
THE COCKPIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHISLEHURST RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 1934 MEMBERSHIP 3,500 REGISTERED WITH THE CIVIC TRUST

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

No. 37

September 1982

ON DISPLAY at the Chislehurst Fair



Chairman, Alun Jones (right), and Nicolette Comport, at the CRA display in June.

Our first venture of going 'on display' at the Chislehurst Round Table's Summer Fair in June was a great success.

In spite of temperamental weather, the Fair, held in the public fields at the back of the Library, attracted crowds of people.

The CRA stand featured the aims and objectives of the Association, details of the new Conservation area and how it will help us to preserve and enhance the

beauty of Chislehurst, and the importance of trees in our local environment.

Interest in our display was high. New members were recruited as a result, and existing members expressed their pleasure at seeing the Association taking this positive step to get into contact with all the people of Chislehurst.

We shall be looking for other possibilities to repeat this type of activity at indoor and outdoor venues in Chislehurst.

Chairman:
A. T. C. JONES
(01-467 2796)

Vice-Chairman:
Lt. Col. C. B. WENIGER

Secretary:
Miss S. SPENCE

Editor:
P. A. TURNER

THE AGM Chairman's Report

This year's AGM held in the Methodist Church Hall in April, endorsed the very successful year the Association had enjoyed in dealing with many important issues.

The unavoidable absence of our local Councillors meant that the opportunity for impassioned debate was restricted this year.

Mr. Roger Sims, our MP, also had to make his apologies for absence as a result of pressure of Parliamentary business. Mrs. Joan Wykes, GLC Councillor, despite having another meeting, was able to join us during the evening, and readily dealt with questions concerning traffic, and the Green Belt.

Members were brought up to date with current issues, and under Any Other Business the nuisances of street parking and garden bonfires were once more raised. The bonfire problem is the subject of a separate section in this edition of 'The Cockpit'; but the problem of parking, as members already know, is one of long-standing frustration, and the alleviation is entirely dependent upon police staffing strength and availability.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

The following Officers and Committee Members were elected for the year 1982/3.

Chairman: A.T.C. Jones
Vice-Chairman: Lt. Col. C.B. Weniger
Treasurer: C.P. Miscampbell
Committee: H.T.G. Brown, C.M. Dunn,
J. Kinsella, A. Osmond, T. Turner
in addition to those already serving:
K. Catchpole, A.W. Coles, D. Howard, G. Payne,
B. Platt, P.A. Turner, P. Young
Co-opted for 1982-3 Miss N. Comport,
Miss P. Howley, Mrs. L. Pullar, A.R. Turner

Auditor: F.W. Baker
Editor 'The Cockpit': P.A. Turner

We welcome a new member to our Committee, namely, Andrew Osmond of Holbrook Lane.

SUB-COMMITTEES

At the Executive meeting following the AGM these sub-Committees were set up:

Planning: Weniger, T. Turner, Kinsella,
Payne, Brown, Young
Conservation: Dunn (deputy Weniger)
Trees: Weniger, T. Turner, Miss N. Comport
Road Safety: Young
Publicity: P.A. Turner, Platt, Catchpole,
Osmond, Miss Spence
Social: Brown, Jones, and co-opted members
Traffic: Howard, Osmond
Flooding: The Kyd Brook Flood Liaison
Committee is a co-opted Committee fully
supported by the CRA. Its Chislehurst Chairman
is A.R. Turner

BFRA: Jones, A.R. Turner

Members are reminded that our Officers and Committee are elected at the AGM but our financial year is the calendar year, January to December.

TREES IN CHISLEHURST Two new leaflets distributed

We all value the rich heritage of trees that gives Chislehurst its unique character and appearance. With the recent extension of our Conservation Area, which provides for added protection to our trees, we co-operated with LBB in the production of two leaflets, 'Trees in Chislehurst' and 'Tree Care', and we have helped to distribute copies to all households in Chislehurst.

The leaflets give information on the protection and preservation of trees as well as valuable advice on tree care and planting.

PLANT A TREE

We can arrange advantageous purchase price for trees for members, if we are able to guarantee to the nursery an order in quantity. The tree leaflet referred to lists a variety of trees suitable for planting in Chislehurst; it shows their botanic name, and height at maturity, as well as describing their foliage and flowers.

If you are interested in purchasing one or more trees, for planting in November and February, please contact Col. Weniger, telephone 467 4575.

If we have sufficient response, we will be able to issue special purchase vouchers, enabling you to buy at a reduced cost.

