



## Brocsoc 3 years old...!

**SO WHAT** has the Society achieved in those three years? Conservation being its primary objective, the main achievement has been to stop the threatened large-scale demolition throughout the area. The threat was in two forms — first, the piecemeal attack by property speculators hoping to make a quick profit during the property boom; and secondly, the clearance of certain roads and areas by Lewisham council as part of an out-of-date 'master plan' (Rokeby Road and Upper Brockley were part of this).

The Society, together with members of the Manor Avenue Residents Association, supported by a number of enlightened councillors (in particular, Nick Taylor, chairman of Planning & Development) were able to create a precedent for the future by opposing applications for demolition and putting forward proposals for conversion and rehabilitation of the existing buildings.

Although this is now regarded as a commonsense approach to help solve the housing shortage, some people are still in favour of a policy of 'sweeping away everything old to make way for the new . . .' such a policy has been applied to most of Deptford which locals will tell you has had the guts torn out of it by the planners and politicians. It is particularly sad, because the Council's excellent improvement scheme around Brookmill Road shows what can be done and how the older part of Deptford could have looked if it had been 're-habilitated' instead of demolished.

The 'spirit' or 'feeling' in an area is difficult to define, but in Brockley, the handsome old houses, numerous large trees, the open space of Hilly Fields and other small things like the chiming of the clock on St. Peter's Church, give an overall sense of permanence; a feeling of continuity from one generation to another.

When Conservation Areas are 'declared', some tend to become 'trendy' and 'gentrified', ending up as precious enclaves of one social class. But Brockley in this sense is unique in that it is a perfect example of what the politicians often refer to as a 'good social mix' — different income groups, different ethnic groups, a balance of old and young people, light industry in the mews, a variety of shops and pubs — all adding a quality to the whole area: a quality many people feel is worth preserving — hence the Brockley Society!.

Apart from the general activities of the Society — waste paper collection, tree pruning service, information through the news sheet, and the various pressure campaigns, there are two other main achievements to date. These are the annual event of the midsummer Fayre on Hilly Fields and the initiation to turn St. Peter's Hall into a Centre with Amenities & Recreation for All. The last issue of the News sheet gave the background of this and in another column in this issue you will find a brief statement of the present situation.

The organisation and running of the Brockley Midsummer Fayre has meant a

lot of work by those involved, both before the event and on the day. The finance for running it has come from the monthly waste paper collection — this year the Fayre made over £250 profit and this was donated to the St. Peter Centre project. Most residents agree that the Fayres have been a great success and worth all the effort; "Events like this achieve more in one day for community relations than all the high-flown reports and symposiums . . ."

As to the future, apart from continuing to push for the principles of conservation, the Society will devote its attention to some specific items.

The number of empty properties in Brockley still remains high but it is hoped that with the recent change in Government policy plus the combined operations of the Housing Association and the Council, this situation will rapidly improve.

The bad conditions in which some private tenants live due to the apathy of absentee landlords need looking into: powers exist for the Local Authority to insist that repairs are carried out and living conditions are to an acceptable standard. We hope to give further information on this subject in later News sheets.

The Manor Avenue traffic experiment is expected to start in October. In connection with this, the problem of the junction at Wickham Road and Lewisham Way needs resolving following the temporary installation of the

## Annual General Meeting

IN ST PETER'S HALL  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21st. 1976  
at 8 o'clock

Come and help to decide how we can  
make this area a better place to live in:  
enjoy  
wine & cheese beer & bun

traffic islands which were requested by the Society. The outcome of this depends a great deal on what is decided as a result of the traffic experiment in the Friendly Street area.

The Brockley Society, unlike most resident groups, does not have a paid-up membership. It is an organisation set up by local people to act as a pressure group and to provide information on current planning matters. It is run by the four elected officers and a voluntary group of approximately 40 Road Representatives. Day-to-day financing is by fund raising ideas and income from the monthly collection of waste paper. The reason for not having a 'membership' was to make the Society open to everyone living within the conservation area. In practice, this has not worked out as hoped, for the "Road Rep", monthly meetings have been held in private houses thus restricting the number of people able to attend and inevitably making it difficult for anyone new to come and join in. In future, however, Road Rep., meetings will be held each month in St. Peter's Hall and any resident can attend. If you have strong feelings about what is needed in Brockley, or have a grievance you wish to air, or would simply like to come and join in, the next two meetings will be on November 3rd, and December 1st. at 8 o'clock. **John Moreland (Chairman)**

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING in  
Brockley Road/end of Wickham Road.

