



BRENTHAM NEWS

I have always wanted to visit Iceland, principally for the scenery but also to see the Northern Lights. But who knew the lights could be visible in the sky above Brentham? Sadly I missed them last month and will still need to visit Iceland, but a resident in my street captured some wonderful images. I was fully prepared the night after of course - but they chose not to enlighten us again.



At the recent AGM I talked about some “beautification projects” we wanted to undertake this year. I am pleased to say we have now started on these. The Brentham Garden Group is currently planting up some tree beds, more about which in this edition. You may also have seen the posters on the notice boards about this and perhaps observed that the leaning boards of Brentham have now been straightened!

Another project was to renovate the street signs, sanding and re-painting the backing boards where possible. Although this should be taken on by the Council’s Highways Department they have said they

are unlikely to do this and are happy for us to lend a hand. We have surveyed all the signs and identified the ones that are in most need and able to be repaired. This work we shall do over a warm summer weekend so do keep a look out for the improvements.

Ironically just as we try to improve the streets we also have the utility companies digging them up and closing roads. It does look like the end is in sight though by the first week of July.

Just a friendly reminder, membership of the Brentham Society although not obligatory (as it is in some Conservation Areas) is both appreciated and important. We are all volunteers and give up a substantial amount of our time to looking after Brentham. Membership is still only £5 and details are on brentham.com. If you set up a yearly standing order you never need to remember again!

Brentham hosted another successful and well attended May Day at the Brentham Club and the parade did manage to find a route through the various road closures. Amazingly after a forecast of rain and thunderstorms just the day before, it turned out fine and dry. Pictures in this edition.

I have received a few emails about overgrown hedges in the twittens - please try to keep them cut back so people can still walk down the twittens. The hedges do grow very quickly at this time of year!

Enjoy the summer, and hopefully I’ll see some of you at our next event, the Strawberry Tea on June 23rd

Jo Bradley
chair@brentham.com



May Day

The parade around the streets had to be planned at the last minute in order to accommodate the latest road closures. Some of the current road works are to replace worn out water mains but most of the digging is to renew iron gas pipes that may be affected by the major groundworks involved in the HS2 tunnelling. The twin bore tunnels run just to the north of the A40 from Victoria Road in Acton to West Ruislip.

Brentham Spring 2024 Front Garden Awards

Springtime on our estate saw a proliferation of bluebells, daffodils, tulips and forget-me-nots bursting into flower and gradually fading as the weeks progressed. Azaleas and rhododendrons looked magnificent this year. After a soggy spring, Brentham gardens are now blooming and there are some gorgeous displays of roses. Summer bedding and herbaceous perennials are starting to make their presence known.

Our Spring Garden winner: 64 Meadvale Road ►

The bluebells and a variety of shrubs with an interesting mix of leaf shapes and colours created a spring-like ambience in this pretty garden.



◀ Spring runner-up: 38 Fowlers Walk

The stunning rhododendron was the star of the show here. The overall planting along with the arrangement of the stone pots made this a lovely spring garden.

Other runners-up were 80 Meadvale Road, 30 Holyoake Walk and 31 Denison Road.

Garden Tips: Peat-free gardening

There is no doubt that peat-free compost is more sustainable than peat-based products. The quality has vastly improved in recent years but there are still potential drawbacks. It tends to shrink more when it dries out and its nutrients are therefore used up more quickly. The composition and texture can vary from one scoop to the next, so it needs to be well mixed. On the plus side, it is usually richer in beneficial microbes than the peat-based stuff.

You can make the most of peat-free compost by making changes to the way you use it, particularly for containers. Firstly, check the information on the bag for its intended use. For example, you need peat-free ericaceous compost instead of multi-purpose for acid-loving plants. Don't store compost too long as it can deteriorate in quality.

Watering – The compost can look dry on the surface making it easy to overwater. Check moisture levels by pushing your finger down the side of the pot or lift it to feel its weight before watering.

Feeding – Most compost contains a small amount of fertiliser which can run out in as little as three weeks. Add a liquid feed if the growth or flowering slows down, or use a controlled-release fertiliser.

Mixing – Peat-free multi-purpose compost can be quite lightweight and free draining. You can bulk it out and improve it by adding top soil and/or farmyard manure depending on the needs of your plants. For instance, I blend in 20-30% farmyard manure when growing tomatoes and cucumbers in pots. This year, I've also included 10-15% top soil in the mix for most of my pots. For tulips or Mediterranean style plants, add horticultural grit. Happy peat-free gardening!