FALKLANDS MEMORIAL

The Conservators have welcomed the CRA's proposal to plant an oak tree near the War Memorial Corner, in memory of those who died in the Falklands conflict. The chosen site will be near the junction of School Road and Church Road. A memorial plaque will also be placed by the tree.

COOKHAM DENE

The fate of this GLC owned property is still unknown. What is known is that the Valuation Department of the GLC has invited tenders from a selected list of developers and that Ferndale Homes Ltd. have a provisional agreement to buy subject to getting planning permission for their proposals.

An indication of what these might be was revealed at a meeting between representations of the company and the CRA, but it was made clear that the CRA could not give a decision without referring to the Executive Committee and the Manor Park residents.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The tentative plans were for 7 detached houses within the front grounds of Cookham Dene together with a two storey block of 26 flats. Also indicated were proposals to convert Cookham Dene into 3 large flats, conversion of the Stable block and an extension of the Gate House. The meadow at the rear was shown as remaining and the developers suggested that they were considering making

it over to a body such as the Commons Conservators if a satisfactory planning permission was obtained for the rest of the site.

Following the distribution of notices to all householders in Manor Park and adjoining roads, a meeting was held in the village hall on Friday, 25th June, 1982. Mr. Alun Jones, Chairman of the CRA, chaired this meeting and was assisted by CRA Vice-Chairman, Lt. Col. Charles Weniger, and Mr. Tony Turner, Chairman of the CRA's Planning Sub-Committee. Fifty people signed the attendance sheets.

On display were the preliminary proposals by Ferndale Homes Ltd. as described above. It was clear from the questions and points made from the floor that the greatest causes of concern are the proposed block of flats, the possible loss of trees and the general change of appearance to the area which the development would cause. A local committee was set up with T. Turner, CRA, as convenor.

DEVELOPMENT OPPOSED

The results of personal visits made by others to the majority of households in Manor Park were conveyed to the Committee. These results, together with other factors considered, led the Committee to decide that with the exception of the possible conversion of Cookham Dene itself, the adjacent stable block and the extension of the gate house, the proposals for development on this site are unacceptable and if formally submitted as a planning application to the London Borough of Bromley should be totally opposed.

This decision has been formally conveyed both to the Developers and the Council's Planning Department.

One of the 'other factors' which led to the decision to oppose these proposals was the appeal decision earlier this year against the Council's refusal to allow development in the adjoining grounds of 'Saxby's'. The Inspector's report clearly vindicated the CRA's grounds of objection, which (notwithstanding the fact that the land is zoned for housing) were that development here would be detrimental to the locality's rural appearance and to the adjoining woodland. It is felt that this applies equally, if not more so to Cookham Dene.

It is disappointing to discover that although the property was offered in the first place to the National Trust, they appear to have taken no action. One of our members is currently engaged in correspondence with the National Trust's area agent, who, it seems, was not consulted by his head office.

THE NEXT MOVE

The latest news is that the developers will be having further discussions with the Council's Planning Officials who are expected to be non-committal as to what might be approved and to suggest that the best way to find out would be to submit a formal application. We understand that the developers will do this in September.

Residents will be kept advised of the situation, as before, by the distribution of leaflets via the sub-committee. This sort of exercise incurs expense and it is hoped that the recent production and delivery of the 'Trees' leaflets, together with the application forms for the CRA membership, will result in the majority (if not all) of the Manor Park residents joining the Association.

THE CAMDEN GROUP

In our last issue, we mentioned that three members of our Committee, Bryan Platt, David Howard and Keith Catchpole, had set up a special group to deal with the problems currently threatening the amenity of the Kyd Brook valley between Chislehurst Station and Elmstead Woods Station. Affiliated to the CRA, the Camden Group covers both sides of the valley and thus serves part of Bickley as well. Now operational, the Group benefits in particular from the expertise of the many professional people who live in the valley. One interesting feature of their work is that each problem is treated as a specific project with its own manager, who draws on other people's help as required. Two such projects are the Amey Roadstone Depot and the Bickley Arms Dive Bar, which are reported here.

AMEY ROADSTONE

In May, the Amey Roadstone Corporation applied for planning permission to develop their aggregate handling depot at Chislehurst Station Goods Yard, which is leased from British Rail. If the development is allowed to go ahead, it will radically change the lives of hundreds of families in the Kyd Brook valley and affect virtually everyone who lives in Chislehurst and drives a car.

