

THE COCKPIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHISLEHURST RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 1934 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. 41

March 1984

AGM - APRIL 24

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting will be held in THE METHODIST CHURCH HALL, PRINCE IMPERIAL ROAD, on Tuesday, 24th April 1984, at 8.15 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
2. Matters arising
3. Committee Report for 1983*
4. Accounts for 1983
5. Election of Officers
6. Election of Committee
7. Appointment of Auditor
8. Any other business

*Will members please note that Item 3, Committee Report for 1983, will have been covered in regular issues of 'The Cockpit'. This will avoid the need to give a long verbal report at the AGM. Questions may be asked arising from these issues.

CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

Were we to ask members what they recall of the Association's activities during the past year most of them would probably answer, 'The Green Belt issue'. It would be easy to imagine that we were wholly pre-occupied with this subject since it is one very close to the concern of our members living, as they do, in such a pleasant area. However, there were many other matters which claimed the attention of the Executive Committee and its Sub-Committees. These matters are reported regularly in 'The Cockpit'.

In order to remind members, particularly those who have joined the Association more recently, of how the routine work is dealt with by the Executive Committee, may I commence by saying that this Committee meets on the third Wednesday of each month at the Village Hall, Church Lane. Members of the Association are welcome to attend Executive Committee meetings if they wish to see how we operate or if they want to bring to our attention an important problem involving conservation, planning etc. We avoid political issues, being primarily concerned with the maintenance and improvement of the amenities of Chislehurst.

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

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

General Secretary:
A. R. TURNER

Editor:
P. A. TURNER

SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE

At the beginning of each working year Executive members volunteer to serve on one or more of the Sub-Committees or to act as delegates to other bodies such as the Conservation Advisory Committee of the London Borough of Bromley. The information and advice brought back to the Executive Committee by the Sub-Committees and delegates help to formulate our conclusions and decisions. As members can well imagine, planning and conservation being such contentious issues in this day and age, the major part of our time is taken up with these subjects.

And here I would appeal to any members who have specialist knowledge of planning, environmental, tree preservation, traffic matters etc. to come forward and offer their services to our Committee system. We do have powers to co-opt.

SOCIAL EVENTS

A matter for regret, in outlining the work of the Committees, is the thought that we have been unable to call upon the services of the dormant Social Sub-Committee. Finding a venue for a social evening, where parking is not a problem, has been increasingly difficult. However, we are exploring one or two possibilities and hope to resume our social gatherings in 1984. In anticipation, we invite any lady members, or gentleman members for that matter, to let us know if they would be prepared to assist in the organising of a social evening. Please don't leave everything to Committee members.

One possible venue for socials is 'Ripley', Sundridge Avenue, Bickley. We should like to know if you think it an acceptable suggestion.

CAMDEN AREA

In addition to the encouraging response of our members over the Green Belt debate there has been another heartening piece of news. Thanks to the tenacity with which the Camden Group has pursued the vexed question of the public music and dancing licence held by the Bickley Arms, Courage have now withdrawn their application for renewal of the licence. This is good news, indeed, which will bring some peace of mind to members and residents in the Camden area. We congratulate The Camden Group on their efforts and wish them well in their continued efforts to solve the Amey Roadstone Depot problem.

PLANNING EXPERTISE

In reflecting on what has been an extremely busy year for Officers and Committee members one thing impresses itself on my mind very readily, and that is the considerable debt we owe to Tony Turner of The Meadow. His planning expertise, his informed and well-written representations to Planning Committees and the time he has devoted to inspecting sites and attending Planning Committee meetings have been invaluable in protecting the amenities which we enjoy, and I am sure my colleagues on the Executive Committee will readily join me in thanking him for his efforts on our behalf.

Again it is a pleasure to record my warm thanks to my colleagues on the Executive Committee. Their support and loyalty over the past twelve months have been so readily given that chairing our meetings is a pleasure.

My personal thanks go also to our loyal band of Road Stewards who are the backbone of the Association.

I shall look forward to meeting many of you at the AGM on 24th April, when, it is hoped, your local Councillors will be present. In the meantime my thanks and best wishes to you all.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

It will be very helpful if nominations for the above are sent to the Chairman (at 10 Thistlemead) a week or so in advance of the AGM. The Constitution does not lay this down, but embarrassment is caused at the meeting when members who are present are nominated and their consent has not been obtained. Nominations must carry names of proposer and seconder and the assent and signature of the person nominated.

MEMBERSHIP FOR 1984

We are pleased to have your membership in 1984 and it is my wish to see as many of you as possible at our Annual General Meeting.

Our Road Stewards have been busy collecting 1984 subscriptions and issuing our new Membership Cards. If you do not already have a card for 1984 would you please contact your Road Steward, or the Chairman.

Subscriptions remain at 60p per member, or £1 per household per year. OAPs are 40p per member or household per year.

Reports of our major activities are published in 'The Cockpit', which all members receive regularly during the year. The Association also helps members with personal matters relating to planning or development problems, unwanted nuisance (noise, road hazards, flooding, etc.) and advises on action that can be taken to preserve our lovely neighbourhood.

