



THE COCKPIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHISLEHURST RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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

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

No. 1

September, 1966

Your Committee continues actively engaged on matters concerning Chislehurst and its residents and now gives an account of its stewardship since the annual general meeting in February.

Commons Conservators: As requested by the general meeting, a letter was sent to the Conservators urging them to administer the Commons in accordance with the terms of the Commons Act of 1888. The Clerk replied that this request had been placed before the Board and had been noted by them.

Since that time, the Board has elected a new Chairman in the person of Mr. L. Leighton Irwin, M.A., LL.B., J.P., who has already stated his determination to see that not one inch of common land is at any time lost. Our members will wish him well in pursuance of this aim and as Chairman of the only statutory body retaining the name of Chislehurst.

Cricket Ground Road: Due to the confusion remaining as to the exact boundary of the commons on the east side of this road, your committee applied to the Local Authority for a Tree Preservation Order on twelve trees forming an essential background to the Cricket Ground. This Order was duly made by the Borough Council and has been confirmed by the appropriate Ministry. It does not affect our claim that the original boundary remains the boundary of the common. Arrangements for the annual walk on this common land are given later in this newsletter.

Shepherds Green: At the request of our members at and near Shepherds Green we took up with the Conservators the question of the unauthorised use of common land for access to the Masonic Old Peoples' Homes now in course of erection. It transpired that the verge was partly common land and partly owned by the Borough. The Masonic

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SATURDAY, 24th SEPTEMBER

"Walk" on common land
Watts Lane, 3 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, 5th OCTOBER

Social Evening
Graham Chiesman House,
St. Paul's Cray Road, 8 p.m.

Institution has now offered to the public an area considerably in excess of that used as an access. This addition to Shepherds Green is considered by your committee as a satisfactory solution. It is proposed that seats be placed there.

Walls in Ashfield Lane: Your Association was represented at a public enquiry concerning a wall of excessive height at "Chestnut Cottage" refusal of permission for which has been confirmed by the Minister of Housing and Local Government. As requested by our members at the general meeting, the Borough Council has been asked to take steps to secure the reduction in height of an adjoining wall at "Yelsen". This constitutes a traffic hazard reported to have caused more than one car to be driven into the Rush Pond.

Nuisance following Evening Entertainment in the Caves: This thorny problem was the subject of discussion at our general meeting. Although your committee has arranged

meetings with the aggrieved residents, the freeholders of the caves, the lessee of the caves, and the Metropolitan Police, it has not been found possible to reduce the nuisance by voluntary action. The Home Office suggested that action might be taken under the Noise Abatement Act of 1960, but the Town Clerk advises that this is impracticable.

Your committee has secured the co-operation both of Mr. A. Macdonald, M.P., and Lord Willis of Chislehurst, in asking Parliament to include, in a new Bill for the regulation and licensing of entertainment clubs, wording that will include caves as well as buildings, thereby remedying a defect in existing legislation. The Bromley Borough Council has also written to the Home Office in support of our plea. The Bill is now before the House of Lords.

The Rates: We have set up a sub-committee to examine the situation. It is of no use protesting at increases unless positive suggestions are made for economies. In the meantime an earlier suggestion by your committee is now receiving the attention of the Borough Council, namely a "cost-effectiveness" enquiry of the Council's administration.

Education: We set up a sub-committee to examine the Borough Education Officer's proposals for a reorganisation of schools. Their findings were fully reported in the Kentish Times. They were opposed to the destruction of any part of the educational system that could be proved to be working well, particularly if the proposed changes required greater expenditure of public money. They saw great improvements in the Secondary Schools in recent years and felt that these could be continued to provide an even higher standard. They were not opposed to purpose-built comprehensive schools in new areas. In short, they were not in favour of change for the sake of change if it threw new burdens on to the ratepayers.

