



NEWS

Chairman's notes.

There's a hint of Autumn in the air, I'm back from my summer holidays and the children are back at school. Somehow, the Society's summer events seem so long ago. Yet it is only five weeks since we were sitting in the grounds of the Brentham Club, surrounded by families from all over Brentham enjoying picnics and watching the children learn the intricacies of the three legged race. This summer's Strawberry Tea was a rip-roaring success as well, and the first Brentham Cycle ride was so good, riders asked if we could do another in two weeks time! The thing I most enjoyed was that each event attracted a different group of people and we met many who had not been to a Society event before.

I'm looking forward to our last outdoor event of the year, the Open House weekend. For those who are new to this, Open House is a national, and now a Europe-wide celebration of the best in architecture, from ancient palaces to modern blocks of flats. I've just seen the catalogue of events in London and it is mouth watering. The Brentham Garden Suburb is, of course, taking part again with our guided walks round Brentham. If you want to know more about why Brentham is worth conserving, Clive Hicks' walk is the best way to find out.

We're now planning this year's AGM. Along with our report to you about the Society's work over the last twelve

months, we've got a very interesting speaker lined up. Steve Smith will be talking about the Co-Partnership Movement, which was born in Brentham and grew to inspire a series of Garden Suburbs all over the country. It promises to be very interesting. Also I will be sharing with members our sub-group's suggestions for the Council to consider as the Brentham Planning Guidelines are updated.

This year the Committee has had a very active group of eight committee members. However this autumn five members will be standing down - not due to any mass resignation, just an unfortunate series of events - moving house, babies and time for a change - but the remaining three will be standing at the AGM for re-election to next year's committee. This means vacancies for five new committee members and it is really important that these places are filled. So, if you have ever thought that one day you might like to help the Society, now is the hour. Give one of the Committee a ring and have a chat about what is involved.

Mark Greenwood

Brentham Society
Annual General Meeting
13th October 1998
The Brentham Club at 8.00pm

Nominations for membership of the committee should reach the secretary Rosanna Henderson 47 Meadvale Road by Tuesday 6th October 1998.

Project update

Centenary History of Brentham Garden Suburb

If you have heard about the Brentham Society's plans to produce a history of Brentham Garden Suburb, you may be interested to know what has happened over the past few months. For those who haven't heard about the project, the idea is to produce a well-researched, authoritative history to mark the centenary of Brentham Garden Suburb in 2001. Many of us are aware of the distinctive arts and crafts architecture and the strong feeling of community among the residents. Brentham has a national significance, too, that is not widely known. It was the first example of co-partnership housing in Britain, the start of a movement that was to influence town planning throughout Britain. While much has been written about Hampstead Garden Suburb, our 'sister suburb', there has been no in-depth study of Brentham which was designed six years earlier than Hampstead and by the same architects.

Earlier this year thirteen of us gathered together to talk about the project and the different ways in which volunteers could help. This resulted in offers of help with proof-reading, copyediting, photography, interviewing, research and administration - many thanks to you all. If I haven't already done so I hope to take up your offers of help at the appropriate time of the project.

There are several stages to producing the book and the two that have kept us occupied during the past six months have been fund-raising and finding a suitable author. In April an SGM was held to enable the Brentham Society to apply for charitable status - as a registered charity it is possible to apply for funding to charitable trusts that award grants to projects such as ours. Unfortunately we've just learned that our application was unsuccessful. The Charity Commission explained that the Society appears to be a residents' association established primarily to benefit its inhabitants. We have now decided to reapply for charitable status, but this time we will apply to set up a new independent charity whose only purpose will be to seek funding for publishing the book.

In the meantime several volunteers including Melanie Sutcliffe and Krystyna Niedenthal have been helping to compile a shortlist of

appropriate trusts to approach, and Sue Elliott has made excellent progress in contacting several possible funding sources.

We are also drawing up a list of sources of corporate funding and hope to approach Tesco, Ealing Council and others. Here we would like to appeal for help from residents who may be employed, for example, by the local branch of a bank, or a store such as M&S. Many such organisations have funds set aside for local community projects such as ours. As an employee you may be able to find out:

- whether funding is available for local community projects
- whether funding is available for millennium projects (we will publish in 2000)
- whether there is a policy whereby amounts already raised will be matched
- how to apply for funding

Your role may well be limited to making the application on behalf of the Brentham Society, rather than any specific work on the book. I would be particularly grateful to anyone willing to approach their employer about this sort of funding.

Finally we will approach local businesses later on in the project to top up amounts raised from trusts and corporate funders.

Our other main concern has been to find a suitable author, someone with the time, expertise and enthusiasm to tackle the project. I am delighted to say we have found someone who has these skills and more. Aileen Reid has written 12 books on a range of art history, architectural history and biographical subjects. Her freelance writing encompasses both popular newspaper and magazine work, and contributions to encyclopaedias and reference works. Aileen has, as a mature student, just completed a PhD on EW Godwin, the first architect of Bedford Park.

If you'd like to help with this project (there are many small tasks if your time is limited!) please get in touch. Special thanks to Paul Fodrio and Anna Black who are taking photographs for the book and the Brentham Archives, and to everyone else who is helping the project chug along.

Wendy Sender (997-4123)

FROM THE ARCHIVES

STREET PROFILE

I said in the last newsletter that I'd start a short series of street profiles with information drawn from the archives. We start this issue with three streets which were the first to be built in what was to become the initial phase of the Brentham Garden Suburb.

