

THE BRENTHAM SOCIETY



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NEWSLETTER NO. 8

MARCH, 1971

Chairman: Clive Hicks
72 Brentham Way

Hon. Sec.: Tony Scanlan
3 Winscombe Crescent

OUR LAST MEETING

At our meeting on February 24th, an appreciative audience was entertained with a recital of recorded music presented by Mr. A.J. Skinner, assisted by Mr. D. Cozens. Many famous orchestras and artistes were represented, most of them known personally to Mr. Skinner, who interspersed a well-balanced musical programme with comment and reminiscences.

MAY DAY 1971

We are glad to report that the May Day festivities will be held as usual this year on Saturday, 8th May. As we said in the last Newsletter, this occasion originated in the early days of the estate when Brentham was a village community and it was considered one the main events of the year.

A procession of children, all dressed in white and carrying flowers, leaves the Brentham Club and tours the estate on foot - the babies being carried in a small carriage. They then return to the Club to take part in country and maypole dancing. The May Queen, previously elected by the children, is then crowned. It is interesting to know that the first May Queen is still alive and a resident on the estate - she was in fact one of the daughters of a founder of the estate, Mr. Hugh Brampton. The afternoon's activities are then followed by a dance in the evening, in honour of the May Queen.

MEADVALE ROAD 'TRIANGLE'

Residents have no doubt noticed the untidy condition of the piece of land at the junction of Meadvale Road, Denison Road and Holyoake Walk which, though fenced in, has become something of an unofficial rubbish tip. The Society was recently given permission by the owners of the land, the Bradford Property Trust, to clear away the debris and maintain this large open space in a manner more in keeping with the aims of a conservation area.

Last weekend, a working party carried out a preliminary tidying-up of the ground and thinning of the overgrowth, and many residents have already commented on its improved appearance. It is hoped that the fencing will be renewed and flowers and shrubs planted in the near future.

WRITING A LETTER

Now that the postal strike is over and everyone is busy catching up with overdue correspondence, it seems an appropriate moment to announce that the Society has just produced its first distinctive stationery. This is in the form of Notelets incorporating the typical Brentham sketch (showing Ludlow Road) prepared for the Society by our former Secretary, Colman Higgins, and already used for the membership cards.

Sets of eight notelets may be purchased for 10p (2s.) including envelopes, from any of the following: Mrs. Hicks, 72 Brentham Way; Mrs. Aarons, 8 Winscombe Crescent; Mrs. Oliver, 48 Denison Road.

BRENTHAM - OR BRENTHAM?

Recent conversations with some of the original residents of the estate have revived for the Committee the question of pronunciation of the name "Brentham". It appears that the older residents say "Brent-ham", while newcomers tend to favour "Brent-am". As the name was a new invention at the foundation of the estate, local history will not provide an answer. Perhaps, for amateur detectives, the river Brent which flows through Pitshanger Park, may give a clue, coupled with the fact that the estate was planned on the lines of a "model village" (or hamlet?). What do you think?

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Again, through the courtesy of our older residents, we have uncovered some most interesting recollections on life on the estate in its early years. Thanks to the Misses Hearn of Holyoake House, the Committee has had the pleasure of browsing through some issues of the monthly magazine The Brenthamite for the year 1921. It was then that the magazine was re-started after the first world war, having previously appeared without interruption for five years - first as The Brentham Magazine from 1913 to 1915 and then as The Brenthamite from 1916 to 1918.

This lively little publication - popularly known as "The 'Ite" - was distributed free to every house on the estate, the cost of production being paid for by revenue from advertisements. The magazine was very well supported by local traders and obviously had an enterprising advertising manager. It is interesting to learn that the Brentham Club & Institute was at that time affiliated to the Village Clubs Association and was thus able to draw on a national panel of lecturers and entertainers. Amongst the weekly events in one session's programme, were dramatic sketches, recitals and illustrated lectures ranging from "The Land of the Pharaohs" to "Medieval Fortresses of England". Now we watch it all on television instead. But there are still many local interests which can and should be catered for locally.

READERS' CORNER

If readers of this Newsletter feel moved to write to us about any issue raised in it, or issues you think should be raised, please do not hesitate to do so. We shall be glad to have your views - briefly, please - in the form of letters/ comments/news items, or to advertise your sales/wants/services whenever space permits. Send your contributions to the Editor, Miss M. Tims at 137 Fowlers Walk. Copy for a particular issue should be received in the first week of the month.

NEXT MEETING

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE:

Tuesday, 6th April 8 p.m. at the Brentham Club, Meadvale Road

AN EVENING OF SLIDES presented by Clive Hicks

We shall be showing a selection of slides of the estate, including some of the early years and many other photographs recently made available to us. Amongst these are pictures of war-time bombing in Meadvale Road. We shall also be pleased to show at this meeting any slides submitted by members which they feel will be of interest - not necessarily of the estate. These should be preferably limited to batches of six per member and should be delivered to Mr. Hicks during the weekend before the meeting.

I would like to support the Brentham Society and enclose 30p. (6s.) (per household) Membership Fee for 1970/71