



The Dulwich Society

TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

Newsletter 60

April 1983

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THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM was held on Thursday 3rd March 1983 in St. Barnabas' Hall, Captain Denys Wyatt taking the chair in the absence of the President. It was with great pleasure that we welcomed two of our Vice Presidents, Sir Frederick Everson, KCMG, and the Rt. Hon. S.C. Silkin, QC, MP, among the 75 members who were present. At the same time all members of the Society will note with very deep regret the deaths during the preceding year of Charles Pearce and James Fitton, Vice Presidents, both of whom had contributed so much. The Minutes of the 19th AGM held on 4th March 1982 were read and approved.

The Chairman recalled that 1983 was the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Society. He paid tribute to all who had given so generously of their time and talents over the years, with special thanks to Mr. Peter Lawson, the Vice Chairman, whose tact and expertise had been invaluable in creating and maintaining the good relations which the Society enjoys with other local and national organisations.

The Chairman then welcomed the election as a Vice President of Mr. Geoffrey Pattie, MP, who has resided in Dulwich for many years, and of Mr. Arthur (Jim) Davis as Treasurer in place of Mr. Harry Smith, who has resigned. The Chairman thanked Mr. Smith for his work on the Society's Accounts during his term of office. He mentioned that offers of help from members are always welcome and needed for all aspects of the Society's work, and that a volunteer is still required for the post of Secretary.

The Chairman then invited the Chairmen of the Sub-Committees to report on their activities during the past year. The main points have been covered in the newsletters.

The Chairman concluded by expressing thanks and appreciation to all who contribute to the work and activities of the Society.

The Treasurer presented the audited accounts for the year ended 31st December 1982 which were unanimously adopted.

For those members unable to attend the following details have been extracted.

	<u>1982</u>	<u>1981</u>
Income	£1591	£1539
Expenditure	1595	1238
(Deficit) Surplus	(4)	301
Accumulated Fund	£3264	£2424

The increase in the Accumulated Fund arises, after deducting the deficit of £4, from the transfer thereto of £844 being a Provision brought forward from last year which is no longer required. This Provision formed part of the item Sundry Creditors & Provisions £915 in the 1981 Accounts. The Provision had been built up in earlier years against an anticipated outlay upon a History project which is now being carried out by way of annual supplements.

The Officers of the Society were elected or re-elected and their names are listed in the centre-fold of this Newsletter, which should be detached and kept for reference.

The Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m. and the always-welcome refreshments were provided by Mrs. Evans and her helpers.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Memo

Annual Dinner

As announced at the Annual General Meeting, the Society's Annual Dinner will take place in the Ladies' Annexe of the Athenaeum Club on Friday 6th May 1983 at 6.45 p.m. for 7.15 p.m.

The guest speaker will be Dr. David Quarmby, Managing Director (Buses), London Transport Executive.

Tickets (£13.75 each including sherry, wine, port or liquers) may be obtained from Mrs. Pat Rich (telephone 693 5332).

Dress for gentlemen: Black tie.

Wildlife. An evening field walk has been planned for Thursday, June 2nd. Members should meet at Rosendale Allotments gate (Rosendale Road) at 7.15 p.m.

April 14th: The History meeting at Bell House scheduled for this date has now been postponed.

July 14th: 8 p.m. At Bell House, 27 College Road, a talk by members of the History Sub-Committee on "The History of Bell House", and an opportunity to view the house and garden.

The following lecture list of the Lambeth Horticultural Society will interest some of our members. All lectures are given at Nettlefold Hall, West Norwood at 8 p.m.

<u>1983</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Subject</u>
March 23rd	Mr R Dale	Cactus and Succulents
April 27th	Mr Woolmer	Gift of the Nile
May 25th	P.B.I. Quiz	
June 22nd	Mr L A Cross	Pelargoniums
July 27th	Mrs Simpson	Floral art of land and sea

few people find hibernating or dead bats so as to be able to discover what species are in the area. A few species - Pipistrelle, long eared and the Noctule bats - are reasonably common throughout England. The Noctule, being much larger than the other two, is easier to guess at, but there are several large species which might turn up anywhere to make any sighting suspected, rather than positive. Concerning any small bat seen flying by, there is no way of telling its identity. I do not know of any method of identifying the various sounds that are within the range of human hearing though I suspect that if we could hear the full range of the bat's voice, then it would be much simpler to identify the species correctly.

Having explained that we are unlikely to discover which bats are about, there are several interesting facts to watch out for. If you see a bat, note what time it was first seen, e.g. in relation to lighting up times, usually half an hour before. Does the bat patrol an area? If so, how? Does it fly in a figure of eight, up and down, or in a continuous direction along a regular circuit? Reference to stationary objects is always useful, e.g. along the lee side of a tall hedgerow, round a street light, etc. Is the bat alone? Some species hunt clouds of insects in loose flocks, others prefer their own little patch of hedgerow or garden. If other bats are present, note any behavioural patterns. Do they keep a specified distance apart? Patrol their own space within the flock? I have seen some bats (thought to be Noctules) flying in strict formation over a large pond on a hot sunny afternoon. They looked very similar to a migrating flock of gulls, which is what I first thought they were.

