



The Dulwich Society

TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

Newsletter 34

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SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

Recruitment Campaign: At the same time as we deliver this newsletter to members we are asking our willing street representatives to deliver a leaflet to all houses in the area to encourage new members to join. You may get one too. This leaflet, which is similar to one used last year, outlines the benefits of membership and asks for help in running the Society. This latter appeal of course applies equally to members of the Society. You can help the Society in two ways: either by joining one of the Sub-Committees to add your expert knowledge of trees, wildlife, the law, or whatever to the work already being done, or by helping in some administrative way. We are always glad of offers to help distribute literature; and we would love to hear from someone with an accessible electric typewriter to help production of the newsletter and other documents. If you would like to be involved in any way please let the Secretary or any member of the Executive Committee know.

MEMBERS MEETINGS

To finish 1976 we have two very interesting combined meetings, both in St. Barnabas Hall in Dulwich Village.

Thursday, 4 November 1976, at 7.45 for 8.00 p.m.

A joint meeting of the Dulwich Society and the Arboricultural Association (SE Branch) in the presence of His Worship the Mayor of the London Borough of Southwark and the Mayoress. The meeting will be in the form of a panel to discuss questions mainly on the subject of:

"Trees on Development Sites"

although other questions may be raised.

The panel will be composed of:

Mr. Michael Hardy	Principal Planning Officer, London Borough of Harrow
Mr. Peter Bridgeman	National Secretary, Arboricultural Association and Director of Arboricultural Studies at Merrist Wood College, Guildford. Author of a recent book on tree surgery.

Hambledon House

The Department of Health and Social Security - the leaseholders of Hambledon House and of the derelict lodge adjacent to it - have sought the views of the Southwark Borough Council on the demolition of Hambledon House and its replacement on the 5-acre site of the house and its garden by a residential development. This approach has been treated as an outline planning application, and the Council have accordingly sought the views of the Society. Before doing so they have informed the DHSS that it would be necessary to consult the GLC and other local interests about the demolition of the house, since although it is neither statutorily nor locally listed it is situated in the Dulwich conservation area. They have, we understand, gone on to say that consent to demolition would be unlikely to be granted in isolation, and that it would have to be accompanied by a plan for redevelopment of the site to "a high standard". This is taken to mean that the density of any future development must not exceed 50 persons per acre and (bearing in mind the proximity of the South Circular Road), is likely to be less; and the Council have emphasised that any residential development of the site would have to be of a high standard in terms of layout, design and finish.

Some members will have taken part in the visit to Hambledon House under the auspices of the Local History Committee a couple of years ago, and they will remember that the building was generally agreed to be a pretty severe disappointment. In fact, there is little of any quality that remains within the building, and even the outside has been subjected to so many alterations and accretions over the years that it would be very difficult to press for its retention in whole or in part. In the light of this, the Southwark Borough Council have been informed that, with regret, the Society would not object to the demolition of Hambledon House, and that they strongly support the Council's expressed view about the quality of any residential development that might replace it. The DHSS's approach is merely, at this stage, an "enquiry in principle", and we have no idea when or if a formal planning application might be submitted. We shall of course keep members informed.

All Saints' Church, Rosendale Road

We last reported proposals to redevelop the triangular site alongside All Saints' Church, Rosendale Road, which is now occupied by allotments, in the April 1975 newsletter. At that time the proposals envisaged a mixed development for elderly, disabled and one-parent families, and some features of these proposals aroused strong local feelings.

A new application has now been submitted to the Lambeth Council which represents a substantial modification of the earlier proposals. The number of housing units has been reduced from 27 to 18, and the proposed development now takes the form of a low two-storey block of ten flats for elderly or disabled people along the Rosendale Road front of the site, together with a house for disabled people; and seven two- or three-bedroomed houses at the back of the site facing on to Lovelace Road. These latter would not have any garages, and in order to minimise traffic hazards they would be provided with a parking area for ten vehicles with a single exit on to Lovelace Road. The site will also have a garden and what is described as a "sitting area".