The planning application itself is for the installation of a 'Rapid Rail Discharge System'. Identical to plant operating at other Amey depots, this bulk discharge machinery would enable Amey to use their own rail trucks, which are double the size of those used at present. Incoming trainloads of aggregate would also double in size, from 650 tonnes to 1,300 tonnes — yet each train in future would be unloaded in only 3 hours, Amey say, compared with the 9 hours that it currently takes to do the job.

All part of a Better Britain, one might think, except that Amey plan to build this industrial plant right in the middle of an established residential district, much of which has just become a Conservation Area (the noise from a bulk discharge plant is deafening and would reverberate all around the steep valley sides of the Kyd Brook). Even more critical is the predicted increase in heavy lorry traffic, as all aggregate brought in by rail is then distributed by road. Our recent lorry counts show that the depot already generates an astounding 140 lorry trips a day (compare this with the prediction of 25 a day when the depot was first opened). So, merely doubling the present throughput of the depot could produce nearly 300 lorry trips a day on our narrow, congested roads.

Perhaps the clearest indication yet of the size of the threat is that the first objections to the scheme have come from other big firms like Bovis Homes Ltd. and Courage Ltd., who were contacted straight away by the Camden Group. The CRA itself immediately alerted local councillors and made its views known to Bromley Council. For the moment, however, there is a lull while Bromley Council seeks more information from Amey Roadstone. Once these details become available, we shall alert everyone who is likely to be directly affected.

BICKLEY ARMS DIVE BAR

It is now well over a year since Courage Ltd. closed down the controversial disco at the Bickley Arms pub for a 'cooling-off period', since when the surrounding district has been quiet and peaceful at weekends. In the intervening period, we have been pressing Courage to remove the threat once and for all, as the pub's Dive Bar remains equipped to start up a disco again at any time. For this reason, we objected again this year to the Dive Bar's public music and dancing licence, and we shall continue to exert strong pressure of this kind until the problem is finally solved. On another front, we have held talks with Courage's top managers, and have put forward imaginative schemes for integrating the pub into the local community again. In the meantime, enjoy the peace and quiet, but be prepared to fight again, if necessary, for these precious rights.

GOSSHILL ROAD

The problem of fly-tipping in what should be a pleasant rural approach to the National Trust land is still with us. In order to try and solve this problem once and for all the CRA has written to the LBB asking them to arrange a meeting of all parties concerned. We hope that this meeting will take place in the near future.

BELMONT PARADE bus terminal

As reported in 'The Cockpit', December 1981, the CRA is supporting the petition of residents in the vicinity of the Bus Terminal to have it resited alongside the open ground in Belmont Lane. We understand that the GLC has supported this proposal, and the decision now rests with the London Transport Passengers' Committee.

CHISLEHURST RAILWAY STATION

We understand that, perhaps sadly, the station buildings alongside the southern boundary of the station are being pulled down by British Rail. These buildings are technically outside the Conservation Area, and are not protected in any way. We will continue to keep in contact with BR over the condition of the station and the station approach.

FRED SNOCKEN

Chislehurst lost one of its real characters in June when Fred Snocken died. Fred was well known in Chislehurst for his personal campaigns against the trend to develop Chislehurst in undesirable ways, and he was a great supporter of the efforts made a few years ago to improve the verges of the High Street.

Fred had been a member of the Association and had served on the Executive Committee.

We shall miss him.

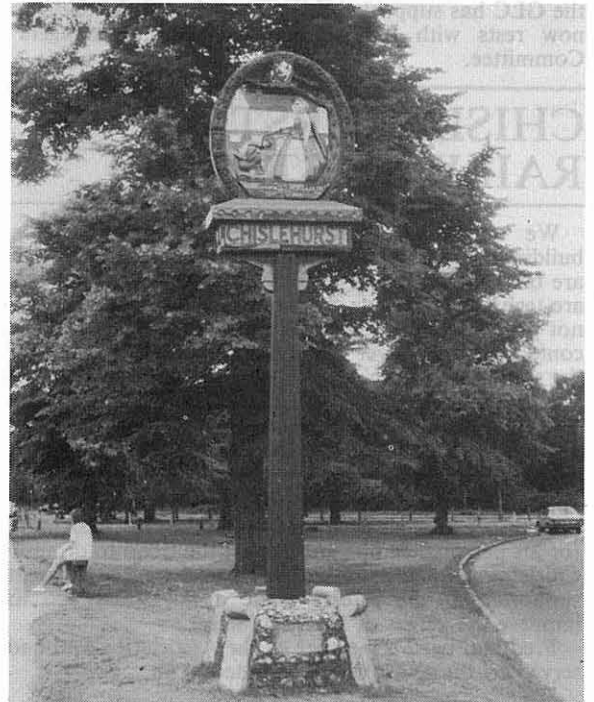
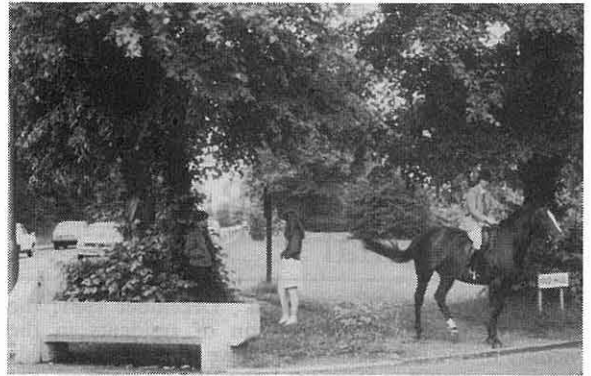
EMPRESS DRIVE