Most people are aware that all British bats feed on insects. The majority of these are caught in flight, their position pin-pointed by echo location, similar to radar. The bats emit a constant stream of notes at high frequencies and are then able to pick up the echoes giving them a sonic picture of their surroundings. They do not get confused by the notes as they are being emitted owing to the structure of their ears but I cannot discover how. When catching insects most use the flap of skin between their legs as a basket, taking the insect out with their mouth. Some food is caught in the mouth and often the wings will be used to knock an insect into the basket. The long eared bat also has the habit of hovering around low shrubs in the manner of a humming bird, picking insects off the leaves. Many insects do manage to escape capture. Moths in particular can detect a bat's approach and drop out of the path at the last moment. This can be seen when driving at night - moths caught in the headlights will often be seen dropping very suddenly to the road. Some moths can also produce squeaks or click their wings to confuse the bat's radar.

All British bats hibernate for the winter, the majority in hollow trees although some species roost in caves or in attics. Increasingly bats are using nest boxes for hibernation and brood rearing in plantations where there are no hollow trees. Instead of having a hole in the front, these boxes have a slit in the bottom and the box is wider at the top than the bottom. The early bats will begin to fly on warmer evenings in March and can be seen until the end of September although any warm spell will bring a few out during the winter.

SICK OR HOMELESS BIRDS

If any members find a bird which is injured or has fallen from a nest, could they please ring 699-9108 and efforts will be made to restore it and return it to the wild in due course. The main aims of this scheme are to return birds to the wild, to breed birds unable to be released through injury and to find out if the releasing of such birds is worthwhile by ringing them and analysing any recoveries.

Also required is any wood or building materials (particularly old kitchen cupboards) which can be used for cages. Please ring the above number or call evenings and weekends Mr R Goff, 14 Waldram Park Road, Forest Hill, London SE23.

Members are reminded that our Bird Recorder is Mr D V Freshwater, 24 Dulwich Village, SE21 (telephone 693 1666) who will be glad to hear of sightings in the Dulwich area.

LOCAL HISTORY

This year has been an interesting and productive one for the History Sub-Committee. To some extent it has been business as usual, with much of the real work being done behind the scenes on an individual basis, as private research, the advantage of the Sub-Committee being that it enables us to pool our knowledge. Patrick Darby's card index of Dulwich inhabitants is fast approaching unmanageable proportions, with about 5,000 names

up to 1807, and he and Austin Hall, the Archivist at Dulwich College Library, are collaborating in the design of a database for use on the College mini-computer, which it is hoped will come to fruition in the next eighteen months. Brian Green has followed up his attractive and informative 'Dulwich Village' with a companion volume, no less successful, entitled 'Around Dulwich', which appeared in October. The year would not, of course, have been complete without Bill De Baerdemaecker's popular slide-show and talk at St. Barnabas Hall.

There have been two significant additions to our programme this year. The first is that we have been allocated an extra Monthly Members' Meeting, which in June took the form of a visit to Kingswood House. There three of our members, ably assisted by a representative of the G.L.C., gave a talk on the history of the house, followed by a tour of it. We shall be repeating the exercise this year at another of the locality's fine old houses, Bell House, on July (not April) 14th. Secondly, October saw the appearance of our 'History Supplement' to the Newsletter. Tentatively planned as the first of a series, we are pleased to say that this seems to have met with general approval, and arrangements are therefore in hand for issue no.2 to appear this October, using the same format.

The request in Newsletter 54 for information on isolated archaeological finds of any description elicited a unique response from the Society's members. In other words, the Chairman of our Sub-Committee received only one reply.

We are most grateful to those members who have contributed to our archives during

the year: Mr Jack Le Tall for his material on Bessemer Grange and Ruskin Manor, and Miss Margaret Todd for a volume on Dulwich which she compiled as a schoolgirl, and which contains many interesting picture postcards of the area. We have also been given the Minute Books and other material relating to Air Raid Post 60, which in view of their undoubted interest for students of modern history we are proposing to donate, on permanent loan, to the local studies department of the John Harvard Library.

HORTICULTURAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Plants and Gardens Spring Fair

Sunday May 8th 11 am to 5 pm

This year, instead of our own plant sale, we have agreed to take a stand at the "Plants and Gardens Spring Fair" organised by the Tradescant Trust at St. Mary's, Lambeth.

