



# *The Dulwich Society*

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TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

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*Newsletter 68*  
*April 1985*

APRIL 1985

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THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The 22nd Annual General Meeting was held in St Barnabas Hall on Thursday 7th March. The Chairman of the Executive Committee, Capt Denys Wyatt, took the Chair in the absence of the President. After the signing of the Minutes of the 21st (Anniversary) AGM, the Chairman gave a warm welcome to the 44 members present. Sir Frederick Everson, one of our Vice-Presidents who had been unable to join us last year, was given a particularly warm welcome.

The Chairman opened his report by recording the Society's deep regrets at the deaths of Lord Hinton of Bankside, a Vice-President of long standing, and Sir Robert Lawrence, Chairman of the British Railways Properties Board and loyal member of the Society which had been represented at his Memorial Service by the Vice-Chairman. The Society's deepest sympathy was conveyed to Sir Frederick Everson in his tragic double bereavement in the loss of Lady Linda Everson and his eldest son.

The Society's thanks were recorded to Mr Giles Waterfield for his agreement to the planting of its 21st Anniversary Tree in the Gallery Gardens and for the reception which followed in the Gallery. Efforts during the past year had concentrated on preservation and conservation, and to this end a substantial contribution had been made to the London Wildlife Trust's Fund. The Fund covered costs involved in presenting the LWT's case objecting to the Mid-South Southwark Local Plan for housing development in Sydenham Hill Woods. Objections were made at a Public Enquiry at which the Vice-Chairman gave a very able presentation of the Society's own case in support of the LWT.

Mr Still, Trees, Mr Reid, Planning, Mr Todd, Traffic and Miss Lock, Editor, were praised for their sterling work: all were retiring, but Mr Reid and Mr Todd were to remain active. A volunteer was needed to edit the Newsletter. Members had been lost to the Traffic and Planning Sub-Committees and the Chairman was proposing they should merge. After referring to the presentation of 2 goblets to Mr and Mrs Low, in recognition of the work they had done over many years before leaving Dulwich, the Chairman concluded by announcing the arrangements for this year's Annual Dinner. Details are given in the Insert in this Newsletter.

Important points made by Sub-Committee Chairmen in their reports were:-

Wildlife.

The theme for last year and the coming year was 'Gardening for Wildlife': sightings of all less-than-commonplace fauna play an important part in this work.

Traffic.

Thanks to an influx of new volunteers, the Sub-Committee may be able to avoid a merger. The engineering surveyors appointed by the Dept of Transport to report on the South Circular

Road had asked for the Society's observations: all members were invited to contribute specific points to the Sub-Committee. Trees.

The public owed a deep debt of gratitude to the London Wildlife Trust for its long campaign on the theme 'Save the Woods'. All areas of London, similar in composition to Dulwich, were challenged to show similar numbers and varieties of trees. All members were thanked by the retiring Chairman for their support. Local History.

Closer links had been forged with the John Harvard (Local Studies) Library following an extensive tour of the Archives by the Sub-Committee. On 6th June, the anniversary of D-Day, Glenlea, on Dulwich Common, would be visited. Dutch Intelligence had used this house during World War Two, and one of the few surviving agents had been invited to join members with his wife, a former pupil at JAGS, for the occasion. A small charge per person was to be made for this meeting to defray expenses. Horticulture.

Slides produced by a member of the Sub-Committee now provided an excellent record of gardens already visited, and new 'open' gardens were needed each year. To celebrate 50 years at The Grange, Mr Fairlie's garden was to 'go public' for the first time in May, at a small charge to go towards NSPCG funds. Planning.

Mr Reid was unable to give his report through illness, but noted the Sub-Committee had made strong submissions on the Mid-South Southwark Local Plan, and had supported, on the Society's behalf, proposals by the Southwark Conservation Officer for an extension of the conservation area which would include Sydenham Hill Woods. Members were urged to continue to write in on any proposals or developments: they provided a most valuable source of intelligence.

Presenting the Audited Accounts and Balance Sheet for 1984, the Treasurer emphasised the constant movement of residents in and out of Dulwich: this movement increased the importance of constant effort to encourage new members to join, to maintain income.

The following items are extracted for those members who were unable to attend.

|             | 1984   | 1983   |
|-------------|--------|--------|
| Income      | £2,431 | £2,175 |
| Expenditure | £2,080 | £2,044 |
| Surplus     | £351   | £131   |

The Society's Assets now stand at £3,746.

