



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. 7

April, 1969

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Chislehurst Residents' Association will be held at Graham Chiesman House, Chislehurst, at 8.10 p.m. on Wednesday, 16th April, 1969, to consider and, if approved, to adopt the following amendment of the Rules:—

In Rule No. 9, delete the words "from within its own body".

This rule will then read:—

"Officers—The Officers of the Association shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting and shall consist of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, General Secretary and Treasurer. Any necessary Assistant Officers shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. Social, Press and Organising Secretaries shall be deemed to be Assistant Officers."

This amendment received approval, in principle, at the Annual Meeting. Its adoption will permit the appointment of assistant officers from the membership and they will be able to join the Committee under the terms of Rule 6. In view of the constantly increasing membership, this additional help is very necessary.

The Extraordinary Meeting is open to all members of the Association. Those staying for the Social Evening will require tickets.

Social Evening. The Social Evening at Graham Chiesman House on Wednesday, 16th April, follows immediately after the Extraordinary Meeting and, therefore may be expected to begin at 8.15 p.m.

It will take the usual form, with ample time for members to meet the principal guests—and each other. Refreshments will be served.

SOCIAL EVENING

GRAHAM CHIESMAN HOUSE
CHISLEHURST

Wednesday, 16th April
8.15 p.m.

Refreshments

Tickets. 5/- from any member of the Committee

There will be an interlude at approximately 9.0 p.m. when the Chairman will accord a welcome to the Mayor, Cllr. H. W. Haden, J.P. and the Mayoress who are expected to arrive about 8.45 p.m. Our other principal guests will be Mr. Alistair MacDonald M.P. and Mrs. MacDonald; Mrs. F. Hall, Chairman of the Board of Commons Conservators; Mr. A. Waters President of the Chislehurst Chamber of Trade, and Mrs. Waters; Inspector R. Sparrow, Metropolitan Police and Mrs. Sparrow. We shall welcome also those guests that our members are able to bring.

QUEEN OF THE MAY



Christine Coker, Queen of the May, 1968, with attendants.

"I crown thee Queen of May; best beloved May today.
May royal blessings fall upon thy fair sweet brow and
may the light divine satisfy thy soul with love."

With these words, on the afternoon of the first Saturday in May, our 1968 queen, Christine Coker, will crown her successor, Yvonne Humphreys in the pleasant vernal setting of Chislehurst Common.

The ceremony goes on:—

"Take this sceptre,
It shall be thy staff divine.
The seal of grace I hand to thee.
On thy brow I place a kiss
And on thy finger I place a ring.
The ages come and the ages go,
But the May Queen never dies.
Onward I must, I cannot stay,
For Yvonne is here to take my place
As Chislehurst's Queen of the May."

The traditional programme will again be followed with a procession of the retiring queen and her attendants, young children in carnival attire, and the "Invicta" Scout Cubs, led by a band, leaving Red Hill School just before 3 o'clock for the time-honoured rendezvous on the Commons above Prickend Pond. If the clerk of the weather proves an ally, all will be well. If not, the ceremonies will take place in the hall of Red Hill School.

These festivities go far back into the womb of time, like Christmas (Yule) and Easter (Oestre) they derive from ancient heathen festivals, but if the church can happily avail of such origins, so can the layman, especially if thereby bringing pleasure to young people as heralds of Spring. After the crowning, the new queen, in tribute, we suppose, to the ancient goddess Flora, descends from her throne to strew flowers. There follows the traditional dancing round the maypole in honour of the queen, the girls in their white and Persian yellow (Chislehurst's allotted colours) getting, perhaps, their first lesson in graceful movement within the limitations of long dresses!

The carnival winners receive their prizes, the Brownies regale us with country dancing and the time has come to form the homeward procession. This is not the end of the day for there remains the tea party at the Red Cross Hall at which the parents are the hosts and when many a pretty dress is marred by sticky fingers—but a good time is had by all.

On the following Saturday the girls will go to the Merrie England Festival on Hayes Common, where Chislehurst's is usually the largest contingent. Where else in England can one see five to six hundred girls (and an occasional boy), in a multitude of gay colours, all dancing round a single maypole? It is a great sight.

The queens have taken part in public events during their year regnant e.g. the Chislehurst celebration of King George V's Jubilee in 1935, and of King George VI's coronation in 1937. The 1948 queen took part in the official opening of Whyte's Woodland in that year and the 1951 queen in the Festival of Britain. More recently they have attended and opened various local fêtes. In addition, Mary Pearson in 1940 and Shirley Edge in 1946 were May Queens of London.

How far back these ceremonies go in Chislehurst we do not know. The present series, under the auspices (at Hayes) of the Merrie England organisation, were begun by the late Mrs. Everist and continued by her with great success for over twenty years. With the help of the Residents' Association Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Copp carried on for a further ten years and then, when there seemed a possibility of the custom lapsing in 1962, the present joint committee was formed between the local branch of the Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men and the Chislehurst Residents' Association.

The present Hon. Secretary is Mrs. T. Facer, "Upinford", Manor Park Road; and the Hon. Treasurer is Mr. Alex Drage, "Little Heath", Heathfield, Chislehurst, who would be glad to receive donations towards the continuance of this traditional and happy event.