We rely on your active support and will always welcome help and advice from the many trades and professions represented by our members.

THE FALKLANDS TREE

The young oak tree, sponsored by the CRA, near the War Memorial, has survived the winter, and we now expect to see it flourish.

THE GREEN BELT — STILL AT AMBER

The news of a reprieve for our green and pleasant surroundings comes as the result of a spirited and determined national campaign in which the residents of Chislehurst and the Association may justifiably feel they played a significant part. At the same time as our Green Belt leaflets were being distributed we wrote to the LBB's powerful Policy & Resources Committee urging that the LBB should itself press for the D.O.E.'s Circular to be withdrawn. We felt this to be particularly important for two reasons — firstly, Bromley is one of only a very small number of local authorities which may be considered as 'having the ear' of the Government; secondly, a firm decision by Bromley would serve to encourage the Borough's M.P.s to respond positively to representations from their constituents.

CRA LEAFLET

Despite a contrary recommendation from the Directorate of Technical Services to approve the circular, the members of the P & R Committee unanimously endorsed our call for its withdrawal. The distribution of our leaflet in Chislehurst resulted in our M.P. Roger Sims receiving letters from many hundreds of residents. If there had been any doubts (actually there were) in the minds of our M.P.s as to the need to take active steps against the Circular then these splendid results must have dispelled them.

On the 18th November in an adjournment debate in the House of Commons, Roger Sims very ably drew attention to the dangers posed to the Green Belt by the Circular and called on the Minister to withdraw it. In reply the Minister undertook to take account of the matters raised but he did not at that time accept that the Green Belt was threatened, although by now pressure from national organisations such as the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, and the Civic Trust was mounting and over 80 M.P.s signed a motion calling for the withdrawal of the Circular. Faced with such wide and determined opposition the Government withdrew it on December 2nd 1983.

OUR THANKS TO ROGER SIMS

We are deeply grateful to Roger Sims, not only for his response to our appeals but also for having replied to each of those who had registered their protest with him. We are also extremely grateful to our Road Stewards and Committee members for delivering the leaflets so promptly.

FIGHT NOT YET OVER

But the fight is not yet over! In January the Secretary of State published revised drafts of the Circulars 'Green Belt' and 'Land for Housing', which, despite acknowledging the importance of the Green Belt, emphasise the urgent need for more land for housing. The Council for the Protection of Rural England has met Ministers in the meantime to discuss these Circulars and having come away with their fears unallayed, has called a one-day conference in Central London on Saturday, 24th March at which the CRA will be represented.

Patrick Jenkin, the Secretary of State for Environment, will speak at this conference and will answer questions. We anticipate that he will be asked certain pertinent questions by our delegates. It is hoped that with this issue of 'The Cockpit' members will receive a copy of CPRE survey form relating to the use of Green Belt and open countryside and to their future. We urge you to respond promptly to these forms and to return them to your Road Stewards from whom they will be collected by Committee members.

KEEPING THE COMMONS CLEAN

The Commons Conservators do splendid work in maintaining the Commons and one of their major problems is the removal of rubbish. Recently a new problem has arisen; domestic refuse is being put into the litter bins provided, and this has attracted foxes and dogs who scavenge, and scatter the contents over a wide area.

We deplore the thoughtless actions of those people who spoil the Commons by disposing of their domestic refuse and rubbish on them.

LEISURE FACILITIES

As we prepare this issue for the printer we learn that there will be a meeting of the LBB Recreation Committee on the 15th March, when, it is hoped, we shall learn of some positive measures being taken towards the provision of additional outdoor playing facilities in our area. The Chislehurst Leisure Committee, under the Chairmanship of Mr. L. B. Cross has continued to meet regularly and has been constantly in touch with the Local Authority which affirms that once negotiations with various bodies are completed it will be in a position to make known to the public its plans. Further news will be given at the CRA's AGM.

NATIONAL TRUST Forthcoming Activities

Are you a member of the National Trust? If so have you considered joining your local Orpington and Chislehurst Centre? You will be able to enjoy a full programme of talks, outings and events and support the Trust in its task of preserving the Nation's heritage of homes, gardens and places of natural beauty.

Lecture meetings for the forthcoming months are:

- April 26 'National Trust Gardens', Vera Harrison
Methodist Church, Orpington. 8.00 p.m.
- May 10 'Inns of Kent', Edward J. Hayward
Methodist Church, Chislehurst. 2.30 p.m.
- May 24 'Know your London', Marc Ferdman
Beaverwood School, Chislehurst. 8.00 p.m.
- June 28 'Sissinghurst & Rainham & General Conservation', John Burkett.
Beaverwood School, Chislehurst. 8.00 p.m.

Outings during the year will include visits to Stourhead, Hughenden Manor, Wimpole Hall, and the Tower of London. New members can be sure of a warm welcome. Further details from Mrs. Diane Saunders, 67 Broomhill Road, Orpington, Kent.

