



NEWS

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL BRENTHAM RESIDENTS

This newsletter is the first produced by the in-coming committee of the Brentham Society. We are looking forward to continuing the good work begun by our predecessors and to developing some new initiatives. Some of you may wonder who 'we' are! To quote from the Brentham Society Constitution, "The objects of the Society shall be:

- * to stimulate interest in the original form of the Estate.
- * to encourage, preserve and improve the character of the Brentham Garden Estate.
- * to promote the interests of the Estate and its residents.
- * to promote any activity desired by its members.
- * to cooperate with any body or individual with similar or related aims.

Membership is open to all residents of the Estate, subscription £1 per annum. Please contact any committee member for information, help, comments or ideas.

Heather Moore, Chairperson

The Committee Members for 1994 are:-

Derek Buckley, 53 Ludlow Road, 997 2378 (Treasurer) *Derek is an accountant and has lived on the Estate since 1973.*

Gunda Cannon, 65 Brentham Way, 997 8657 (Secretary) *Gunda works for the BBC World Service and her passion is gardening.*

Julie Gibson, 40 Woodfield Crescent, 997 8637 (Membership Secretary) *Julie is a newcomer to Brentham having only been here for 2 years. She works for a charity.*

Heather Moore, 127 Fowlers Walk, 998 0234 (Chairperson) *Heather has lived in Fowlers Walk since 1977, but has known Brentham since childhood through her grandmother who moved here in 1914. She teaches in Harrow.*

Delphine Nunn & Robert Staines, 24 Woodfield Crescent, 997 1208 (Newsletter) *Delphine and Robert have lived on the Estate for 13 years and are both keen gardeners and theatre goers. Robert is a teacher and Delphine works in in-service education.*

Tony Oliver, 48 Denison Road, 997 7523 *Tony has been a member of the Committee for many years and has kindly agreed to serve again despite his recent ill health.*

John Parsons, 8 Meadvale Road, 997 9034 *John has lived on the Estate since 1948. He is "dotty" about cats and dogs.*

WELCOME TO EVERYONE WHO HAS MOVED INTO THE AREA SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER

THE NEWSLETTER

We have attempted to produce a varied and interesting edition of Brentham News. However we are keen that the contents reflect the genuine concerns and interests of the residents. We intend to produce four newsletters a year and need lots of articles to fill them.

If you have items for subsequent issues please send them to Delphine and Robert at 24, Woodfield Crescent.



SUBSCRIPTIONS: NEW METHOD OF COLLECTION

Following last year's successful pilot we have decided to introduce a new method of collecting subscriptions. With this newsletter you will have received an envelope. Please enter your name and address, and return it with your subscription to the collector indicated. If you pay by direct debit please ignore your envelope.

N.B. Subscription rate for 1994 is still only £1 per household. If you can, please make a donation, as this increases the work we are able to do on your behalf. Thank-you. Julie Gibson



THE HISTORY OF GARDEN SUBURBS

At the AGM in October Dr. Hazel Conway talked about the pioneers of garden suburb planning and the architects who designed suitable housing for the estates, based on traditional English

vernacular styles.

We saw slides of the earliest residential estates such as Saltaire, initiated by Sir Titus Salt (1858) then Port Sunlight (1888) and Bournville (1895) built for employees of Lever and Cadbury. These were followed, on a grander scale, by the development of Bedford Park in West London - begun in 1875 and built to the designs of Norman Shaw.

The concept of the independent garden city was developed and publicised by Ebenezer Howard's book, *Tomorrow, a Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (1898), since republished as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. Howard's ideas were taken up in Letchworth (1904), of which the architects, Unwin and Parker became deservedly famous. Unwin and Parker were also responsible for much of Hampstead Garden Suburb (1907), and last but not least the Brentham Estate.

Dr Conway pointed out some of the elements which make these estates attractive and pleasant for their residents. These include: the positioning of houses amid trees and gardens, the variety of shapes in gables, entrances, chimneys, roofs and the conscious effort to harmonise these details which contribute to our unique and enjoyable residential environment. We would like to thank Crista Goode for this summary of Dr. Conway's lecture.

OTHER ISSUES

At the last AGM a number of issues were raised from the floor both supporting and criticising recent developments in the area. e.g. paving stones replacing tarmac met with a positive response but the advice that permission must be sought from the council on the removal of dead trees was less welcome.

WINDOWS WISDOM

David Humphries writes :- Hardly a week goes by without a leaflet through the letter box, advertising double glazing or conservatories. There can be few residents who are not aware that planning permission is required for replacement windows. No prefabricated units have so far been found acceptable. Conservatories were not an original feature of the estate, and are unlikely to receive favourable consideration. Recent leaflets imply planning permission for these structures may not be necessary. Please do not be taken in by such "sales talk", however persuasive. Advice is readily available.