In 1974, Rosemary Nicholson had her interest in the Tradescants aroused by the biography written by Mea Allan and made a pilgrimage to the site of their Nursery in South Lambeth Road and to the church where they were buried. In 1976, quite by chance, Mrs Nicholson found to her horror that the church, St. Mary at Lambeth, was scheduled for immediate demolition. With prodigious energy and formidable courage, she went to work. By dint, one suspects, of a mixture of bludgeoning, cajolery and missionary zeal, she obtained the necessary authorisations, gathered around herself a dedicated band of supporters, set up The Tradescant Trust, acquired a dilapidated and vandalised church, an overgrown rubbish tip and a

daunting obligation, which would require enormous amounts of money to fulfil.

Since then the Trust has raised a quarter of a million pounds. It has put in hand repairs to the roof and windows and set about cleaning the church, clearing the churchyard and designing and planting a garden with flowers and shrubs that were grown in the seventeenth century. It has installed a fine stained glass window by Lawrence Lee commemorating the Tradescants and their plants. It is the intention of the Trust to continue the work of restoration, to complete the garden, and to set up the first "Museum of Garden History" in Europe.

The two Tradescants, father and son, were nurserymen of Lambeth, Royal Gardeners to Charles I and among the most illustrious names in English horticulture. They travelled widely and introduced many plants that have changed the face of our gardens. The "natural and artificial curiosities" of John Tradescant the younger in large part formed the basis of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and the director of that museum is one of the present Tradescant Trustees.

St. Mary's nestles under the wall of Lambeth Palace at the eastern end of Lambeth Bridge and is just 4 miles from North Dulwich Station. The "Plants and Gardens Spring Fair", to be opened by Hugh Johnson ("Tradescant" of THE GARDEN magazine) will be from 11 am to 5 pm on Sunday, 8th May; there will be an admission fee of 50p. A good number of gardening organisations have agreed to take part and, if their track record is anything to go by,

the Tradescant Trust can be relied on to put on a very fine show.

There will be a much wider selection of plants and seeds on offer than could possibly be produced at our own plant sale and there will be many interesting displays and exhibits. If any members have plants for sale, or specimens which they would be prepared to lend us for display purposes, would they please contact Ann Calder, John Robinson or Bill Hale of the Horticultural Sub-Committee. If any members would like to attend but are in need of transport will they please let any member of the Horticultural Sub-Committee know and we will do our best to arrange a lift. We hope as many members as possible will support this worthwhile event and get themselves a gardening bargain. Please note there is, as yet, no heating in the building and it can be nippy on a cold day.

THE TRADING HUT

We shall not be printing new cards for the hut this year. The Lambeth Horticultural Society have agreed to accept the existing cards, for identification purposes for 1983.

TREES SUB-COMMITTEE

Activities in the Year to March 1983

Alan Barnard, Chairman of the Trees Sub-Committee, left us during the year. His devoted work for the Society and trees in particular will be greatly missed. We were also very sad to lose Margaret Westwood, and John whose meticulous work in mapping

out the Farquhar Road site and Sydenham Hill Wood has proved so valuable. Sheila and Dick Low offered the hospitality of their home for the Society to say goodbye to these good friends at a very enjoyable reception.

We saw Alan again when he attended the planting of a beech tree in November in the estate area between Lowe Walk and College Road to commemorate John Toler. After the planting we enjoyed the very generous hospitality of Rosemary Toler at her home.

The Tree Walk this year was in Dulwich Wood, where our old friends Ted Storey and Michael Cudd, horticultural advisers to the G.L.C. gave us their expert view of the familiar local amenity. We have been active also in Sydenham Wood where Southwark have asked the London Wildlife Trust to formulate and implement plans to develop the wood as a nature reserve. Members of the Society are on the committee and in the working parties set up to assist the London Wildlife Group in developing plans. The Trust's conservation officer gave to a well attended meeting, early this February, a very interesting illustrated talk on the work of the Trust and its plans for the wood.

Members of the sub-committee regularly attend the Saturday morning visits by the Estate Governors to look at trees whose removal has been requested. We are also frequently in contact with the local authority and others about local tree problems and asking for the trees in our streets to be replaced. I am sure we are all glad to see that Southwark have been active in replanting trees in our streets recently.

Our tree walk this year is to be held on 7th July. The venue will be announced in the next edition of this magazine and in the Villager. Please make a note of the date.

Finally we would be very interested to hear from any one interested in serving on the Trees sub-committee. Any specialist knowledge is obviously useful but the only vital qualification is an interest in, and love of, trees.

The Treasurer wishes to remind members that the new subscription of £2 was due to 1st January, 1983, and asks that those who have not paid will now do so without delay.

Many members have not amended their Banker's Order (the form was enclosed with the January Newsletter) and the Treasurer asks that members send the outstanding £1 balance together with a new Banker's Order for 1st January, 1984. If a further copy of the form is needed, please apply by telephone or post to the Treasurer.