

# THE COCKPIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHISLEHURST RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 1934

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

CHAIRMAN  
A. T. C. JONES, B.A.  
VICE-CHAIRMAN  
K. H. SEDGWICK, B.A.

TREASURER  
ASST. SECRETARY  
Mrs. J. BARKER

SECRETARY  
A. L. DRAGE, A.H.A.,  
4 Stainmore Close,  
Chislehurst, Kent

No. 22

March, 1977

*The views expressed in signed contributions to The Cockpit are not necessarily those of Chislehurst Residents' Association, but are included as matters of local interest.*

## THE AGM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual General Meeting of Chislehurst Residents' Association will be held at the METHODIST HALL, PRINCE IMPERIAL ROAD, CHISLEHURST, on WEDNESDAY, 13th APRIL, 1977, at 8.0 p.m. Only members may vote or take part in the proceedings.

## AGENDA

1. Minutes of last Annual General Meeting.
2. Matters arising.
3. Committee report for the year 1976.
4. Accounts for the year 1976.
5. Election of officers.
6. Election of Committee.
7. Appointment of auditor.
8. Any other business.

## Raymond Oblath - an appreciation

Only a year has passed since we had the sad task of publishing an appreciation of our late President, Thomas Bushell. Now, with great sadness, we have to record the passing of our Treasurer, Raymond Oblath.

The news of his death on 16th January was a shock to his wide circle of friends, for he had been active with Association business and other local affairs up to the end of November, and even when he was confined to his bed the Committee continued to receive the occasional business-like note from him. It is now evident that he had fought a grave illness with his typical quiet courage and fortitude.

Ray, as we all knew him, assumed the duties of Treasurer in 1970, and it was immediately evident that the office was in the capable hands of one who set great value on knowing as many of his road stewards and members as was possible. This emphasis on personal contact, combined with the ability to put people at their ease very quickly, brought him a very large number of appreciative friends and boosted the membership of the Association considerably.

But it was not only the Association that benefited from the services of Ray; he was also

Treasurer of the May Queen Committee, a member of the Chislehurst-Sidcup Men of Kent and Kentish Men and active with the local Probus Club. At many of the social functions of these organisations he was most ably supported by his wife, Dorothy, and between them they always provided that 'special touch' in the table arrangements.

Until his retirement Ray was the deputy staff manager of Cable and Wireless Ltd. Following his retirement he was chairman of the Eastern and Associated Telegraph Companies Retired Officers Association and a trustee of the Cable and Wireless Pensions Fund.

To all these activities he brought a charming personality and kindness. He will long be remembered by countless friends and colleagues. The measure of esteem and affection in which he was held was reflected in the attendance of so many representatives of various organisations at the service held at Christ Church on 21st January.

We are deeply grateful for all that Ray Oblath did for our community and for having been privileged to know such a sincere and likeable person.

To Dorothy Oblath and her family we extend our deepest sympathy.

## Committee Report

Of the 10 Executive Committee meetings held since last April, all of which were well attended, the first three were at Hornbrook House, the remainder at Graham Chiesman House. We continue to meet at 7.45pm and sometimes exceed the allotted time to 10.30pm due to the volume of business. Apart from the Water Tower Memorial Seat Sub Committee which completed its task, the remaining sub committees continue their work in the field of Rates, Planning and Social. Our delegates continue to represent us on The Borough Council's Conservation Advisory Committee and their Road Safety Panel and on the organisations to which we are affiliated where appropriate—Bromley Federation of Residents' Associations, Bromley Consumers' Group, The Civic Trust, CHIS '77 and Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society. Invitations to formally affiliate to other organisations were declined not because their aims are contrary to ours but due to the high cost of affiliation fees. The following send their literature notwithstanding our non-affiliation: CALM (Campaign against the

Lorry Menace), SOS (Save Our Services), ANCHOR (Association of Neighbourhood Councils, Kent Federation of Amenity Societies, Museum of London, Europa Nostra, etc. Committee members attend the public gallery of some meetings of Bromley Council and their Committees to obtain first hand information on their debates and decisions on the more important matters affecting Chislehurst. Delegates also attend to present the Association's submissions at Public Inquiries.

