of the members of this Association when the buildings were opened by H.R.H. the Duke of Kent.

(g) **Summer Hill:** Our representatives on the local Road Safety Panel continue to stress the dangers of parking on the Old Hill and the difficulty of pedestrians—particularly of schoolchildren—in crossing Summer Hill at Chislehurst Railway Station.

## PRICKEND.

By A. N. Oldun

From Saxon days onwards, Chislehurst was divided into an East Borough and a West Borough, the division being approximately on the line of the present A.20 road.

During the XIXth century the East Borough was known as East Chislehurst, although, for local government purposes from 1899 until 1934 it was the Lower Borough. It included a great part of Foots Cray as far as Rectory Lane now known as Sidcup, although that name had no legal existence until 1921.

The West Borough extended from Petts Wood across the commons to Prickend but, rather curiously, only the latter has retained the name of West Chislehurst despite the fact that it is really north.

Prickend was a small hamlet with two ancient inns, "The Queen's Head" in Stockmans Row (now the High Street) and "The White Horse", the latter rebuilt in 1899. The writer, in his very early days, went to the Prickend

National Schools which stood behind St. Mary Hall and survived until destroyed by enemy action in 1944. The old name now survives only at Prickend Pond.

An alternative spelling on old maps was Prickings and this is said to have originated either in holes made by stakes when the boundary was "pricked" or—a more romantic derivation—from the holes made by stakes which the bowmen had to split at certain distances during archery practice in the Middle Ages. It is for this reason that the "March of the Bowmen" has been used as the "signature tune" for Prickend for some years and is to be heard on the first Saturday in May for the entry and departure of the May Queen and her entourage to and from the enclosure on that part of the commons faithfully described on the programme as Prickend.

When Chislehurst was "Down Your Way" on a well-known B.B.C. programme some time back, the same "March of the Bowmen" was to be heard on the air.

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**Officers and Committee:** Meetings have been regularly held, with a high degree of attendance. The following Committee members retire under Rule 6 and, being eligible, offer themselves for re-election:—Mrs. O. Jarrett; Messrs. B. G. Coffin, C. M. Dunn, J. Easden, F. Grundy and E. Thompson. Members at the annual meeting will be at liberty to make other nominations if they so wish.

**Finance:** The accounts for the year are being audited as we go to press and copies will be available to all members at the annual meeting, or on request.

**Floods in Lower Camden:** The abnormal rainfall in September and the serious flooding that occurred in the Lower Camden area caused great distress and the risk of drowning. Our appreciation of the work of all those who helped in rescue was expressed in the previous issue of our Newsletter. Newly built properties in and off Woodlands Road were among those affected and, although these are strictly in the Bickley area, many of the householders subsequently asked to be admitted to membership of this Association and we welcomed them.

On 12th November we called a meeting, at the Bickley Arms Hotel, of all those affected and this was attended by over seventy residents. At that meeting we collated details of the times and depths of flooding, and the contributing causes, all of which information was subsequently forwarded to the Greater London Council, the Bromley Borough Council and others concerned. A week later,

Councillor C. C. Reeves called a second meeting at the same venue at which representatives of the authorities concerned explained the steps to be taken to avoid a repetition of the flooding. Councillor Reeves' efforts in this matter were much appreciated.

In December the Kyd Brook again reached a very high level and residents were pleased to note that precautions were this time taken when the police notified all householders of a flood warning. The area was also patrolled by G.L.C. River Staff throughout the night concerned. Fortunately, there was no further flooding.

**Proposed Roundabout at Leasons Corner:** On 29th November the Association convened a Town's Meeting at the Methodist Church Hall, Prince Imperial Road, with the primary purpose of discussing the proposed roundabout (actually a "squareabout") at the junction of Leasons Hill—St. Paul's Wood Hill—St. Paul's Cray Road, the cost of which is estimated at £55,000. A total of 304 persons filled the hall. It is regretted that some were unable to gain admittance.

Among those attending this meeting were Alderman Cox, Chairman of the Borough Highways Committee; G.L.C. Councillor Mrs. E. Beecher Bryant; Alderman Miss Bertha James; the three Councillors for the Chislehurst Ward and Mr. Alistair MacDonald, Member of Parliament for Chislehurst.

When a vote was taken it was found to be unanimous i.e. 304 persons (plus the platform) against the proposed roundabout.

As there is no single local newspaper circulating throughout the Borough of Bromley, we bought 100 copies of the Chislehurst & Kentish Times and circulated the excellent report printed on the front page, together with a copy of the resolution passed at the meeting, to the Minister of Transport, the Town Clerk and Borough Officials, the ten Aldermen and the 60 Councillors so that they could be in no doubt as to the wishes of the people of Chislehurst. In addition, residents in the immediate area affected circulated a petition against the roundabout which was signed by over 1,500 persons and this also has been sent to the Minister and the Borough.

The decision rests, ultimately, with the Borough Council who, it is hoped, will reject the proposal. Meanwhile the Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray Commons Conservators have refused to cede the necessary common land, in which action they have the full support of this Association and, we feel sure, the great majority of the people of Chislehurst.

**Attacks on Women and Girls:** This matter was raised at the Town's Meeting and particular concern was expressed at the lenity with which the magistrates dealt with a recent case of assault causing actual bodily harm. At the suggestion of the Member of Parliament it was decided to inform the Home Secretary of the concern of the people of Chislehurst at the number of cases of assault, or indecent exposure, on the commons and in Kennal Road.