TREES Gale damage

Recent gales have blown down many fine trees and it is therefore all the more important to prevent further losses by thoughtless or unnecessary actions. If you suspect that tree felling is taking place without permission please ring the LBB (464-3333) and ask for the Tree Preservation Officer. The Department will know whether or not an application has been made or granted.

OLD HILL COURT Some prime trees lost

The folly of granting planning applications in sensitive areas without giving real examination and thought to the problems which can arise subsequently, is exemplified by what has happened in this particular case. Years ago planning permission was given to build on this piece of land containing some fine specimen trees but situated not far above part of the cave complex. We successfully persuaded the developer to change the application for building two blocks of flats to one for building houses. We suggested five houses were ample, but, on appeal, the developer's application for seven was granted. The result? A flurry of activity last Autumn — meetings with neighbours, the Tree Officer, the site foreman, and with Officers of the LBB. We have saved some trees, on the perimeter, but we have lost some prime specimens. Building on part of the site will not proceed until the ground has been reinforced from below within the caves.

GOSSHILL ROAD

It is now likely that the landscaping part of the scheme to improve the appearance of this road will be implemented within the next two or three months. The rubbish which has been dumped there over recent years will now be removed and the landscaped area will be protected by bollards. The latter action will act as a protection until such time that the width barriers can be erected. Permission to erect the barriers has been applied for to the GLC but the processing of the application, according to the LBB, takes time!

A WALK AROUND CHISLEHURST New Enbro leaflet

ENBRO (Environment Bromley), a voluntary organisation with the aim of conserving and interpreting the natural and man-made environment, has recently produced an excellent leaflet listing 26 places of interest in Chislehurst. With a map showing how to see them all, with illustrations and historical information, the leaflet is excellent value at 35p. It is available in Chislehurst and Bromley Libraries, at Coolings shop in the High Street, and at the National Trust Shop in Royal Parade.

BROMLEY IN BLOOM

The 1984 Competition

The LBB's Bromley in Bloom Competition is a very popular and successful event and we are pleased to give details about this year's activities.

The 1984 competition will be launched with another garden exhibition in Queens Gardens Bromley on Thursday and Friday 26th and 27th April where the leading Garden Centres and Nurserymen have been invited to stage a display, and given an opportunity to sell plants and sundries. In addition to the display marquees this year, there will be a refreshment tent where visitors may relax and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee.

The Bromley in Bloom Competition will have eight classes this year, an addition of one from 1983:

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| 1 The Coolings Nursery Cup | For the best Front Garden |
| 2 The Tollgate Garage Rose Bowl | For Balcony and Window Box Displays |
| 3 The Cramphorn Cup | For Residents and Tenants Associations Areas |
| 4 The Housing Committee Trophy | For Council Controlled Housing Areas |
| 5 The Robbins Cup | For Shops or business premises in Shopping Areas |
| 6 The Joint Brewers Challenge Bowl | For Public Houses and Hotels |
| 7 The Forecourt Award | For Garages, Filling Stations or Car Showrooms |
| 8 The Eric Day Improvement Award | For New or Improved entries from Garages Filling Stations or Car Showrooms |

Please note that it is permissible to enter for individual front gardens, as well as the Cramphorn Cup or Housing Committee Trophy. Your interest and efforts will help to ensure that Bromley remains the floral borough of London.

MR. A. W. McKENZIE

58 years in Chislehurst

One of Chislehurst's senior citizens, Alexander McKenzie, who has lived in the Old Hill/Lower Camden area for the past 58 years, has now become one of the first residents at the newly opened Whiteoak Court Nursing Home in Selby Close.

Mr. McKenzie, formerly an active member of the CRA, is still one of our most loyal supporters. In spite of ill-health he was a familiar figure in the area, and a parishioner of Christ Church, Lubbock Road.

In 1954 he was awarded the CBE for his work in the Civil Service.

His book, an authoritative account of The Treatment of Enemy Property, was written in retirement, and published in 1981.

We thank him for all that he has done for the CRA, and wish him happiness in his new residence.

CHISLEHURST

DONKEY DERBY

Sunday May 27th 1984

The Chislehurst Round Table is organising a Donkey Derby from 12.30 p.m. until 5.00 p.m. in the Recreation Ground, off Empress Drive, on Sunday 27th May 1984. The organisers expect to attract over 10,000 visitors, and in addition to providing an enjoyable day's entertainment, they will also raise funds for local charities.

MAY QUEEN

This year's ceremony will be held on Saturday, 5th May, at the traditional place on the Common. Entrants for the children's fancy dress competition should report to Red Hill School at 1.45 p.m. The procession will arrive at the Common by 3.00 p.m.

There are vacancies for the May Queen's retinue in 1985. Applicants must be five years old at the time of joining. Please write to Mrs. V. E. Quinn, Secretary, Chislehurst May Queen Society, 18 Belmont Lane, Chislehurst.

The Society is very much dependent upon the generosity of the public. Those wishing to make donations should contact either the Secretary, or the Treasurer, Mr. R. Newport-Gwilt, 49 High Street, Chislehurst.