CHISLEHURST "MERRIE ENGLAND"
MAY QUEENS

1923 Olive Everist	1933 Betty Pierce	1944 Barbara Castle	1957 Sandra Geddes
1924 Norah Everist	1934 Dorothy Veness	1945 Beryl Armstrong	1958 Pamela Deadman
1925 Doris Honeysett	1935 Ada Colgan	1946 Shirley Edge	1959 Janet Simmons
1926 Irene Atkins	1936 Irene Allen	1947 Joan Dorrer	1960 Linda Ryan
1927 Marjorie Dodge	1937 Marjorie Goddard	1948 Rita Schofield	1961 Joan Adams
1928 Vera White	1938 Joan Kelly	1949 Beryl Harte	1962 Stephanie Adams
1929 Mary Mallet	1939 Mary Pearson	1950 Sheila Webb	1963 Bridget Stap
1930 Evelyn Rollison	1940 Barbara Mewett	1951 Angela Copp	1964 Heather Shepherd
1931 Vera Pankhurst	1941 Rosemary Wilson	1952 Marion Johnston	1965 Judith Masson
1932 Gwen Kennett	1943 Pamela Chapman	1953 Brenda Maddox	1966 Gillian Archer
		1954 Jeanette Stap	1967 Gillian Main
		1955 Moira Blamey	1968 Christine Coker
		1956 Kathleen Tookey	

Annual Meeting. This was held at the British Red Cross Hall on Monday, 10th February, when about 50 members braved a bitterly cold night.

The Committee's Report, as printed in the previous issue of this Newsletter, was debated item by item.

The Chairman expressed his appreciation of the co-operation of the Board of Conservators in revising certain boundaries of the Common previously in dispute, all of which, on the agreed lines, will be submitted for registration under the Commons Registration Act. For our part we have applied to register part of the verge at Royal Parade and the whole of the verge on the west side of the High Street as being common land not coming within the jurisdiction of the Conservators. One of our reasons for doing this is to prevent, if we can, the cutting down of the trees which has been a possibility for some years.

Mr. F. W. Grundy reported on his efforts on the Road Safety Panel to get something done to solve the difficulty of pedestrians, particularly school children, crossing the lower part of Summer Hill at the Station Approach. The hazard caused by the parking of cars on the Old Hill has also been represented and, as we go to press, we learn that something may be done to restrict this practice. The continued series of accidents at the crossing of Loop Road and Ashfield Lane causes considerable concern. It would seem that if one set of "Give Way" signs were replaced by "Stop" signs there might be an improvement.

Concerning the flooding in Lower Camden and Lubbock Road in September it was noted, with approval, that a watch is now being kept so that, when, in December, the waters of the Kyd Brook rose abnormally the local residents were warned to take precautions. Fortunately, the brook did not overflow on that occasion.

CHISLEHURST RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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.

The proposed roundabout at Leasons Corner, the attacks on women and girls, the London Ambulance Service and the possibility of a seat at the top of Summer Hill incorporating stonework from the former Water Tower were among other matters discussed.

The Committee's Report was unanimously adopted.

The Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1968, showing a balance in hand of £135 7s. 5d. (less £26 4s. 8d. held for the May Queen Committee) were adopted with the thanks of the meeting to the Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Auditor.

Mr. T. A. Bushell was re-elected as Chairman; Mr. Alistair Gunn as Vice-Chairman and Mrs. M. S. Holt as Hon. Secretary for the ensuing year. Mr. Alex Drage, although willing to serve for another year as Hon. Treasurer, stated that this would only be on the understanding that a successor would be found next year. He pressed for a volunteer as Assistant Treasurer and, after some discussion, Mr. G. Rollason, having offered, was elected as Membership Secretary to relieve Mr. Drage of that part of his work. Lady Baker, Mrs. H. T. G. Brown, Mrs. D. A. Cohen, Mrs. N. E. Higgitt, Major M. B. Koe and Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Newton offered to act as road wardens to help with the delivery of the Newsletter and the collection of subscriptions.

On this encouraging note, Mr. Alex Drage was re-elected Hon. Treasurer for the ensuing year.

Under the present rules, neither Mrs. T. Facer, as Minutes Secretary, nor Mr. Rollason as Membership Secretary were entitled to vote at committee meetings. The committee was asked to propose an amendment of rules, if possible preceding or during the Social Evening, after due notice had been given. It was felt that the matter would be uncontroversial and would take little time.

Mrs. O. Jarrett and Messrs. B. G. Coffin, C. M. Dunn, J. Easden, F. W. Grundy and E. Thompson were re-elected as members of the committee for the ensuing two years.

Mr. K. A. Messeter was re-appointed Hon. Auditor.

The meeting closed on a happy note with a vote of thanks to Mr. L. Holt for his great help throughout the year by reason of which we could almost feel that, with his wife, we had two excellent Secretaries.

The proceedings closed at 10.30 p.m.

Planning Applications. At the request of members the committee, as we go to press, is dealing with the implications of a number of planning applications in Sundridge Avenue, Summer Hill, Walden Road and Heathfield Lane which affect the area in general and members in the vicinity in different ways. Our aim is always to see that the facts are made known to the authorities in good time.

May Queen. An account of the May Queen festivities is included in this issue. The committee appeals to the younger male members of the Association for help in preparing the arena on the Commons on Saturday, 3rd May.

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, Upinfold, Manor Park Road, 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, 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.