The Brockley Society asked the Council to consider this, and the Highways and Public Works Committee of Lewisham Council agree that a crossing here is desirable. The exact positioning is difficult to decide and this is being discussed with the GLC and the Police.

## WASTE PAPER

NEWSPAPER  
OLD MAGAZINES  
CARDBOARD  
OLD DIRECTORIES  
ETC., ETC., ETC.

will be collected on  
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 6th. 1976  
starting at 10 o'clock

Please put your bundles out EARLY  
WHERE THEY CAN BE SEEN  
FROM THE ROAD

If not collected by 6 o'clock  
please phone Fred Huthwaite  
692 1608 or better still,  
bring round to the collecting point  
at 47 WICKHAM ROAD

## Face-lift for Upper Brockley Shop Forecourts



# Planning Group

Although the Planning Group have never been able to meet regularly, we have worked together when issues have arisen concerning the buildings or the environment of our area. Those involved are interested, enthusiastic, and professionals in such jobs as architecture, landscape architecture, surveying, and quantity surveying.

Regular tasks over the last three years have been:

*Attending monthly meetings of the Borough Conservation Advisory Committee, and of other committees*

*Advising on details of house improvement and building legislation.*

*Keeping an index of all planning applications.*

*Keeping an eye on newspapers for planning items or local news.*

*Receiving notice of all planning applications and publishing these in the BrocSoc News sheet.*

*Finding time to visit Catford Town Hall to examine plans of the more important or controversial schemes.*

*Commenting on reports etc.*

*Writing letters of support or objection (which may mean research into Planning Legislation, etc.)*

John Moreland and Chris Johnson attend the Conservation Advisory Committee meetings at which there are local councillors, council officers, and representatives from the other Conservation Areas in Lewisham. We find that opinions put forward are listened to sympathetically and are often acted on by Lewisham Council.

All planning applications are discussed and positive recommendations are put forward to the Council's Planning Committee.

We have also conducted surveys to back-up campaigns on empty houses, traffic, trees, pavements, lamp-posts, etc.

All this means that the people who make the decisions are made more aware of what local people think.

Apart from the obvious successes — the forecourt to Upper Brockley Road Shops, the proposal to use St. Peter's Hall as a Community Centre, and the saving from demolition of 61 Breakspears Road, success has been gradual. It will be seen in the improvement in the standard of external design and conversion of houses and we trust that our time and effort will prove to have been worthwhile over the years.

Chris & Juliet Johnson

A proposal for a tree planting scheme at Myatt Road School is being discussed.

## Thank you!

A letter of appreciation has been received from Lil Bickley for the £10 Brockley Society contributed to the Summer Project of the Brockley Play-scheme.

BrocSoc News Sheet is published every 3 months. All items for publication to be in the hands of the editor Bill Turner 104 Tressillian Road SE4 by the 21st. of Dec, Mar, June, Sept.

DELIVERED FREE TO OVER 3,000 HOUSEHOLDS IN THE BROCKLEY CONSERVATION AREA

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 1976

The flood of applications for conversion to flats is a very hopeful sign for the area.

**124/126 LEWISHAM WAY**

Conversion to four flats with dormer windows in the front.

**20 and 26 TRESSILLIAN ROAD**

Each conversion to two maisonettes.

**33 and 95 MANOR AVENUE**

Each conversion into three dwellings.

**5 DRAKE ROAD**

Conversion into three flats (a very interesting scheme by Solon Housing Association which they considerably discussed with Brockley Society before applying for planning permission.

**96 BREAKSPEARS ROAD**

Conversion to three flats.

**3/5 CRANFIELD ROAD**

Joint conversion into three dwellings.

**54 CRANFIELD ROAD**

Conversion to two dwellings with external stair at the back.

**131 UPPER BROCKLEY ROAD**

Conversion to two maisonettes.

## St Peter's Centre

The management committee has now been formed and meets monthly. The fourth meeting was on September 13th. Legal business connected with the lease of the building by the Church authority to the St. Peter's Centre Management Committee has taken time

The development committee has prepared schedules of work starting on the exterior of the building, and the finance committee has drawn up hiring agreements for the use of the hall.

Working parties have already been cleaning up the Hall, clearing rubbish, repairing water pipes, stripping chairs ready for repainting, etc. Any voluntary craftsmen would be very welcome: there is electrical work, plumbing, wood-working and of course labouring work to be done. If you are willing and able to help, please contact Ray Cornwell on 692 9136 to add your name to the list of helpers.

**FUND RAISING.** A dinner dance held by the St. Peter's Church Catering Team raised £150, and following the Jumble Sale on October 9th., there are plans for a Social later in the year, and Bingo on Thursday nights starting in December.