In spite of recent patching, there are still many bumps and pot-holes in Empress Drive. As this is the only road access to the public park, we are supporting requests from our members by asking the LBB to look upon this as a public thoroughfare and to resurface it accordingly.

RESTORATION work completed

Two of Chislehurst's best known land marks have been fully restored to their former glory. Our photographs show the horse trough at the top of Old Hill, and the Village sign.

Renovation work on the War Memorial is in hand by specialists appointed by the LBB, and we hope to show the result of their work in a future issue.



CHILDREN'S ART COMPETITION

Prizes for good ideas

In this issue of 'The Cockpit', we announce the first of two competitions for children. This competition is open to children (aged 15 and under) of all CRA members.

We want posters, paintings or drawings in colour for display. Sizes to be (i) standard A3 (16½" × 11¾") or (ii) larger up to 2'6" × 2'6".

The subject is simple: Chislehurst. The theme is all that we like about its natural beauty and character; all that we want to see preserved and enhanced.

The posters should include a short message that encourages people to appreciate Chislehurst and to preserve its special character.

Each entry should state on the back, entrant's name, age, birth date and address, and should be given to your Road Steward or sent to P.A. Turner, 10 Penn Gardens, Chislehurst.

PRIZES will be awarded for the best entries, as follows:

A3 posters: 1st prize— £5 record token
 2nd prize— 4 C90 tapes
 3rd prize— 2 C90 tapes
Paintings/Drawings: 1st prize— £5 record token
 2nd prize— 4 C90 tapes
 3rd prize— 2 C90 tapes

Entries will be considered for display on the notice board in the Library, for our outdoor display panels, and possibly for reproduction in future printwork.

Closing date for entries is NOVEMBER 30th 1982. All entries will be seen and judged by the CRA Executive Committee and winners' names published in the next issue of 'The Cockpit'.

The next competition to be announced later will be open to all children in Chislehurst, but it will be more complicated!

BONFIRES

Action can be taken

The nuisance of bonfires seems to be always with us and we receive many letters from members asking if any byelaws exist, which govern the use of garden bonfires.

The LBB has informed us that Bromley, like other local authorities, do not have such byelaws, nor are they able to make any under existing legislation.

Section 16 of the Clean Air Act 1956 is considered to give sufficient protection, as it makes it an offence for smoke from a garden bonfire to be a nuisance. No hard and fast rules are laid down, but it does state that bonfires are permitted so long as they do not cause a smoke nuisance to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

As we have said in earlier issues of 'The Cockpit', and the LBB confirm, it is best if the people suffering nuisance can overcome the problem by speaking directly to the neighbour concerned. If this course of action is not successful, the matter can be brought to the attention of the Environmental Health Officer who will investigate and take appropriate action.

The LBB also suggest that bonfires should be kept to the minimum and combustible materials taken to the Refuse Disposal Depot, Waldo Road off Homesdale Road, Bromley, which is open

Monday-Friday 9.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m.
Saturdays 7.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.
Sunday 8.00 a.m.-1.00 p.m.

LATE NEWS

A.R.C.'s application refused

At the D.C.C. meeting, held at the Civic Centre, Bromley, on Tuesday 31st August, 1982, the Amey Roadstone Corporation's application to introduce a bottom discharge system at their Depot in Chislehurst Goods Yard was firmly refused by the Council.

It was gratifying to see the tremendous personal support at the meeting; about 150 or more residents attended.

The C.R.A. is extremely grateful to all those people who gave their support to the campaign, and thanks the Camden Group for the way in which it handled this project.