DETECTIVE WORK ?

Crista Goode has suggested a project for 1994 focused on collecting information about all the original decorative features which still exist in Brentham houses: fireplaces, cornices, doors, finger plates, stained glass etc. The record could take the form of photographic slides which could provide an item for the next AGM. Crista is happy to collate such a collection and to carry out research into existing records of designers' and manufacturers' drawings. Any resident who is lucky enough to still have original artifacts and who would be willing to contribute to this exciting project should contact :- Crista Goode, 42 Woodfield Cres., 997 5480

THE WILD SIDE OF BRENTHAM

(This article by Mike Silverman was written some time ago and it seems appropriate to print it now as thoughts turn again to Spring.)

Our resident blackbirds had plenty of nest-building practice this summer. They half-raised three broods, each in a different nest. On each occasion, amid

alarmed squawking and clucking, their progeny became yet another lunch for the local magpie family. If there are any successful garden-nesting blackbirds around here, they must have evolved more covert patterns of behaviour.

The weather early in the summer was ideal. Nest building was speedy. Within two days the grassy cup was woven, a layer of mud applied and a final soft, inner mattress fitted. All this activity was performed by the hen, while the cock bird accompanied her to and fro, perching on a prominent branch as she wove and following her across the lawn as she prodded for worms. I presume his attentiveness was based neither in feeling of love nor of protectiveness, but merely assured that his genes, rather than those of a fly-by-night bachelor, would be passed on to the next generation!

The public nature of blackbirds' activities, especially those of the cock bird, must help the magpies to plan their subsequent menus. This pressure must eventually lead to a change in nesting behaviour. Successful breeding will depend on skulking rather than brazen habits and muted rather than tuneful song.

Other open-nesting birds have all but vanished from our gardens. Let us hope that the blackbird does not follow the disappearing song thrush; a poor exchange for raucous magpies.

The RSPB magazine for winter '93 advises us on the different food garden birds prefer and warns against the danger of aflatoxin in nuts. Always buy your nuts from a dealer showing the "We're safe nuts" sign. Also remember birds need a drink too. (Eds.)

NEIGHBOURS RULE OK ?

Our alley way was a mess.

Perhaps neighbours backing on to the path might be asked to consider donating a small sum to cover the cost of clearance by a contractor?

Well we tried it and it worked.

First a warning note was put through letter boxes. Within a few days we knocked on doors and collected donations. A week later the alley way was cleared by a contractor. Several weeks later we are pleased to report that it remains tidy.

There were unforeseen benefits too. First, we actually met our neighbours, many of whom we had not seen before, in spite of living within one hundred yards or less. Secondly, all pessimism regarding willingness to participate vanished when our first donor arrived on our doorstep with his contribution and encouragement. Just about everyone approached responded in the same vein. Contributions from residents lends an added sense of responsibility and we encountered no hostility or resentment - quite the contrary.

If anyone has a similar problem and is interested in trying this solution, I would be glad to answer their questions.

Susan Eaton - 997 1220

SWAP SHOP:

Often people sit on articles they do not need or want while others would find them really useful. It has been suggested a regular column in the Brentham News could advertise available articles and services. Contact a committee member if you have anything to swap/share.

GARDEN AWARDS 1993

- * 1st prize (rose bowl): Mr. & Mrs. Arnett: 93 Fowlers Walk
- * 2nd prize: 93 Brentham Way
- * 3rd prize: 10 Neville Road

Commendations:

- 82 & 64 Meadvale Rd.
- 58 Holyoake Walk
- 30 Denison Rd.
- 200 Pitshanger Lane
- 19 Neville Rd.,
- 54 Brentham Way
- 85 Fowlers Walk
- 7 Brunner Rd.
- 11 Ludlow Rd.
- 43 & 45 Woodfield Cres.,

NEW LETTERING

We hope you have noticed the new lettering for Brentham News drawn for us by Pat Baxendale. She tells us the type is copied from lettering on a plan of the estate drawn in 1910 by G.L. Sutcliffe ARIBA, the architect of the Brentham Club. She also mentions that many of the beautiful plans held by the Brentham Society have similar decorative Arts and Crafts style lettering.

EXHIBITION

The Committee thinks the plans and drawings mentioned above deserve a wider audience. It is planning a social event at the Brentham Club on March 8th at 7.30 which will feature an exhibition of some of them. Light refreshments and a glass of wine will be available. The cost will be:

£2.50 for adults
£1.50 for OAP

Those who require a lift to the club, or those able to offer a lift to someone else, should ring Heather -998 0234.