Gladys Rogerson

## STOP PRESS

**WANTED Artists studio space 300 sq/ft + with elec & water phone Les 692 4357**

**ST PETERS CENTRE have scaffold, now need U if UR a scaffolder to help renovation. Also roofers and electricians to help. Please contact Ray 35 Breakspears Rd or phone 692 9136 if U can help**

**WANTED by landscape architect: flat, urgent. Would share. Phone Geoff Beilby 836 9456**

## Celebration of H.M. THE QUEEN'S SILVER JUBILEE

Events are being planned by the Local Council for May, June and July 1977 and Brockley Society hope to have something arranged during this period. If you have any ideas please contact Maureen Mayers 118 Tressillian Road, phone 691-1354

## exchange & MART

**CHRISTMAS & BIRTHDAY CARDS AND GIFTS** Mrs Percival has catalogues showing many interesting and inexpensive items. All profit to St. Peter's Centre. Phone 692 8477 after 5 o'clock for loan of catalogue, or to call and inspect.

**METALS, BADGES & BUTTONS** Chas. Smith would like to receive items for his History of Regiments. Donations to the Society. Please phone 692 7048. **WINDOW CLEANING SERVICE** phone 692 9136 **USED POSTAGE STAMPS** wanted for OXFAM. Deliver to 104 Tressillian Road or phone 692 1996. **HORSE MANURE** Bring your own plastic bag and 10p per bag for Society Funds: Appointment - 692 9136.

**WANTED** Premises for small pottery workshop - garage, basement etc., Ring Teresa Earle -692 2394

Have you a flat to let, to share or for sale. A mention in this News sheet may solve your problem.

## THE Summer Fayre

WAS A GREAT SUCCESS BECAUSE OF ...

### ★ GIFTS AND DONATIONS FROM:

**Upr. Brock Road:** Georginas Hairdresser Masiello's The Wine Warren DIP Records Mintons Eastern Traders Mr. Wong  
**Loampit Hill:** The Old Firm Northwood's Post Office Patel Newsagents **Coulgate Street** Amin Tobacconist Doreen's Stores **Harefield Road:** Brockley Aquaria **Tyrwhitt Road:** Kelly Confectioner Taylor's Grocers **Lewisham Way:** Post Office No. 150 Quality Bargains Alex. Sloane Stewards Greengrocer Mace Supermarket Exotica Supermarket

### ★ THE VOLUNTARY SERVICES OF.

Cockney Sparrows Road Show (692 5077)  
Trampoline Team from Sedgemoor School  
Brockley School of Dancing

### ★ AND OF COURSE:

the many residents who helped as stall holders and "backroom boys" (and girls) without whose tireless efforts the Super FAYRE would not have been.

**RESULT** Lots of Fun and **★★★★** £260 for St. Peter's Centre.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Keith & Maureen Mayers, Ray & Maureen Cornwell, Ron Kilsby, Barry Becket, and others too numerous to mention who helped to make it a success.

JUMBLE SALE OCT.9-over £200 !

## EMPTY HOUSES

You will have noticed that there is quite a lot of building and conversion activity going on at present and we asked Councillor Pepper if he could let us have a statement on the present position and on the Council policy in general. He very kindly gave us the following information:

*There are approximately 31 council owned empty houses within the conservation area, most of which will have works completed by the end of the year. The remainder are, I am told, mainly owned by housing associations over whom we have no control. All empties owned by the council are programmed for repair and/or conversion-improvement. They, and the others we own throughout the borough, cannot all be dealt with at the same time. Nor would it be sensible to use them as short life property for homeless families if it meant moving people in and out over a period of months. Since March of this year 150 conversions/improvements of acquired properties have been completed - by next March this should be something over 400.*

*Our policy on empty properties depends on the future plans for each individual house. If they are earmarked for demolition in 2 or 3 years time and are useable then we use them, or allow Lewisham Family Squatters or other groups to borrow them. If they are for conversion/improvement, i.e. with a guaranteed life of 15 to 30 years plus, then they are put in the programme, passing through the various and time consuming processes of architects' drawings, planning permission, tendering and actual building works. Privately owned empty houses which stand unused for many months are liable to be purchased by negotiation or are compulsorily purchased. No-one likes houses standing empty for long, but sometimes that is the price we pay to get them modernised and improved with real guaranteed life for many years to come.*



30 St. Margaret's Road - in our last issue we commented that this house had been empty for over two years, but now it is being refurbished by the Council. Good news!

"The past should serve the present"  
Mao Tse-Tung