Under Rule 10 all the officers retire and are eligible for re-election but Mr K. Sedgwick reluctantly withdraws from nomination this year. The sad loss of Mr R. Oblath leaves another officer vacancy in the post of Treasurer for which the Committee nominates Mr W. A. Page.

Under Rule 6 the following Committee Members retire—Messrs Blandford-Baker, Boon, Cohen, Payne, Snocken, Weniger. All are eligible for re-election but Mr D. Boon reluctantly withdraws. A further committee vacancy arises on the resignation of Mr S. Rawlings-Smith.

It is open for any member to nominate another member to any of the five offices mentioned at the heading of this newsletter and the seven committee vacancies mentioned in the above paragraph. Seconded nominations with the nominee's willingness to serve, if elected, may be sent to the Secretary.

Members who have not paid their subscriptions for 1976 and/or 1977 are asked to do so by using the tear-off slip in this issue, rather than await a call from their road steward whose name and address appears in this issue. Members are reminded that Barclay's Bank Ltd, High Street, will receive subscriptions if accompanied by the tear-off slip. Non members are welcome to the AGM if they wish to join after which they may speak and vote to the business of the meeting.

**LOOP ROAD/ASHFIELD LANE.** Continued pressure has at last persuaded Bromley Council to take positive action and support our submission that changing the 'Give Way' signs to 'Stop' signs is the cheapest and most effective way of minimising or eliminating the accident rate at this notorious junction. They examined and rejected four alternative schemes and requested The Department of the Environment (Transport) to authorise the change. The Department has declined. It is for the Association to decide what further measures are open to us.

**SUMMER HILL FOOTBRIDGE.** The Authorities agreement in 1975 to this structure being erected in 1976 failed because Government finance to the GLC for such road works was halted under the 'public spending cuts'. An expected release of funds in December 1976 would have enabled the work to start in March 1977 but funds were not released and in the present financial stringency no prediction can be made that finance will be made available in the foreseeable future.

**WIDTH RESTRICTION BARRIERS.** The long debate by the Authorities has now finished with a decision that 7 feet width barriers will be installed at junctions of Chislehurst Road/Logs Hill; Yester Road/Sundridge Avenue; Elmstead Lane/Sundridge Avenue; Watts Lane/Morley Road. Crown Lane will be closed to through traffic. Bromley Council state

works orders have been issued for the first three barriers which should be completed in three months. The Watts Lane and Crown Lane works will follow as soon as works orders are issued. They should effectively curtail the movement of heavy traffic in some residential roads in Chislehurst. While not entirely preventing heavy vehicles using Chislehurst as a through traffic route they should confine them to the main roads.

**OLD HILL.** Bromley Council's original intention to close Old Hill to through traffic was reversed. Instead they decided to await the effect of the first width barrier mentioned above and Old Hill closure will be reconsidered after an experimental period of six months. In the opinions of Old Hill residents, many other members, and The Committee, that barrier will not effectively stop heavy traffic using Old Hill and written representations have been made accordingly. However your committee judge that it would be unreasonable to do other than let the experiment run its course before deciding what, if any, action is then called for.

**73/87 HIGH STREET—DEVELOPMENT.** Previous reports culminated with that in the March 1976 Cockpit recording Bromley Council's planning consent to the application to which the Association and many residents had lodged strong detailed objections. The Developers had declined our request to clean and enclose the derelict site pending the start of work on the building. The Council had declined our request that they use their powers to require it to be done. The Developers are now 'in receivership' and with this financial difficulty the possibility of their developing the site is remote. It seems that it will remain derelict until some interested developer is willing and able to acquire it and develop it. Then it remains to be seen whether the existing planning consent is used, or abandoned and a new one sought. In either case a date for building is a long way off. Members have again complained about the state of the site and we have represented again to Bromley Council that they should use their powers to require the site to be cleaned, sealed and enclosed. We have requested a site meeting with the Councillors and their officers and by the time this Cockpit appears a meeting should have taken place after which it is hoped to report favourably on the site. Future development and the time it will take to plan and complete must remain a matter of conjecture.