The presence of invalid car exits on to Rosendale Road from the row of elderly/disabled person flats on that part of the site has caused some concern. However, the Sydcote development, between this site and the South Circular Road crossing, does include some twelve motor car exits, and so far as we know this has caused no particular problems during the ten to fifteen years that this development has been in existence. All in all, therefore, the new proposals represent a great improvement over the earlier ones, and despite some reservations about traffic, are undoubtedly a good deal more welcome.

A Note for the Diary

Members may like to know that the Dulwich Branch of the United Nations Association is planning a "habitat" exhibition in UN Week (October 23-31) linked with essay, model building and painting competitions for Southwark schools concerned with some of the problems and possible solutions of housing and planning in the borough of Southwark in the light of experience in other countries, as highlighted at the recent UN Habitat Conference on Human Settlements in Vancouver.

This exhibition will be held at East Dulwich Grove United Reform Church, East Dulwich Grove, SE22, and it is intended that it should be open from 10 am to 7 pm on Tuesday to Friday, October 26 to 29, and from 10 am to 4 pm Saturday 30 October 1976. There is also to be a public meeting arranged by the Dulwich UN Branch at 8 pm on Monday 25 October in the Dulwich Library hall. The speaker will be Mr. Foster Murphy, Chairman of the UK Habitat Committee, who attended the conference in Vancouver. The UNA have extended a cordial invitation to any of our members to attend.

TRAFFIC

The ban on the overnight parking of lorries in the Dulwich area which came into force earlier this year was referred to in newsletter 31. Where signs are affixed to lamp posts prohibiting the parking of lorries between the hours of 6.30 pm and 8 am and an offence is committed, complaint can be made by telephone to East Dulwich Police Station at 97 Crystal Palace Road, SE22 (693 1113) which will be passed on to the headquarters of the traffic wardens for this area for official action by them. Alternatively a call can be made direct to the wardens' office at 22a Church Street, Camberwell, SE5 (701 0534).

LOOKING AT RARE TREES IN DULWICH

We are indebted to Miss Rosa Davis, of College Road, for the following account of a visit to Dulwich by Mr Alan Mitchell, a trees expert from the Forestry Commission at Alice Holt Lodge, near Farnham, Surrey.

On 19 August several members of the Trees Sub-Committee had the pleasure of showing Mr Mitchell some of the trees of Dulwich. Mr Mitchell is the author of a "Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe" published by Collins, and is now writing a similar book on the trees of the USA. He is also compiling a list of trees with their measurements from all over the British Isles; this now includes well over 34,000 examples.

The first interesting identification was the Bhutan pine (*Pinus wallichiana*) in the garden of St Stephen's Church; this has leaves in clusters of five, and eight-inch long cones.

Mr Mitchell particularly wanted to see our famous *Zelkova carpiniifolia* at the junction of College Road and Dulwich Common. This measured 13 ft 2 inches round the bole 5 feet from the ground, and is 75 feet high. We had previously shown him the two in the hedge by the playing field, which can be plainly seen from College Road. They both measured 11 ft 9 inches round and one is 65 feet and the other 70 feet high. Mr Mitchell discovered a smaller one close by. Although related to the elm they have not yet succumbed to the Dutch elm disease. Other small *Zelkovas* are opposite the Picture Gallery in College Road, and there are two in Dulwich Park wrongly named as *Carpinus betulus pyramidalis*.

Mr Mitchell was interested in all the swamp cypresses, *Taxodium distichum*, and amongst a number he measured was one at Bell House 7 ft 3 inches round by 82 feet high, compared to 6 ft 11 inches and 72 feet high when measured in 1957. The one in the Picture Gallery garden measures 10 ft 1 inch and is 84 feet high, whilst the largest one of all in the back garden of 111 Dulwich Village measures 11 ft 10 inches by 95 feet compared to 10 ft 5 inches by 87 feet in 1957. There were others in the Park and a good one at Hambledon House where a white mulberry, *Morus alba*, was identified.

