

BROCKLEY



SOCIETY

NEWS SHEET NO. 50 JANUARY 1988

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

● A.G.M. 1987 ●

At the A.G.M. in October the officials elected were:

Chairman: Gillian Heywood
Vice Chairman: Bob Hayes
Secretary: Bernie Harper
Treasurer: Jerry Casey

These officers will serve for a year, with those others who have volunteered to help.

Newsletter Editors: K & W Turner
Newsletter Distribution: Sheila Job
Fayre Organiser: Chrissie Webb
Local History: Alec Gilles
Mews Committee Chairman: Alan Jaques.

The Chairman reported on the work done by the Society throughout the year and the Treasurer reported on the Financial situation.

From the profits of the Fayre, £100 was voted towards the upkeep of the buildings in St Peter's Centre.

Refreshments were provided by Bernie and Dave Harper and Juliet Johnson.

● BROCSOC MEETINGS ●

These are held in St Peter's Centre on the first WEDNESDAY in each month. The next meeting is on:

FEBRUARY 3rd

8 o'clock in St Peter's Centre.

Many people ring up the members when they have problems but few come to the meetings to hear what BrocSoc is doing for the area. Why not come with a friend or neighbour and see what it's all about. Everyone who lives in the Conservation Area is a member of BrocSoc.

The Midsummer Fayre which we hold on Hilly Fields each year is our main fund raising event to pay for the Newsletters and running the society.

Another idea for fund raising is to hold an indoor International Food Fair. We have many people of different origins in this area — England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, France, Ghana, India, Pakistan, Turkey, China and the West Indies to name a few! People could prepare cakes or dishes of different countries for sale.

If you are interested in helping to organise such an event, contact Jean on 692 4487.

***** Midsummer Fayre 88 *****

Although it is only January, it is not too early for us to be planning the Annual BrocSoc Summer Fayre which will be held on Saturday, July 2, 1988. As usual the venue will be Hilly Fields.

The Fayre last year was very successful and raised over £500. This was only due to a last minute appeal in which we managed to get enough helpers to get the event off the ground.

This year we would like to make the Fayre even more of a success and provide much more enjoyment for the great numbers of local residents who support it each year. We need people to help with many and varied tasks. We would also like to hear from schools or clubs in the area who would like to enter a team in a few hours of sporting events on the day.

DEPTFORD LIBRARY

Rumours are rumours but one rumour that seems to persist is regarding the future of Deptford Library in Lewisham Way.

Lewisham Council is considering closing some of the libraries as part of its cost cutting. Along with other London boroughs the council is facing bankruptcy unless savings in the region of £30 million can be made in their budget.

Cutting library services is one of the soft options but one that affects all the community. Deptford library is well-used by local residents, students and particularly the local schools.

We would urge everyone to campaign to save Deptford library and others under similar threat. So write to:

- a) Graeme Sandell — Chair, Leisure Services Committee.
- b) Local councillors — Jim Dowd, Eric Goodyear and Clifton Graham.
- c) Local MP — Joan Ruddock.

At the time of going to press we have still been unable to find out from the council which libraries are under threat.

An Arts and Crafts sale/display is being arranged for this year and we would like to hear from anyone who would be willing to display or sell any of their craftwork. (Art/Sewing/Knitting/Woodwork, Cake & Flower Decoration, in fact any class and any age group will be welcomed). There will also be Prizes for the Best Exhibits in each class.

Last but not least we would be most grateful for any Raffle Prize Donations or items for our Tombola Stall; Unwanted Christmas Gifts or left-over tinned goods would be ideal.

If you would like to offer your help in any way or enquire about the Sports or Arts and Crafts, or if you have anything to Donate, please telephone **691 4512** or **692 6977**. B.H.

"Ladies Unite and put up a Fight"

It was with some trepidation that I went along to St Peters Centre to join a short course on 'Self Defence for Women' run by the Police in conjunction with the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. The thought of being thrown over someone's shoulder and landing flat on my back after a hard day's work held little appeal.

Fortunately I was pleasantly surprised and relieved to learn that this was not the object of the course. It is not brute force that is needed — more the element of surprise, and knowing where pressure points are that used when needed will leave your attacker (hopefully!) on his knees in a painful cringing heap.

At the end of the five week course, we all felt much happier, more self-confident and less vulnerable, and we had all got to know each other better (this being partly due to some of the "holds" we had learnt!). It was fun as well. A minimal charge for use of the mats; and a few bruises seemed a small price to pay for an excellent course. Val Smith
For information ring Gill Heywood on 692 6977.

LOCAL HISTORY

In our last newsheet we had no space to include this part of the report on the meeting at which Joan Read told how Brockley grew-up.