Open Gardens Day

This was a chance for more than 160 people to admire some normally hidden Brentham back gardens, making over £1500 for Ealing Food Bank. Eight back gardens were open - four for the first time. One of those was Anne Barnes' new garden in Neville Road . ▼



Street Planting



Over recent years, a number of Brentham residents have planted up and regularly maintain the street tree beds outside their homes. Inspired by these delightful miniature gardens, the Brentham Garden Group has started a project to plant up more tree beds. Volunteers are working on one or two beds on most of our roads, supplying plants mainly from their own gardens. We have Ealing Council's support and permission which will help to mitigate the risk of the planting being mistaken for weeds and destroyed.

If this project is a success, we hope to do more and will invite other residents to get involved. In the meantime, please feel free to plant up and maintain your own tree bed if this idea appeals to you! It doesn't have to be outside your house.

This tree bed on Fowlers Walk was made up by one of the local residents. ► The calendulas were flowering well when this photo was taken in early May.



Teresa Mazur



May Day in Pictures



More from Anne Bowers' Brentham Childhood

In the last issue we featured former resident Anne Bowers' memories of a Brentham childhood in the immediate post-war period, when she lived with her father and grandmother 'Nana' at 30 Winscombe Crescent. Just as it is today, May Day in 1947 was a special event for everyone in Brentham. The main differences were that back then, the Maypole dancing was held just behind the club and the music came not from an amplified electronic keyboard but from a heavy upright piano, dragged outside for the purpose. Anne recalls:

"On the right of the front door at number 30 there was a white lilac tree with a beautiful scent and a bed of lilies of the valley. Nana made these into wreaths for me to wear and to put around my white staff for May Day. This was a big event, with this year's queen dressed all in white at the front of the parade, which went around all the streets. Then came the maypole dancing and the children in white dresses. Goodness knows where the fabric came from, given clothing austerity and points for clothes".



Anne on May Day 1947

kitchen sink) once a fortnight, which was more than enough for me; I had hair long enough to sit on and as there were no hair dryers it took hours to dry, crouching with it spread out in front of the fire.

In the front porch we always kept a bucket and shovel. This was to collect any manure passing horses might drop for us. The horse drawn milk cart came every day and sometimes Nana could spare me a bit of carrot or bread crust to feed the horse, but of course never a lump of precious [rationed] sugar.

The kitchen seemed very small, dark and pokey and was painted in a horrible sludgy green gloss paint, as were the bathroom and loo. We didn't have a fridge and in summer the milk would go off on a hot day. When that happened Nana poured it into a boiled muslin bag and hung it from the kitchen tap to dry and turn into

cream cheese which she mixed with a bit of salt. Nothing was ever wasted; Nana kept every bone for soup, every crust for breadcrumbs or bread and butter pudding, every drop of fat for the dripping bowl, every old jumper to unravel and knit something else, every piece of worn-out clothes to be mended or turned into cleaning rags or used for patching.

She taught me how to darn and patch, to crochet and knit and embroider. It felt fascinating, worthwhile and creative. While we did this, she would tell me tales of her childhood - hair-raising stories sometimes, of friends who had died of TB ('consumption') or other infectious diseases or who had to starve to get rid of giant tapeworms.



The milkman in Winscombe Crescent

Laundry was done on Mondays and was a real palaver, spilling over into the rest of the week. It was done outside whatever the time of year so it was particularly unpleasant in winter. It was very hard and heavy work and I don't know how Nana managed it. I helped all I could, but couldn't do much at first except grate the soap, do the dolly bag, help feed things through the mangle and hand her the pegs. Tuesday was ironing...

Until the 1950s we used electricity only for lighting and for the 'wireless'. This was a big brown Bakelite box with black knobs that was a family treasure for entertainment and information. It was always tuned to the Home Service (now Radio 4). I loved it passionately, especially for Children's Hour, every weekday at 5p.m. Thrilling serials, stories, and drama series. I can remember us all sitting round in 1952 listening to the archaic trumpet blasts and the ancient words of the Heralds proclaiming the young queen Elizabeth. It seemed like a symbol of a new world to come."

Next time: Winter and Christmas in 1940s Brentham.