**A POP-IN PARLOUR FOR CHISLEHURST.** This proposal by Bromley Age Action Year Committee seems to have foundered through lack of finance. Our December 1976 Cockpit invited residents to donate but the newspaper reports that the response throughout the Borough and in Chislehurst was disappointing. It now transpires that some residents and traders consider that refreshment facilities which would be provided by a pop-in parlour are already available from local traders if residents wish to use them.

**BROMLEY CONSUMERS' GROUP.** The November 1975 Cockpit invited members to consider the merits of joining the Bromley Consumers' Group whose watchdog activities perform a useful service to residents in the Borough. We learn that there was little response. Here again is their Membership

Secretary's name and address. Miss M. Phillips, 33 Rochester, Avenue, Bromley, Kent.

**RATES & COUNCIL EXPENDITURE.** Through our sub committee we continue to examine possible means of economy in Bromley Council and GLC expenditure and where our enquiries to their spending committees and their officers reveal waste, unproductive activities, mismanagement or other weaknesses, suggestions for economy are forwarded. In particular we are pursuing The Council's wasteful purchase of a very expensive site, now derelict, at Beckenham, urging that the mistake be remedied and the resultant income be applied to the proper account and so relieve the rates. By the time The Cockpit appears Bromley Council will have declared the General Rate for 1977/8, which if some reliable predictions are correct, entails no increase.

**PLANNING.** The Committee regards this as second to none of its activities, and in all issues of The Cockpit, urges all members to be vigilant to examine the planning lists at the Chislehurst Library every week. We continue to represent our views when appropriate and are gratified to note that many Council refusals are in respect of applications to which we and individual members have lodged objections. We are not pleased to note that The Secretary of State for The Environment has, on appeal by some applicants, reversed Council Refusals. Worse still, he has done so without Public Inquiry procedure but on the method known as 'written representation' in which there is no certainty that all interested parties have an opportunity to state their case. Vigorous efforts are now in hand to expose this weakness and to have it remedied, and Roger Sims, our Member of Parliament, has already raised the matter in the House of Commons and is currently pursuing it at the highest level. Meanwhile, some planning procedures operated by Bromley Council to which we had previously taken exception (as reported in the December 1976 'Cockpit'), have now engaged the attention of Bromley Federation of Residents' Associations who are themselves making representations to the Council.

**ROAD STEWARDS.** Requests were received that the lists hitherto printed in alphabetical order of road stewards, should be printed in alphabetical order of roads, with stewards alongside. This form appears in this issue and, it is hoped, provides an easy reference which will assist members. Our thanks to Mr. F. Snocken, 18 Westhurst Drive, our road stewards' coordinator, who is always pleased to assist and with

whom road stewards should communicate, if necessary.

**Chairman's Notes**

Elsewhere in this issue you will have read, in some detail, of matters which have engaged the attention of the Executive Committee over the past months. One conclusion you will, no doubt, have drawn is that we have not been sluggards where your interests are concerned. On the contrary, your elected representatives have been as vigilant as ever, and, between full committee and sub-committee meetings, have spent a considerable amount of time covering a variety of subjects. At this point it is opportune and most pleasurable for me to join with the general membership in thanking all members of the Executive Committee for their devotion to our interests. I am particularly appreciative of their loyalty to the Chair.

A second conclusion many of you will have arrived at, having read the wide-ranging reports in this and last November's issue, is that we are very fortunate indeed in having a Secretary whose industry and enthusiasm are a cause for wonder when one considers his involvement in the affairs of other local organisations. I allude, of course, to Alex Drage. His appetite for work can only be described as voracious. The Association owes him a considerable debt of gratitude. We are not unmindful of the backroom role his wife plays, constantly taking telephone calls and messages while he is pursuing his various missions on our behalf.

This same acknowledgement is gratefully recorded as applying to the wives of the other officers and committee members for their assistance in the same field.

I believe, with great respect to the majority of our readers, that only the most percipient among you will have formed a third conclusion, having conned our reports of the past year. That is, without the support and diligence of our Road Stewards the Association would be unable to function as smoothly as it does. It gave the Committee considerable pleasure last October, when at a social gathering arranged for our road stewards we were able to show some measure of our appreciation to them. This was a most enjoyable occasion.

Since the March issue of last year some events have given rise to much pleasure, others to disappointment and sadness.

The May Queen ceremony at the end of April was blessed with fine weather and was well supported.