In a brief report, the Secretary said 6 members had joined the audience for one of Sir Robin Day's 'Question Time' programmes last autumn, but members had not been able to take advantage of certain reduced-price tickets offered by the National Theatre. A neighbouring Society had done useful work in

connection with development in Brockwell Park being abandoned, and had supported the need for the laying of the Effra Storm Relief Sewer. The Society's Newsletter comprised a tiny archive amongst the thousands housed in the John Harvard (Local Studies) Library: there were some gaps in the sequence, and members were asked for help in tracing copies for the late 1960s. These could be copied and returned.

The Society's Officers, Executive Committee and the Hon. Auditor were elected for the coming year. Some vacancies remain to be filled on the Executive Committee.

The Meeting closed for refreshments at 9.20pm.

#### NOTE.

To allow time for members to be appointed by the EC to fill the remaining vacancies, and for a decision to be reached on the futures of the Traffic and Planning Sub-Committees, the Annual Calendar will now be included with the July Newsletter.

Members who have retained the Calendar from the April 1984 Newsletter will still be able to refer to that for the following information, which also applies for 1985-86:-

- 1) page 'c' Trees Sub-Committee
- 2) page 'd' Local History and Wildlife Sub-Committees
- 3) page 'e' Horticulture Sub-Committee
- 4) pages 'e', 'f' and 'g' Membership and Publicity and Zone Distributors.

Newsletter distribution queries should be referred to Mrs Nina Morgan, telno 274 6340, and general queries should be referred to the Treasurer, telno 693 1713 or the Secretary telno 670 0890.

Treasurer's Report 1984

The audited Balance Sheet as at 31st December, 1984 and the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended that date are shown in full in this issue.

The subscription income has risen slightly reflecting the influx of new members which has more than offset those leaving the district and resigning their membership.

The improvement in tax recovery on deeds of covenant now reflects a full year at the new subscription level.

The Society has benefitted from the higher interest rates in 1984 with maximum amounts kept in interest-bearing accounts. The remainder of the British 9½% Savings Bonds were redeemed on 15th February 1985, and the whole is now in the National Savings Investment Account which pays its interest without deduction of tax.

Without materially increasing the overall total of expenditure, the Society has been able to make a £200 donation to the London Wildlife Trust Fighting Fund to preserve the Great North Wood on Sydenham Hill, and also to plant a tree in the Dulwich Picture Gallery grounds to commemorate the 21st Anniversary of the founding of the Society.

Appreciation is again expressed to all those members who responded to my letter in the January 1985 Newsletter by paying subscriptions promptly. The cost in 1984 of postage and correspondence in following up non-payment of subscriptions was still disappointingly high.

May I also remind members that their membership ceases when subscriptions are 6 months in arrear, and that the Newsletter is not sent thereafter.

There are still old bankers orders for £1 which have not been cancelled; if any member has any query on his/her subscription position or wishes to raise any point on the Accounts, please do not hesitate to let me know.

A. J. DAVIS, F.C.A.

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THE DULWICH SOCIETY

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1984.

| <u>1983</u>  |  | <u>1984</u>  |
|--------------|--|--------------|
|              | <u>INCOME</u>  |              |
| 1,764        | Subscriptions received                                     | 1,849        |
| 50           | - do - Corporate Members                                   | 50           |
| 68           | Tax Recovery - Deeds of Covenant                           | 106          |
| 274          | Interest Received  | 372          |
| -            | Donations and Sundry                                       | 9            |
| 2,175        | Surplus on Social Events                                   | 45           |
|              | <u>19</u>  | <u>2,431</u> |
|              | <u>EXPENDITURE</u>   |              |
| 1,292        | Newsletters, Broadsheets & History Supplement              | 1,158        |
| 243          | Printing & Stationery & Publicity                          | 251          |
| 201          | Postage & Telephone  | 130          |
| 207          | Hire of Hall & Meeting Expenses                            | 249          |
| 67           | Subscriptions, Presentation, Tree Planting                 | 108          |
| 34           | Bank Charges   | (16)         |
| 2,044        | London Wildlife Trust - Fighting Fund for Great North Wood | 200          |
|              | <u>-</u>   | <u>2,080</u> |
| <u>£ 131</u> | Surplus for year   | <u>£ 351</u> |