Sue Elliott



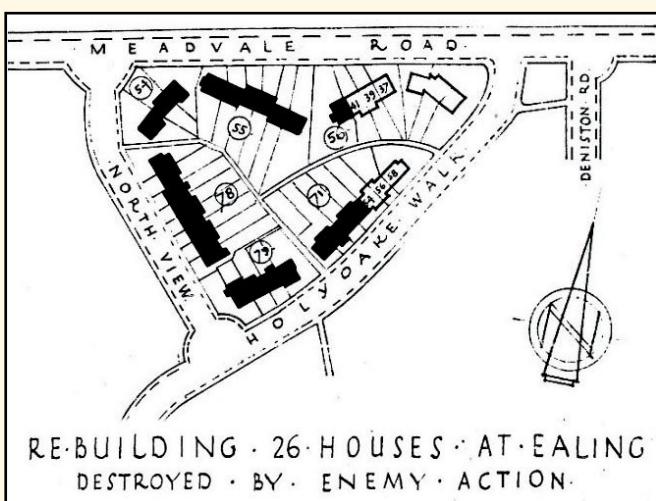
Although not sharp enough to identify Anne, this May Day group photo in 1947 does show how activities took place just behind the Club building rather than, as now, on the football field.

The Meadvale Road Bomb

In our last edition, Anne Bowers recalled that before moving to Winscombe Crescent she would sit on her doorstep in Meadvale Road and stare at all the rubble of the bomb damage inflicted during WW2. It was almost 80 years ago, on 20th August 1944 that the German V1 'doodlebug' bomb fell on No. 45 Meadvale Road with devastating effect.

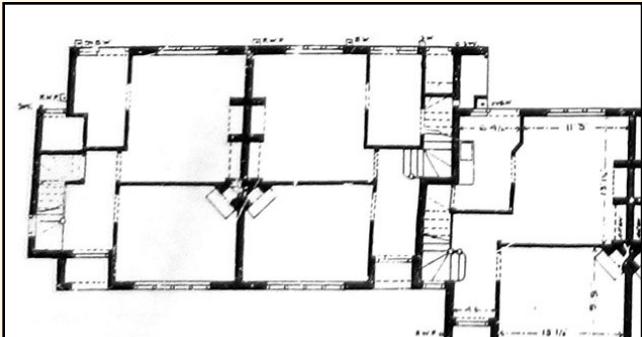


Nos. 57-61 Meadvale Road as seen from the remains of No.45

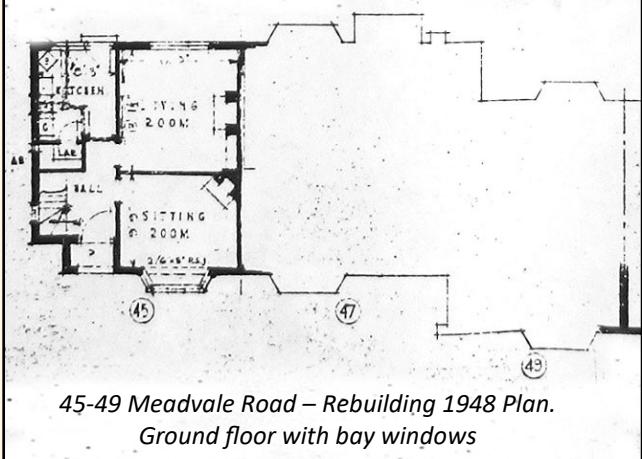


The architect's plan, held in the Brentford Archive, shows the 26 houses that were demolished as a result and rebuilt. In addition, a further 29 Ealing Tenants' houses were very seriously damaged – including No.60 Meadvale Road where Anne Bowers lived.

Of the 26 houses rebuilt, 17 were owned by Ealing Tenants Ltd and 9 were in private ownership. The cost of rebuilding was met by the government under the War Damage Act of 1943. Of the 17 houses rebuilt for Ealing Tenants Ltd, 5 were sold on completion and 12



45-49 Meadvale Road - Original 1910 Plan – ground floor



were re-let to the previous tenants between June 1948 and early 1949 (4 years after the bomb fell) but at an increased rent of 25 shillings per week – a bargain!

Generally, the houses were rebuilt as replicas of their prewar selves. However, from the plans held in the archive we can see that there were some internal layout changes, and that 45-55 Meadvale Road had bay windows built in the front on the ground floor rather than the standard flat arrangement. The owners of 47 and 49 also took the opportunity to have bay windows added to the back of their houses.

Alan Henderson



45-55 Meadvale Road before the bomb, without bay windows

Obituaries

In this edition we mark more than the usual number of Brentham lives that have recently passed. Each made a unique contribution to the community and cultural life of Brentham.