A letter from the Chairman of the May Queen Society appears in this issue.

**CHISLEHURST RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

To ..... (member of the committee/road steward)  
or

To the Manager, Barclays Bank Ltd., 7 High Street, Chislehurst. A/C numbered 60254290

Please receive ..... subscriptions to the above Association (household 40p, individual member 20p, O.A.P. 10p)

Name ..... If a new member, please tick:.....

Address .....

Subscriptions may also be sent direct to the Hon. Treasurer or any Road Steward.

The January meeting of the Executive Committee afforded us the most pleasant task in congratulating Ken Sedgwick, our Vice-Chairman, on his appointment as a Justice of the Peace. He has, for some time, been guiding the deliberations of the CHIS 77 Committee in his capacity as Chairman. Three days later our pleasure was turned to sadness when we learned of the passing of our greatly respected Treasurer, Ray Oblath.

These comments would not be complete without reference to two ladies who have served the Association so well. Jeanna Barker, our Minuting Secretary, is so quietly efficient that it would be easy to

## 'CHIS 77'

This entry is contributed by the CHIS 77 Committee.

In the December '76 issue of The Cockpit the Committee for 'CHIS 77' gladly accepted the invitation from the CRA to contribute an article which left the future of the scheme unresolved. Again the Committee wish to thank the Association for the opportunity to bring members up to date.

December saw a very real probability that the scheme would founder on the rocks of inflexibility and beauracracy displayed by the GLC over the question of car parking, and a great deal of lobbying and pressure was needed to avert this disaster.

The enthusiastic recommendation of Councillor Christopher Reeves and his Planning Sub-Committee on 30th December followed by the equally ardent advocacy of our GLC Councillor, Joan Wykes, eventually won the day, and on January 24th the GLC South Area Board gave their conditional consent to our proposals, enabling the Bromley Planning Committee to grant formal approval to our application on 16th February.

Whilst the Committee's Architect is now pressing ahead with detailed negotiations with the various Statutory Authorities in order to finalise the plans and specification, the publicity and fund raising is getting underway, beginning with a formal launching party on 7th March.

By the time this issue of the Cockpit appears, thousands of pamphlets with tear-off slips for donations and scores of posters will have been distributed, and the proposals for 'CHIS 77' will have been on view to all the residents of Chislehurst.

The Committee make no excuse for stressing that the scheme can only succeed through the support and generosity of every member of the community and

overlook the valuable contribution she makes. Melinda Conquest, our 'Chislehurst Times' reporter, has rendered an excellent service to Chislehurst in providing such interesting articles and detailed reporting on local matters. We congratulate her on her promotion, which, we fear, will deprive the Committee of the pleasure of her presence at our meetings, and wish her well in her career.

We thank our members for their continued support and loyalty, at the same time inviting them to make their interest more strongly pronounced by contributing features, letters etc. to this news-sheet.

ask that you take a share in paving the way to a prouder village in Jubilee Year.

This entry is contributed by the Chislehurst May Queen Society.

### CHISLEHURST MAY QUEEN SOCIETY

The crowning of the May Queen of the year, a ceremony which has continued unbroken for 54 years, has become an event in Chislehurst life. Some years ago the late Tom Bushell, as Chairman of both the Residents and Chislehurst Branch of the Men of Kent and Kentish Men Associations, brought the organisation of the ceremonies under the sponsorship of the two associations.

Late in 1975, however, very grave doubts arose as to the continuance of the ceremonies because of mounting costs due to inflation. Clearly for the same reasons, neither of the two sponsoring associations could be expected to provide the funds required, which left the May Queen Committee to seek its own solution in other ways.

Encouraged by the support and interest of so many residents, the organisers have turned themselves into an established society to ensure the continuance of the ceremonies, but are pleased that the hitherto sponsoring Associations have agreed to maintain their connection by becoming patrons of the new society which will now be solely dependent upon donations and sale of programmes to defray expenses.

A public meeting of the new society is to be held at 8 p.m. on Thursday, March 31st at Chislehurst Library to which all interested residents are invited, to hear programme and finance details and to indicate their support.

The Secretary, Mrs. J. Peacock, 5 Alexander Road, 01-467 8301, will gladly give further information.