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1984

|               |   |               |
|---------------|---|---------------|
|               | <u>NET ASSETS</u>                       |               |
|               | Investments                             |               |
| 1,700         | British 9½% Savings Bonds               | 1,200         |
| -             | National Savings Investment Account     | 2,178         |
| 3,331         | Barclays Bank Deposit Account           | 688           |
|               | <u>1,631</u>                            | <u>4,066</u>  |
| 190           | Cash at Bank                            | 70            |
| 67            | Less: Sundry Creditors                  | 402           |
| 127           | Subscriptions in advance                | 94            |
| 194           |   | 496           |
| (126)         | Deduct Sundry Debtor                    | 106           |
|               | <u>68</u>                               | <u>(390)</u>  |
| <u>£3,395</u> |   | <u>£3,746</u> |
|               | REPRESENTED BY:                         |               |
| 3,264         | Accumulated Fund as at 1st January 1984 | 3,395         |
| 131           | Add: Surplus for year                   | 351           |
| <u>£3,395</u> |   | <u>£3,746</u> |
|               | CHAIRMAN                                | TREASURER     |

REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE DULWICH SOCIETY

The above Accounts show a true and fair view of the financial state and results for the year ended 31st December, 1984.

12th February, 1985

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CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

|  |                                |   |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| May 2nd<br>8 pm<br>St. Barnabas  | Wildlife<br>Sub-Committee      | Mr K Betton of the London<br>Natural History Society<br>will give a talk on "Birds<br>of the London area".  |
| May 11th<br>Farquhar Road<br>SE19  | Wildlife<br>Sub-Committee      | The official opening of<br>Dulwich Upper Wood Nature<br>Park by the Ecological<br>Parks Trust.  |
| May 17th   | Annual Dinner                  | (see separate enclosure<br>and ticket application form)   |
| *May 19th<br>2.30 pm<br>North Dulwich<br>Station   | Local History<br>Sub-Committee | Brian Green, Chairman of<br>the Local History group<br>will be conducting the first<br>in a series of historical<br>walks: 1. "The Old Village<br>of Dulwich".  |
| June 6th<br>7.45 pm  | Local History<br>Sub-Committee | The Glenlea evening. The<br>evening will begin at<br>7.45 pm with a visit to<br>'Glenlea' and its garden,<br>followed by a talk on its<br>history at The Old Library,<br>Dulwich College. Admission<br>£1.50. Tickets from The Art<br>Stationers, 31 Dulwich Village,<br>SE21 |
| *June 16th<br>2.30 pm<br>Grove Tavern<br>(corner of<br>Dulwich Common/<br>Lordship Lane) | Local History<br>Sub-Committee | Local History Walk: 2. "Dulwich<br>Woods and Kingswood".  |
| *June 23rd<br>2.30 pm<br>North Dulwich<br>Station  | Local History<br>Sub-Committee | Local History Walk: 3. "The<br>Old Village of Dulwich".   |
| June 30th<br>2.30 pm<br>Belair Car<br>Park   | Local History<br>Sub-Committee | Local History Walk: 4.<br>"Belair, Dulwich Common,<br>Pond Cottages - - - and<br>Mr Pickwick!".   |

July 4th  
7.30 pm  
Crescent Wood  
Road entrance  
to Sydenham  
Hill Wood

Trees  
Sub-Committee

There will be a trees  
walk around Sydenham Hill  
Wood led by a member of  
The London Wildlife Trust.  
This is sure to be of  
interest to members in view  
of the public enquiry into  
the future of the woods.

Late July

Wildlife  
Sub-Committee

Walk along Green Dale,  
East Dulwich, led by  
Mr de Baedemaeker.  
Details in July Newsletter.

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Local History Walks: With the exception of the walk on June 16th, the walks last approximately 2½ hours and are very gentle. The walk on June 16th will last approximately 3 hours and is rather hilly. Teas will be available on all the walks. Adults £1, Children and OAP's 50p. All proceeds to St. Christopher's Hospice.

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WILDLIFE SUB-COMMITTEE

Care of Sick and Injured Birds

What to do with an injured bird is a problem which befalls most people once or twice, and if you become known, every year. The eventual release of the bird often depends upon the immediate treatment given when the bird is found, as opposed to the long-term care. Most common knowledge concerning the treatment and feeding of injured birds (particularly babies) is inaccurate and frequently lethal. In this article I would like to clarify what can be done to aid these birds.

Firstly let me explain that I am not a Vet., but for the last three years I have been taking in birds referred to me by various vets and the R.S.P.C.A. Although I now live in Gillingham, Kent, I started the scheme whilst in London. During 1984 I dealt with approximately 200 birds from gulls and owls, to blackbirds and sparrows.