**Sheppey as a Site for the Third London Airport:** Mr. Alistair MacDonald, M.P., explained the many disadvantages to the people of this area that would arise if the Isle of Sheppey were chosen as the site of the proposed third London Airport—particularly as to the overcrowding

of the already inadequate public transport system in N.W. Kent and the problem of increasing noise.

No vote was taken at the Town's Meeting on this subject, but this Association is a subscriber to the Sheppey Group and any member wishing, individually, to join the Group should apply to our Hon. Secretary for the necessary form.

**London Ambulance Service:** As reported in the November issue of our Newsletter, we wrote to G.L.C. Councillor, Mrs. E. Beecher Bryant, concerning a case in which the Ambulance Service took (with waiting time) 3½ hours to collect and return a disabled man who required 5 minutes attention at Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup. A reply has been promised in time for the annual meeting.

**Planning Applications:** The Committee continues to be asked, from time to time, to consider planning applications which cause concern to residents immediately affected. These have been considered by a sub-Committee which, when necessary, has interviewed the members concerned and subsequently visited the sites. We have advised our members to the best of our ability and where opposition has been considered necessary on general amenity grounds we have made suitable representation to the planning authorities.

The problem, in a period of extensive development arising, either from the wholesale takeover of large properties, or from the practice of selling off pieces of land from existing gardens for housing development, is, of course, to decide where to draw the line in supporting objections; though it is clear that both types of development contribute to the ever increasing pressure on existing facilities and communications and tend to diminish amenities generally as altering, in the long run, the character of Chislehurst which we are pledged to preserve.

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## CHISLEHURST RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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To the Manager, Martins Bank Ltd., High Street, Chislehurst.

Please receive..... subscriptions to the Chislehurst Residents' Association, at 2/6d. per annum. Total:.....

Names..... If new member please tick:.....

Address.....

Subscriptions may also be sent to the Hon. Treasurer: Alex Drage, "Little Heath," Heathfield, Chislehurst, or to the Hon. Sec.: Mrs. M. S. Holt, 13 Oakleigh Park Avenue, Chislehurst, or to any member of the Committee.

**May Queen:** In conjunction with the Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men we have continued the Chislehurst May Queen Committee which organises this pleasant annual festivity. No cost to the sponsoring organisations was incurred this year, but the balance in hand is getting very low.

**Federation of Ravensbourne Residents Associations:** We have continued our membership of this Federation which allows us to keep in touch with similar organisations throughout the Borough. Our active delegate, Mr. Alex Drage, reports regularly to our Committee on all matters of interest and concern.

**Minutes Secretary:** A continually increasing membership makes heavier demands upon our Hon. Secretary and we have, therefore, been happy to accept the offer of Mrs. T. Facer (who is also Hon. Secretary of the May Queen Committee) to act as Minutes Secretary. For this purpose she has been co-opted to the Committee.

**Membership:** The membership at 31st December, 1968, stood at 1,212.

The above are the principal matters dealt with during the year 1968.

Issued by Order of the Committee,

(Mrs.) MARY S. HOLT,

Hon. Secretary.

January, 1969.

**Social Evening:** This is in course of arrangement to take place at Graham Chiesman House, St. Paul's Cray Road, Chislehurst, on Wednesday, 16th April, 1969, at 8.15 p.m. Further information in the next issue of this newsletter. Meanwhile members are asked to enter the date in their diaries.

**Subscriptions:** These are now due for 1969. Some members of our Committee are approaching three score years and ten and find the door to door method effective, but increasingly difficult.

Will members kindly help by paying their subscriptions into Martins Bank, High Street, Chislehurst, or to the nearest committee member shown on the attached list. In both cases it would help if the detachable form at the foot of page 3 of this newsletter were used. Membership fees remain unaltered at 2/6d. per person (but sixpence for O.A.P.'s).

It is not too late, we feel, to wish all our members A Happy New Year.

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#### COMMITTEE

Miss D. P. Bushell, T. A. Bushell, A.M.Inst.T. (Chairman), both of 48 Green Way, Chislehurst. B. G. Coffin, Rider's Way, Ashfield Lane, Chislehurst. Miss J. Cunningham, 9 Lower Camden, Chislehurst. A. L. Drage, A.H.A. (Hon. Treasurer), Little Heath, Heathfield, Chislehurst. C. M. Dunn, Hoblands Cottage, Kennal Road, Chislehurst. G. Easden, J. Easden, both of 1 Paddock Way, Holbrook Lane, Chislehurst. Mrs. T. Facer, Mead House, Chislehurst. F. W. Grundy, 27 Lubbock Road, Chislehurst. A. L. Gunn, M.D., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G. (Vice-Chairman), 9 Holbrook House, St. Paul's Cray Road, Chislehurst. N. T. D. Hocknell, Manor Place Lodge, Manor Park, Chislehurst. Mrs. M. S. Holt (Hon. Secretary), 13 Oakleigh Park Avenue, Chislehurst. Mrs. O. Jarrett, 90 Chislehurst Road, Orpington. S. W. Mack, M.Inst.T., Little Maxbys, Raggleswood, Chislehurst. F. G. Snocken, 18 Westhurst Drive, Chislehurst. E. Thompson, 1 Green Lane, Chislehurst.