Public Transport: The Divisional Movements Manager, British Rail, received a deputation from this Association on 21st March. Mr. Howell, Area Manager at Orpington, attended our committee meeting on 20th April. The subject at both meetings was the overcrowding of trains during the peak hours and the possibilities of relieving the congestion. We have since been informed of proposals for new, wider footbridges and improved train indicators at London Bridge.

Parliamentary Representation: Mr. Alistair Macdonald, Member of Parliament for the Chislehurst Division since the General Election in March, attended our committee meeting in April and contributed to the discussion on overcrowded trains. He has since undertaken to help in con-

nection with the Lower Camden nuisances, as reported above.

The committee sent the cordial thanks of the Association to Dame Patricia Hornsby-Smith, D.B.E., for her unstinting help on many problems during her long period as the Member for Chislehurst.

Chislehurst Chamber of Trade: Cordial relations have been resumed with the Chamber and joint meetings have been held. It is felt that, with Chislehurst so small a corner of so large a borough, the co-operation of local organisations is essential in all matters on which there is common agreement.

Postal Facilities: In common with the Borough Council and many local organisations, we protested at the earlier postal collections; in other words, lessening facilities in return for increasing costs. We have recently made representations on the very long periods during which public telephone call boxes remain out of use after vandalism. The difficulties of the postal authorities in this matter are well understood and we make a most earnest appeal to our members to report to the police, from the nearest private telephone, any vandalism they may see taking place at telephone kiosks.

Pavements: We have called the attention of the Borough Engineer to the condition of pavements in Chislehurst that have caused falls and injuries to pedestrians. We ask our members to support the Federation of Ravensbourne Residents Associations in their borough-wide campaign to reduce the number of loose-running dogs and, in particular, the fouling of footpaths. In closely built-up areas such as ours, this is a most important effort, both in maintaining the amenities and from the point of view of public health. The Borough Council has erected notices in certain parts, but the matter entirely rests with the burgesses.

Planning Applications: The Association has made various representations to the Planning Authority where it appeared that proposed development would adversely affect the residents as a whole.

May Queen: Due to heavy rain overnight and the consequent difficulty of preparing the customary arena on the common, the annual crowning of the May Queen took place in the Red Hill School hall on the afternoon of Saturday, 7th May. Several hundred people attended and, the weather improving, the Maypole dancing and country dancing took place on the playing fields, followed by a procession through the High Street.

On the following Saturday, Queen Gillian Archer, with her 25 attendants, took part in the larger festivities on Hayes Common when 40 queens attended.

All the arrangements were made by a joint committee with our friends of the Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men. The expenditure, much increased as a result of the local Government amalgamations, was largely met by public donations. An account will be published at the end of the year.

Preservation of Common Rights: In conformity with Counsel's opinion, the second annual walk on common land within retaining walls in Cricket Ground Road will take place on SATURDAY, 24th SEPTEMBER, 1966. Members are asked to assemble in Watts Lane at 3.0 p.m. Your committee will advise as to the necessity of walking on common land which is being privately cultivated at the top of Old Hill.

Care should be taken not to damage flowers even if planted on common land.

Social Evening: A Social Evening for members and their friends will be held at Graham Chiesman House, St. Paul's Cray Road, on WEDNESDAY, 5th OCTOBER, at 8 p.m. The Mayor and Mayoress, the Member of Parliament, the Chairman of the Conservators, the President of the Chamber of Trade, Dame Patricia Hornsby-Smith, our

Aldermen and Councillors have been invited as guests of the Association.

Refreshments will be provided. There will be light entertainment.

Tickets, at 4/6d. per person, are obtainable from the Chairman of the Social Committee, Mr. F. W. Grundy, 27 Lubbock Road; or from any member of the committee.

Early application is invited. No further notice of this event will be sent.

Subscriptions: Members in arrear are kindly requested to use the form annexed.

NEW MEMBERS are essential if our Association is to take an effective part in local affairs. The annual subscription is 2/6d. (6d. for O.A.P's.).

Unity is strength; ask your neighbours to join by using the form below.

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:.....

NamesIf new member please tick:.....

Address

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