Maureen Monaghan

Maureen, who has died aged 82, moved into Brentham in 1996, first living in Holyoake Walk where she had a huge back garden. It encouraged her to become a passionate gardener. She was soon regarded as one of Brentham's most talented gardeners and was a founder member of the Gardening Group. For years she supported and participated in Open Gardens, the Brentham garden awards and other activities across the estate. Many residents have been encouraged and guided by her enthusiasm and knowledge. Her passion survived her move to a smaller property in Denison Road and last year she won the autumn front garden award. The Brentham garden group remains strong and flourishes today.



Tony Herbert

Tony, who died in April on his 97th birthday, was a long term resident of Brunner Road and regularly contributed to the BEAT art trail. He started painting while a teenager and when he came out of the army in 1948 he spent the demob money on going to Ealing and St Martin's art schools.

He followed a career in advertising in various London studios and worked on children's books for a number of publishers. Eventually Tony decided to go it alone and concentrate on watercolours. He began to exhibit in London galleries and his art took him to Dorset, Wales, France and Italy. For his outdoor subjects, he did pencil sketches, made notes about the colours and finished the work back home in his studio.

Tony always said he felt very lucky to have made a living doing something he loved.



Daphne Williamson née Gloag

Daphne, who has died aged 91, moved into 12 Ludlow Road in 1981 when she married Peter Williamson who had lived there for many years with his children and late wife Elizabeth. After leaving Somerville College, Oxford, Daphne worked at the Medical Research Council and then as a prizewinning journalist at the British Medical Association. Many of her articles on all types of pollution were ahead of their time; she covered many other aspects of health including the impact of disability.

Daphne was also a distinguished poet writing under her maiden name. Her poems were well reviewed and she published three collections. She was an award winner in several well-regarded competitions. After Peter's death her health declined but she remained intellectually engaged with poetry. She was looked after by her stepson David and was regarded with great affection by her family, friends and neighbours.



Inge Lesser

Inge Lesser, who lived in Brunner Road from 1954, has died just a few weeks before her 100th birthday. She was 15 when she escaped from Nazi Germany on the Kindertransport scheme which rescued around 10,000 children before World War II.

After arriving in England, she stayed with families in Golders Green. Her first job was as a TB nurse but subsequently became a successful milliner, making hats for Queen Elizabeth and Princess Margaret among others. Inge married in 1949 and daughter Jackie was born in 1953. The following year the family moved to Brunner Road where Inge lived for the rest of her life. As a Kindertransport survivor, she was invited to a gathering at Clarence House where she enjoyed saying to Prince Charles 'I made hats for your mother'.

In later life Inge spent 25 years as a dinner lady at Montpelier School. After being widowed in 1990 she was looked after by many friends in the Jewish community and a number of carers who supported her in old age.



Patrick Mylon

Patrick lived in Neville Road from 2001 until his death, aged 77, in January. As a youth he was fascinated by the story of *Titanic* and the White Star Line and later he worked in the travel business, for Pan Am and with his own agency. He wrote four books on maritime history. Patrick loved Brentham and made firm friends here. He was a keen member of the Brentham Society, serving on the committee for several years. He was also a popular street representative for Neville Road.



Derek Grimshaw

Many residents will have known Derek, who has died age 87; he had a close relationship with Brentham. For more than 50 years his estate agency has sold houses here and has supported the Brentham Society through sponsorship of Brentham News.

Derek started his career with an estate agent in Kensington, then did his national service with the RAF police. Later he decided to set up his own firm and in 1967, Grimshaw and Co opened its doors at Ealing Common. He never did quite manage to retire as he loved his work so much and his experience and knowledge were always in demand.

Derek played tennis and enjoyed the Brentham Club social life very much, making lifelong friends. He was a keen squash player and also played for Ealing Rugby club. He was a harmonica player who loved all types of music - especially an evening of trad jazz at The Brewery Tap.