Brockley developed from a huge acreage of orchard and meadow land in a great rush. The area became a popular and fashionable place to live, due partly to the influence of the Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace, and also to the construction of the railway connections into the City of London. The railway line through Brockley Station is built on the site of the London to Croydon Canal.

Wickham Road is named after the family of landed gentry from the village of Garsington in Oxfordshire who owned much of the orchard land which is now Brockley. You may have a huge, old Perry pear tree in your garden?

When the land was first turned over to builders for development there were four Grades of buildings. The large houses in Wickham Road would have been Grade 1 buildings. Buildings today are Graded for their historic, aesthetic, unusual qualities, but the constructional grading of buildings for erection was based on the size of the house, whether it was built on high or low ground, and the use and quality of the materials. The houses in this area are all built from yellow stock bricks. It's quite likely that many of these bricks were made at the brickworks on Hilly Fields, situated where the football pitches are now. The Grade 1 houses would have been built from the best quality bricks which came from the middle of the stack whilst being baked. If the use of materials and the design of the house did not come up to standard, the builder would have been offered a site on an off-road, like Cranfield Road.

The builder would often buy a plot and build in groups of four houses — either two semi-detached houses or four terraced houses in a row. This is why there is such a noticeable difference in the style of architecture in one road. Also, the higher the lie of the land the more elaborate and expensive the houses would become. Walking up Wickham Road from Lewisham Way you will see that the houses become very grand, but as the hill slopes back down to Brockley Road the designs become more simple.

FROM THE MARQUIS TO THE OBELISK

The next exhibition at the Lewisham Local History Centre, The Manor House, Old Road, S.E.13, 21st of January to 25th of June

Open Fri 9.30-1. Mon and Sat 9.30-5. Tues and Thurs 9.30-8.

The exhibition, called 'From the Marquis to the Obelisk' will tell the story of Lewisham Way, Loampit Hill, and Loampit Vale, explaining with the aid of pictures, maps, and documents, how the area was transformed from one of fields and quarries to the completely urban landscape we know today.

There will be information on the history of the various colleges, churches, pubs, cinemas, and libraries, and an attempt will be made to date all the surviving buildings of interest. The legends connected with the beautiful Stone House will be examined, and the true history revealed.

Special sections will deal with the most interesting adjoining areas: The Wickham Park Estate and the Tyrwhitt Drake Estate, which contains some of the best preserved Victorian streets in the borough; the area between Tanners Hill and Friendly Street, originally called Deptford New Town, which has been greatly altered recently; and the now entirely demolished area where the Sundermead Estate stands; in the 19th century so notorious that it was called "Botany Bay".

The Professional Classes, — the doctors, school teachers, dentists, lawyers, — would have lived in Grade 3 houses. They could afford to decorate the outside of their houses for "appearances" with pretty tiled paths, wrought iron railings, and glass conservatories whilst the interior embellishments were much simpler than those of the Grade 2 houses owned by the wealthy merchants. The domestic servants, the coachman, the cook, the parlour-maid, the nursery-maid, who were employed by the middle and upper-class house owners, sometimes had a room in the attics or were housed in the Grade 4 houses. You could discover who lived in your house, what their trade was, how many servants they employed, how many children they had by looking at the census for your street at Manor House Library and by obtaining the original deeds, or photo-copies of the deeds of your house, if they still exist!

S. Job

TREES IN BROCKLEY

The night of October 15/16, 1987 will long live in the memories of all of us in the South. The devastation that met our eyes next morning was unlike anything seen for centuries. Huge trees, some over 100 years old had been torn up by the roots and lay flattened across roads, in gardens and parks or rested precariously against each other or on top of houses and cars.

In Lewisham Way some beautiful walnut and lime trees were lost and on Hilly Fields some 200, about 1/3 of all the trees, including the Turkey Oak (*quercus cerris*) and four of the lovely berry-bearing sorbus trees.

In the hope that all the lost trees can be replaced in our "leafy suburb" and perhaps more trees planted, the Lewisham Environment Trust has launched an Appeal. At the December meeting of our society it was agreed that BrocSoc should give £50 and that the Appeal should also be recommended to all of you individually. Any contributions, should be sent to the Environment Trust Secretary at Town Hall Chambers, Catford, London SE6 4RY headed "Lewisham Tree Appeal". Cheques should be made payable to "Lewisham Environment Trust Ltd."

If any of you have any ideas on the type of trees you would like to see planted and their positions, please let us know and BrocSoc could pass forward your ideas.

The Lewisham Environment Trust which was set up in 1986 and is a non-party independent organisation looks forward to the day when community groups can apply for funds to plant a tree or trees in public spaces or streets in their area and could become involved in the choosing and after care of the trees. For the present however, the main concern must be repairing the damage of the October hurricane.