Other interesting trees were those in College Road between Dulwich Common and Frank Dixon Way, including a pin oak, *Quercus palustris*; single-leaved ash, *Fraxinus excelsior* 'Diversifolia'; Dawych beech, *Fagus sylvatica* 'Dawych', with branches nearly erect like those of the pyramidal hornbeam, *Carpinus betulus* 'Fastigiata'; chestnut-leaved oak, *Quercus castaneifolia*; and the most unusual of all, the cut-leaved

hornbeam, *Carpinus betulus* 'Incisa'. It often has cut leaves like the oak and hornbeam leaves growing at the same time. Mr Mitchell has more specimens of leaves from this type of tree sent to him for identification than any other.

These trees were just some of the many we saw and measured on our walk. That we have such a variety and so many fine trees is no doubt through Edward Alleyn's love of trees and the provisions he made in carefully drawing up the leasehold agreements to protect them, not to mention the continual work and vigilance of the Estates Governors. It will be interesting to see whether, under the new scheme of management resulting from the leasehold reform Act, these standards will be maintained.

WILDLIFE

Reports of sightings have not come in from as many individuals as earlier in the year but we are grateful for those we have received and some have been very interesting.

There has been a family of Canada geese in Dulwich Park and both the lesser and the common whitethroat have been detected at the golf course. House martins and swallows have both been noted for the first time flying in the southern part of the area and long-tailed tits feeding in a garden where they have not previously been seen. We should like more reports of all of these, please.

Reports of foxes continue to come in and, more surprisingly, there have been two or three quite independent reports of badgers having been seen. We should greatly welcome any further verifiable evidence that this attractive animal lives in Dulwich. It is, of course, easy to identify, with its thick-set body, some three feet long, on short legs, and with conspicuous, broad black and white stripes running from behind the ears to the tip of the long snout. The hair on the back is very long and greyish. It comes out of its underground set after dark to feed on both plant and animal food, especially underground storage organs of plants, fruit and earthworms. A set is a complicated system of underground passages with a number of openings. Single badgers may walk for several miles while searching for mates but they live in colonies.

DULWICH COLLEGE PICTURE GALLERY

An Exhibition of Drawings, Water Colours and Prints

Sir Hugh Casson, President of the Royal Academy, will mark a milestone in the history of the Dulwich College Picture Gallery on November 27 when he opens an exciting new exhibition called 'Tradition and Innovation'.

For the first time since the private Gallery opened in 1814, contemporary artists will hang their work in a setting previously enjoyed exclusively by the Old Masters like Rembrandt, Rubens, Raphael, Van Dyck, Watteau, Poussin, and Gainsborough.

This original venture follows months of preparation by Organising and Selection Committees chaired respectively by Roger Low, chairman of the Dulwich Society, and the Royal Academician, James Fitton.

'Tradition and Innovation' is designed to broaden the scope of the Gallery to artists and visitors and offset the rising cost of maintaining the building and its priceless collection.

Twenty-seven artists living or working in South London have accepted invitations to present their work for sale, subject to a Gallery commission of one-third the sale price.

To stimulate further local interest, a section of the exhibition will display the work of pupils of Dulwich College, whose Governors own and control the Gallery.

It is no innovation that a distinguished member of the Royal Academy should be connected with this enterprise since there is a traditional link between the Gallery and the Academy.

At the turn of the last century a reputed art dealer called Noel Desenfans bequeathed his art collection to his wife and Sir Francis Bourgeois, later to become a Royal Academician. When they died the collection was transferred to the Gallery and Mrs Desenfans set aside a sum of money in her will for the annual entertainment of RA members. Unfortunately, inflation has made it impossible to fund a dinner from that sum for some years, although RA members are still invited to Gallery Garden Parties.

Future exhibitions at the Gallery will depend on the success of 'Tradition and Innovation'.