The Woodfields

The very first houses were built in 1901 on Woodfield Road and were originally numbered 1-9 Vivian Terrace, named after Henry Vivian, a founder member of the co-partnership housing movement. The first occupier of number 1 was Hubert Brampton, a master plasterer working for General Builders Ltd and who later became a councillor in the Lammas ward of the newly formed Borough of Ealing. Brampton's granddaughter, now living in East Sussex, is a regular reader of our newsletter and remembers the house was called "Fernlea" and had a small brass plaque on the front door engraved with the address. The remaining 8 houses were all first occupied by other tradesmen working for the same firm of builders. Only the houses at the north end and on the east side of the road are part of the estate.

Ealing Tenants Ltd originally had its office at 32 Woodfield Crescent and there is a plaque on the wall between numbers 24 & 25 dated 1904. Prior to the building of the Brentham Institute a room in one of the houses was used as a meeting room for social events. The numbering of houses is unusual, the south being 1-40 and those on the north side of the street being 41 to 57. Some early estate plans show this really was intended to be a crescent and was also going to have shops at the junction with Brentham Way.

The houses in Woodfield Avenue are similar to those in the other two streets being of sound late Victorian design but with distinctive towers on the four corner houses, each with a weather vane. One of these towers is inscribed with the date 1904 again. The street has one of the few "named" houses on the estate - Amorel.

In 1980 the Ealing Gazette ran a story in their Weekend Woman series of a modern day witch who lived in the street. Is she still there I wonder?

The following year the street featured again in the Ealing Gazette. It was reported that one house in the street had had its grey roof slates replaced with red concrete tiles without planning permission and the Council's Town Planning Committee had instructed the occupier to change them to match the rest in the street. Hopefully this has helped the street retain its original unified character.

There are some 125 houses in the Woodfields and no doubt there has been a number of generations of families passing through since they were first built. An estimate for household removals from one house in 1932 was given as £2 compared to the weekly rent at the time of £3-15s-0d. Some recently advertised for sale have been in the region of £200,000 - £300,000 asking price. I wonder what Hubert Brampton would have made of it all ?

Social life in the early days of the estate included an annual sports day. At one such event a team from Woodfield Road took on a team from Woodfield Avenue in a game of tug-of-war. The Woodfield Avenue team won the day on that occasion - what about a replay at next years Brentham Family Picnic and Sports Day ?

Alan Henderson

RECENT EVENTS - feedback

Family Picnic and Sports Day

Forget the World Cup ! The biggest sporting event in July was the Brentham Family Picnic and Sports Day, held for the first time this year on the Brentham Club playing fields. Highlights of the event included the toddler dash, the parent and child wheelbarrow race, mums' sack race and dads' late for work race. The notorious baby buggy race turned out to be far more exciting than Formula 1 at Silverstone. Other events included face painting, raffles and tombola. Meanwhile families ate picnics, relaxed in the sunshine and chatted with neighbours.

Congratulations to Tom Gibson and Sam and Katie Sender for winning the Children's Painting Competition and the latter also won the Denison Award for the best overall effort by a child. Thanks to the committee members for organising the event and everyone else who helped make the day a successful and enjoyable one. Anyone for tennis?

Tim, Anita and Nina Sands

A Brentham Cycle

Sunday, 7th June at 12-45pm ... raining Cats and Dogs. I put away my cycle clips and told my wife Anne that I was not going on the Brentham Bike Ride. I got a withering look and got the clips out again. I think that Upstairs got the message too and by 1-30pm the sun shone upon the righteous gathering at Pitshanger Park.

Alan, our leader, set off leading an assortment of bikes ranging from hot rods to rust heaps, destination Osterley House. He and his wife Rosanna had carefully planned a most unusual route through rural Ealing. I was astonished ... we hardly touched a road. It was nearly all pathways through wonderful greenery, parkland and river and canal tow paths. We dallied here and there to ease our tired limbs and numbed nether regions. Circuitous our route may have been but it was an eye opener to those who assumed that our part of London is just urban sprawl.

And so to our furthest point ... Osterley House for tea. Once refreshed we were off again... this time, at the request of one of the village elders, we cut one tiny corner, nevertheless our route had taken us no less than 17 miles by the time we were back in the park. It had been a great afternoon with so much interest and a great deal of fun. Let's please repeat it and if you missed this one - turn out next time.

George Barnes

Record Breaking Strawberry Tea

The Society's Strawberry Tea, held in Barbara Murray's lovely garden on Sunday 21st June attracted over 100 people - a record number. Demand was such that at

one point in the afternoon seats were in short supply but there were plenty of strawberries, cream and home-made cakes. It was good to see so many residents, both regulars and new faces. Thankyou to all those who helped in any way and especially to Barbara for welcoming us into her kitchen and garden once again.

The bring & buy plant stall in aid of Downhurst was well supported and raised a marvellous £42 in donations. Thank you to all who gave plants and donated money.

Heather Moore

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday and Sunday 19th and 20th September Open House

Clive Hicks will once again lead a walk through the estate as part of the Open House weekend celebrating London's architecture. Open House is an event which expresses our civic pride and celebrates the wealth of incredible buildings surrounding us. Brentham is proud to be part of this weekend. The Society will have a stall selling Brentham stationery and copies of the Pioneer Co-partnership Suburb book.

Meet at Brentham Club 10-30am. The walk lasts two hours and is absolutely free.

Tuesday 13th October 8-00pm Brentham Club AGM

Steve Smith (great grandson of Hubert Brampton) will give a talk on the Co-Partnership Movement.

Would you like to become a committee member next year? A meeting is being planned to explain what's involved. Find out more by ringing the Secretary Rosanna Henderson (998-6550).

*** Remember ***
we can't put up tree posters near the time,
make a note of these dates in your diary
*** NOW ***