Lectures at 7.30 at St Barnabas Church Hall

Monday 22 July: Science at the National Gallery: the 200th Anniversary of the Gallery. Aaron Hunter

Monday 23 September: Vincent Van Gogh; Madman or Genius? Ties in with exhibition at the National Gallery. Anthony Russell

Monday 28th October: The Road to Santiago de Compostela: Pilgrimage and Spectacle. Ian Cockburn

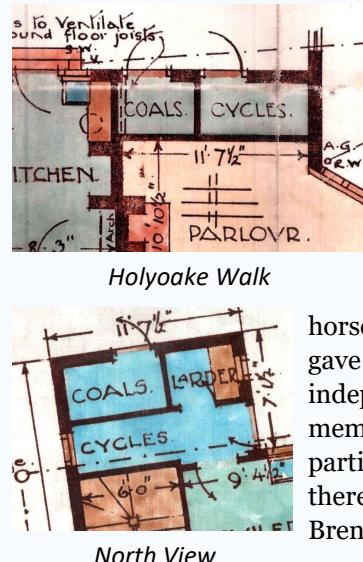
Wednesday 14th August: Special Interest Morning. Art Deco - Pamela Campbell-Johnson. At 10am for 10.30am. Two 1-hour lectures with coffee, tea and biscuits. £25.

Contact: Susan Parsons spsecretary@gmail.com Further details: www.theartssocietyealing.org.uk

The Rise of the Bicycle

As regular cyclists, we were intrigued last November to spot a cycle store on a postcard showing the original plan of a Brentham house. Did house designers in the early 1900s consider a cycle store a "must have"?

We have since delved into the Brentham archives and found five more houses, designed between 1911 and 1922, with cycle stores shown on the drawings. Six is more than the number of houses designed with garages (two) or space for tools (two).



The "safety" bicycle was designed in 1876 by an English engineer, Henry Lawson. It heralded the golden age of everyday cycling which took off in the 1900s with the advent of the "roadster". Bicycles were cheaper to buy and maintain than horses, and for the first time gave a measure of independence to many members of society, particularly women. It is therefore not surprising that Brentham residents embraced

cycling, and for some a cycle store was an essential space in their house.



PHOTO: ONLINE BICYCLE MUSEUM

A hundred years later our society is rediscovering the health, economic and environmental benefits of active travel. Having somewhere to store bicycles is key to their adoption as local transport, and for residents with big enough gardens, a separate bike store might be the answer, although at present planning permission is required for these in front gardens.

The government recently consulted on changes to the permitted development rights of householders, so this might change (even in conservation areas). So there may be no need for residents living in houses designed with cycle stores to return these spaces to their original use!

Elly Castellano & David Lomas

David Lomas is running free "looking after your bike" courses at the Brentham Club on Sunday 30 June and Sunday 28 July on behalf of Ealing Cycling Campaign. Details at www.ealingcycling.org.uk/p/events.html

Brentham Events 2024

JUNE 23rd STRAWBERRY TEA

Meet and mingle with neighbours.

6 Brentham Way 3.30-5.30pm

Details on notice boards and brentham.com

SEPTEMBER 14/15 & 21/22 GUIDED WALKS

Part of London Open House

SEPTEMBER tbc CHEESE AND WINE EVENING



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The Brentham Club

Tennis, Cricket, Football, Snooker, Bowls, Darts, Bridge & Social membership

WHAT'S ON ... at a glance

Sunday 16 June – IMPROVISED COMEDY & DRAMA

Sunday 30 June – LOOKING AFTER YOUR BIKE

Saturday 13 July – BRENTHAM SUMMER PARTY

Sunday 28 July – LOOKING AFTER YOUR BIKE

Sat 21 & Sun 22 July – FRED PERRY TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY STREET FOOD MARKETS 5.00 –9.00pm

14 June / 19 July / 6 September / 11 October

NB On Saturdays between 6.00pm & 9.00pm, food is available, changes each week, for example: Asian curries/noodles or even beefburgers & hot dogs.

For all enquiries, email: manager@brenthamclub.co.uk

To book tickets and for more details on events, see website: www.brenthamclub.co.uk

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- Our wonderful location and extensive grounds, make the Club a unique location for your event.
- Whether you are looking for something small and intimate or grander scale, the space is flexible
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THE FRED PERRY CAFÉ – non-members welcome

Monday 10.00am–4.00pm

Tuesday & Wednesday 10.00am–5.00pm

Thursday 9.00am–4.00pm

Friday 9.00am–5.00pm

Sat/Sun 9.00am–2.00pm

Treat yourself to coffee and cake, or come for lunch

TOP (MEMBERS) BAR AND BALCONY

Mon-Fri 5:00pm–11:00 pm

Sat 12:00pm–11:00pm

Sun 12:00pm–10:30pm

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You can contribute to *Brentham News* by emailing news@brentham.com

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