## ROAD STEWARDS

- Adelaide Road:* Mr. J. Bentley, 19 Adelaide Road.  
*Albany Road:\**  
*Alexander Road:* Mr. J. Bentley, 19 Adelaide Road.  
*Ashfield Lane:* Mr. W. C. Carpenter, Sherbrooke, Heathfield Lane.  
*Beaverwood Road:* Mr. A. W. Coles, 3 Beaverwood Road.  
*Beech Croft:* Mrs. Lemmens, 2 Hurstmead, Bull Lane.  
*Belmont Lane:\**  
*Berens Way:* Mr. J. L. Williams, 23 Berens Way.  
*Bishops Walk:* Mrs. G. Payne, 13 The Glebe.  
*Bromley Lane:* Mr. and Mrs. G. Lemmens 2 Hurstmead, Bull Lane.  
*Bull Lane:* Mr. A. Drage, 4 Stainmore Close, Holbrook Lane.  
*Camden Park Road:* Mrs. D. H. Bell, 7 Lubbock Road.  
*Camden Way:* Mr. A. H. Strutt, Barnoon, Camden Way.  
*Camden Close:* Mr. K. H. Sedgwick, Nant Gwyn, Hawkwood Lane.  
*Chislehurst Road:* Mrs. S. H. Price, 6 Ivybridge Court, Old Hill.  
*Church Row:* Mr. A. Drage, 4 Stainmore Close, Holbrook Lane.  
*Clarendon Way:\**  
*Clifford Avenue:* Mr. B. J. Bull, 36 Walden Road.  
*Collins Hill:\**  
*Collins Wood:\**  
*Cranmore Road:\**  
*Cricket Ground Road (& Roads off):* Mrs. A. T. C. Jones, 10 Thistlemead.  
*Croft Close:\**  
*Crown Lane:* Mr. K. H. Sedgwick, Nant Gwyn, Hawkwood Lane.  
*Degema Road:\**  
*Downs Avenue:* Miss K. Humphreys, 25 Downs Avenue.  
*Edward Road:* Mr. J. Bentley, 19 Adelaide Road.  
*Elmlee Close:\**  
*Elmstead Avenue:\**  
*Elmstead Lane:\**  
*Empress Drive:* Mr. A. Sharpe, 8 Willow Vale.  
*Farmland Walk:* Mr. T. Grimwood 7 Farmland Walk.  
*Fosters Close:* Miss K. Humphreys, 25 Downs Avenue.  
*Glen side:\**  
*Grange Drive:\**  
*Green Lane:\**  
*Greenway:* Mr. E. L. May, 52 Greenway.  
*Grove Vale:* Mrs. H. T. G. Brown, 30 Grove Vale.  
*Hallam Close:* Miss K. Humphreys, 25 Downs Avenue.  
*Hatton Court:* Mrs. J. Barker, 24 Hatton Court, Lubbock Road.  
*Hawkwood Lane:* Mr. K. H. Sedgwick, Nant Gwyn, Hawkwood Lane.  
*Heathfield (& Roads off):* Mr. L. B. Cross, Chestnut Cottage, The Meadow.  
*Heathfield Lane:* Mr. W. C. Carpenter, Sherbrooke, Heathfield Lane.  
*High Street:* Miss Parrott, Hornbrook House.  
*Hill Close:* Mr. T. Grimwood, 7 Farmland Walk.  
*Hill Side:\**  
*Holbrook Lane:* Mr. T. L. Twigg, 23 Poyntell Crescent.  
*Hollybrake Close:* Mr. A. Drage, 4 Stainmore Close, Holbrook Lane.  
*Holmdale Road:\**  
*Homewood Crescent:* Mr. A. J. Ramsey, 19 Homewood Crescent.  
*Ingleby Way:* Mrs. R. J. Philo, 12 Ingleby Way.  
*Isleworth Close:* Mrs. A. Cletcher 5 Ravenshill  
*Kemnal Road, etc.:* Mr. A. V. De Vote, 9 Inglewood, Kemnal Road.  
*Kevington Drive:\**  
*Leesons R.A.:* Mr. R. E. Munday, 43 Highfield Road.  
*Link Road:\**  
*Lower Camden:* Mrs. D. Oblath, 36 Lower Camden.