Jean J.

HILLY FIELDS OPEN SPACE

The Borough Council Leisure Services Committee and Women's Committee have been considering a proposal to provide public lighting on all the main paths on Hilly Fields. The cost is estimated at £45,000 phased over 3 years.

Extract from Women's Committee Report 11.11.87.

"As women are often the target of attacks in public open spaces particularly during the hours of darkness, the proposed provision of lighting will assist in discouraging such crime and in removing perceived dangers from one area of the Borough.

There is currently no capital allocation to permit these proposals to proceed. It will therefore be necessary to include the scheme in the Committee's list of bids for capital resources in 1988-9."

Comment There is no need to go across the Park at night. There are well lighted roads all round

GOOD MEWS NEWS!

At last we are able to bring you good news about the mews. In the last issue, in June, we told you that two developers had appealed to the Department of the Environment (the D.O.E.) because Lewisham Council had not determined their planning applications for mews development within the statutory time. We now have the result of both these appeals.

The appeal relating to four houses to be built in the rear garden of 2 Wickham Road was **turned down**, mainly on the look of the proposed dwellings, which would not fit into this area, but also on the fact that the positioning of the buildings would result in a loss of the sense of enclosure which is evident now, with the high walls either side the mews at this point. The Inspector considered that the rear garden, as proposed, was adequate even though it narrows from 17m to 11m in length, due to the proposed boundary. He said that if six car spaces could be provided for the main house, then that would be satisfactory. From the plans we saw, it seemed impossible to fit in another car space, (one was already shown as blowing exhaust fumes through both a bathroom and kitchen window), without encroaching on the small garden area which will have to serve the six flats proposed for the main house.

The appeal relating to a proposed house in the rear garden of 119 Upper Brockley Road was **turned down** on much more general grounds which should mean that NO housing will be allowed in Ashby Mews and, we hope, in other mews as well. The D.O.E. Inspector says in his report *"Although I consider the design of the proposed house is interesting and makes ingenious use of a small space I do not consider it would enhance the surrounding garden area of the multi-storey town houses, whose architectural character and visual qualities, in my opinion, are dependent on maintaining their long back gardens. The cumulative effect of open rear gardens at the rear of the houses..... I believe is of considerable importance as a feature of the wider conservation area. The gardens for the most part provide an amenity space for the residents in the flats in the houses..... as well as the natural light and space afforded by an open space in close relationship to fairly dense housing. The garden space once developed would be a*

permanent loss. The Inspector concludes his report with "The proposed development would change the character of the Mews to an unacceptable extent by building on an open garden area which is a valuable visual feature of the conservation area as a whole. The proposal would cause inconvenience to existing users of the Mews and occupiers of neighbouring houses due to the congestion and increased vehicular and pedestrian activity associated with the proposal."

With a report like this behind us we have already suggested to the Chair of Planning that the Design Guide should be altered to take this in to account, but as yet we have had no written reply.

Now that we have the D.O.E.'s final word about not building in most of our mews, it is time to consider how they can be improved. We think that one reason why the Council has been seen to be in favour of development has been that new housing in the mews would automatically clear things up with no effort on their part. These lanes belong to the owners of the properties backing onto them, and therefore are their responsibility. It is often difficult with so many types of ownership, Council, housing associations, private landlords and owner occupiers, to get people together to discuss the best ways forward for each mews. From the replies to the questionnaire we circulated last November, it seems that the majority of people want the mews lit, and many of you would use them for parking to relieve the roads if they were safe enough. We are contacting the Council, first to find out the position with the Ashby Mews improvement scheme. This is a pilot scheme, financed under the Housing Action Area, and was supposed to have been finished by now. Secondly we are requesting money for skips for clearing rubbish. We have some suitable street light fittings and have asked a landscape architect the best way to plan for each mews.

Acting now could impress upon the powers-that-be that we are not just the usual protesters against change, but that we have a positive way to improve the area, which will cost very little and have a positive impact. There seems to be enough interest among residents to start things off and we will act as a co-ordinating group, as necessary. If you are interested in helping to improve your patch please 'phone Gill Heywood 692-6977.

Planning Applications

From October 1987.

Adelaide Avenue

60-4 one bedroom flats

12 Montague Avenue

Alteration to a shared home for eight people.

Tressillian Road

71-Demolition of side extension and conservatory. Construction of extensions at rear for school use.

130-1 two room and 1 five room maisonette.

136-2 two bedroom flats.

22 Harefield Road

3 two bedroom flats.

Wickham Road

20-At rear, 3 two storey, one bedroom houses with garage. Access from Wickham Mews.

19-4 one bedroom flats on 2nd and 3rd floors.

Conversion of loft area to 1 four bedroom flat with dormer windows.

5 Avon Road

3 two bedroom flats.

26 Geoffrey Road

1-one bedroom flat and 1-two bedroom maisonette.

Breakspears Road

66-3 two bedroom flats.

70-Demolition of rear extension. 1 bedroom, 1-three bedroom, 3 studio flats, 2 parking spaces.

168 Lewisham Way

Demolition of coach house.

Erection of 2 storey block.

1-one bedroom, 1-two bedroom flats.

25 Brockley Cross

1 maisonette with external stairs.

12 St. Margaret's Road

The land behind has been sold by auction. Rumours abound but we await news of applications for planning permission for the development of the area.

Planning applications granted permission:

3, 16, 28, 30, 32, 37 Tyrwhitt Road -

Conversion of each to 1 and 2 bed flats.

139 Upper Brockley Road - Conversion to 4 flats.

39 Cranfield Road - Conversion to 3 flats.

44 Wickham Road - Erection of three garages, with access onto the mews.

Planning applications refused:

68 Wickham Road - Demolition of the veranda at the rear.

111 Upper Brockley Road - Erection of a house in the rear garden.

37 Manor Avenue - Erection of a house in the rear garden.

70 Loampit Hill, land adjoining - Sunday Market for 12 to 16 stalls.

LOSS OF HOLLY TREES

The Council felled nine mature holly trees at the end of the Memorial Gardens, last November. No planning permission had been given and there appears to be no reason for this piece of vandalism. We wrote letters immediately to the appropriate departments,

2-8 CHALSEY ROAD

A SORRY STORY

This will be told in our next issue, when we hope to have the final details.

Lewisham Police/ Community Consultative Group

The meeting held at Catford Town Hall on 22 October was mainly a Group Annual General Meeting. The group was pleased with the progress made in the previous year and hoped that this could be furthered in the coming year.

The group then went on to discuss the aspect of burglaries within the area, reports were given by both Catford Police Division and Lewisham Police Division. Both authorities reported a decrease in these crimes within the area. This they thought was due, mainly, to the increase in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

It was very disappointing to once again witness the lack of public support. If you are housebound or find it difficult to attend meetings and there are questions that you would like to raise, write to The Chairman of the Group, at the Town Hall or contact the Secretary, Brockley Society on 691 4512. *B.H.*

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

I have asked the Brockley Society to allow me a little space in this publication to hammer home the fact that your area is receiving a lot of attention from the *house breaker*.

Over the last few years I have tried to persuade you to increase the security of your home and encouraged you to take an *active* role in your community to prevent your homes being burgled. You did very well when the schemes first started but it would appear that complacency may be creeping in. I have shown below the streets that have experienced burglaries in recent weeks.

TYRWHITT ROAD, TRESSILLIAN ROAD, AVON ROAD, DARLING ROAD, BREAKSPEARS ROAD, WICKHAM ROAD, UPPER BROCKLEY ROAD, HILLYFIELDS CRESCENT.

We have reports of burglaries through open windows & open doors, this should not be allowed to happen.

Another crime in your area that is on the increase is "The Con Man", Bogus Gas Board/Electricity/Water Board, Bogus Roofers/Fencers/Policemen. Insist on identification and *do not* let them into your home unless you are satisfied the person is legitimate.

Help us to help you. Do not let these thieves succeed.

George SPURLING
Crime Prevention Officer

St Peter's Centre

Activities are back in full swing after the seasonal break. The Senior Citizens Club meet for a friendly afternoon every Wednesday at 2 o'clock and would welcome new members.

The Management Committee (all volunteers) could do with more help. Decisions have to be made about the upkeep of the hall — for example, roof repairs after the October gale. Anybody with bright ideas and a willingness to give some free time to the local community would be gladly accepted at the monthly meeting which is held at the Centre in Cranfield Road, every 2nd Tuesday in the Committee Rooms.

Enquiries for booking should be made by telephoning 692 4503, on Thursday evening only, between 7 and 9 pm.

Other enquiries - ring 691 2341.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH

The Vicar has notified the following dates and events. He thought it would be helpful if our neighbours knew the dates to avoid events clashing and everyone 'losing out'.

Jumble Sales: 12th March,
17th September.

Church Fayre: 25th June.
Barn Dance: Friday, 1st July.
Christmas Bazaar: 19th November.

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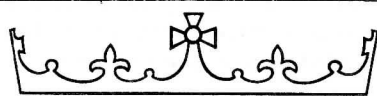
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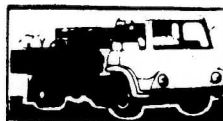
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