- Lubbock Road (Upper):* Mr. A. W. McKenzie, 5 Lubbock Road.  
*Lubbock Road (Lower):* Mrs. M. Grundy, 27 Lubbock Road.  
*Manor House Complex:* Mrs. R. Poole, Manor Court, Manor Park Road.  
*Manor Park Road:* Mrs. G. Payne, 13 The Glebe.  
*Manor Park:* Mrs. P. J. C. Douglas, 7 Chesil House. St. Paul's Cray Road.  
*Marlings Park Avenue:* Mr. & Mrs. E. Davis, 36 Marlings Park Avenue.  
*Mead Road:* Mrs. C. M. Willmott, Mead Cottage, Mead Road.  
*Melanda Close:* Miss K. Humphreys, 25 Downs Avenue.  
*Mill Place:\**  
*Mortley Road:* Mr. K. H. Sedgwick, Nant Gwyn Hawkwood Lane.  
*Oakwood Close:* Mrs. U. Hawkins, Fircroft, Oakwood Close.  
*Old Hill:* Mrs. S. H. Price, 6 Ivybridge Court, Old Hill.  
*Orpington Road (Marlings):\**  
*Perry Street:* Mr. A. W. Coles, 3 Beaverwood Road.  
*Poyntell Crescent:* Mr. T. L. Twigg, 23 Poyntell Crescent.  
*Prince Consort Drive:* Mrs. R. Poole, Manor Court, Manor Park Road.  
*Prince Imperial Road:* Miss D. J. Heaward.  
*Queens Road:\**  
*Raggleswood:* Mr. S. W. Mack, Little Maxby's, Raggleswood.  
*Ravenshill:* Mrs. A. Cletcher, 5 Ravenshill.  
*Red Hill:* Mrs. R. J. Philo, 12 Ingleby Way.  
*Ross Court:* Mr. F. Smith, 3 Ross Court, Lubbock Road.  
*Royal Parade:* Mr. F. W. Baker, 1 The Chestnuts, St. Paul's Cray Road.  
*Sandy Ridge:* Mr. V. Dunleavy 21 Sandy Ridge.  
*School Road:* Mr. K. H. Sedgwick, Nant Gwyn, Hawkwood Lane.  
*Shepherds Green:* Mr. A. Drage, 4 Stainmore Close, Holbrook Lane.  
*St. Paul's Cray Road:* Mr. J. Kinsella, Crayside, Rectory Meadows.  
*Sturgess Field:* Mr. & Mrs. G. Lemmens, 2 Hurstmead, Bull Lane.  
*Summer Hill:* Mrs. P. Barrett, 11 Oakleigh Park Avenue.  
*Susan Wood\**  
*The Avenue:\**  
*The Glebe:* Mrs. G. Payne, 13 the Glebe.  
*The Rise:\**  
*The Weald:* Mr. V. Dunleavy, 21 Sandy Ridge.  
*Thistlemead:* Mr. A. T. C. Jones, 10 Thistlemead, Heatherbank.  
*Townsend Road:\**  
*Walden Avenue:\**  
*Walden Road (W. of Grove Vale):* Mr. B. J. Bull 36 Walden Road.  
*Walnut Tree Close:* Mr. A. Drage, 4 Stainmore Close, Holbrook Lane.  
*Wilderness Road:* Mr. A. H. Proud, 10a Wilderness Road.  
*Willow Grove:* Mr. A. Sharpe, 8 Willow Vale.  
*Willow Vale:* Mr. A. Sharpe, 8 Willow Vale.  
*Wimbourne Avenue:\**  
*Wood Drive:\**  
*Woodside Avenue:* Mr. J. Bentley, 19 Adelaide Road.  
*Westhurst Drive:* Mr. F. G. Snocken, 18 Westhurst Drive.  
*Yester Park:* Mr. A. W. McKenzie 5 Lubbock Road.  
*Yester Road:* Mrs. U. Hawkins, Fircroft, Oakwood Close.  
 \* Road Steward Required

We shall be grateful for offers to act as road stewards for any of the roads not covered. Please contact Mr. F. G. Snocken, 18 Westhurst Drive.

MARCH 1977