By far the most frequent case I receive is that of a nestling thrush, caught by a cat, only a few days out of the nest. To be totally realistic, most of these birds should be destroyed as soon as they are found. As few as one in twenty survive to be set free; infection, even from the slightest of wounds can kill these birds literally overnight; shock also adds to the speed of their demise. I now keep a stock of anti-biotics for immediate use, but have not significantly improved upon the rate of death. The other factor which compounds the problem is the feeding of these youngsters; this often comes too late to save them. Feeding by hand is not the easiest

operation and it is not always possible to fit in an adequate time schedule. Never give any young bird bread and milk, all the bread does is to make the bird feel full, without providing any useful nourishment. Often the bread cannot be digested and blocks the bird's digestive system; either way the bird dies.

Having thoroughly depressed you all, please cheer up; some birds do survive, and thus present a totally different set of problems. If I have a bird which is going to be set free, I begin to train it to the sound of a whistle at each feed. Then once free, the bird can be called back for feeding during the first week of freedom; after that, most thrushes can fend for themselves and should be left to do so. Any bird which has to depend on human support to survive in the wild is, in my opinion, a failure!

Flight comes naturally to a fledgling when the bird is of sufficient development and strength, so space must be provided for their muscles to develop before release. This does not mean that a large aviary is necessary. I use a triangular cage, the sides are 3 feet long, and the total length is 6 foot. Several perches must be provided, and some form of shelter from the elements (my birds often have to share with a family of baby rabbits).

The best food to give is cat/dog food, but ensure that it is not one of the mushy varieties. Bran should be mixed in as well as a vitamin additive. Access to open ground is beneficial because they soon learn to catch food for themselves.

Among frequent guests are gulls that are either starved or suffering from Botulism. Starved birds are easily diagnosed by being very thin on the breast (the breast-bone protrudes like the blade of a knife), and by having green droppings. Birds in this condition must be given glucose and slightly warm water as soon as possible; even if this means force feeding. Botulism is a type of poisoning caused by a bacteria which breeds rapidly in warm, damp conditions, aided by the habit of colony nesting in the gull family. These birds often have great difficulty in standing up and tend to rest their heads with the point of their beak touching the ground. Starvation is a further complication, but the cure is relatively simple. If the effects of starvation are not too advanced, simply leave the bird alone for two days with slightly sugared water, but no food; this is enough to rid the bird of the poison. Recovery is then a matter of feeding and enough room to exercise. Gulls are renowned for eating anything, but sprats are the ideal food. The smaller gulls require two or three a day, four if starved. The larger gulls require five or six.

If you ever find an injured hawk or owl, hand it to the R.S.P.C.A. who will call to collect. Birds of prey are very specialised and subject to strict legal requirements. In any case there are few people who have the necessary food and the space. The subsequent release of these birds can take several weeks and must only be attempted in secluded areas.

Having briefly discussed these methods of treating birds, the question must be asked:- Is it worth the trouble? The short answer has to be, No. The actual benefit to the wild population is virtually nil. But fortunately not all the projects are fatal; I know that birds I have ringed before release have lived for more than a year, quite successfully. -- So why bother? Personally, I have always taken in birds of all sorts and tried to provide a service which ensures that any bird found gets the benefit of experienced care and is given another chance in the wild. If the end result, as far as the ecological balance is concerned, is either positive or negative, I am not too worried. What does concern me is that ordinary people who care, are not ignored. At the moment I have an injured blackbird who reared several of the orphans handed in last year. This saved me a lot of time, and the youngsters were looked after by an expert! So although not yet suitable for release, she is providing a useful function.

#### A Caring Story

It was recorded in the press in January that a 20 ft. Christmas tree at Norwich Station was to stay for the time being. A blackbird had nested in the branches and laid an egg. Rail staff did not want to disturb the bird until the egg was hatched.

#### Sightings

The January cold snap produced several reports of a reduction of Tit numbers. Fortunately those remaining are sufficient to maintain a presence in gardens. Their songs accompany those of Robin, Wren, Dunnock, Thrush and Wood Pigeon. At the same time, Crows and Magpies are nest building so it appears the year is beginning well for birds. Canada Geese paid no regard to the weather and continued their morning and evening flights. Owls are reported only from the wooded area.

During still nights Foxes can be heard at a distance, misleading the listener as to their numbers by their ventriloquial skill. Squirrels remain active but there are no reports of Hedgehogs stirring. A small Bat was spotted flying in an empty modern town house in College Gardens.

In the previous newsletter reference was made to 'wintering Thrushes!'. Redwings and Fieldfares should have been specified. Both are now around, albeit in small numbers, and may visit gardens for berries and apples.

To report sightings, please ring 693 1666.

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Making a Water-Garden

In 1983 we decided to end our efforts to grow vegetables at the bottom of our garden, having surrendered to the flocks of Wood Pigeons and a very poor soil, apparently overloaded with boiler ash. This gave us the opportunity to do a mini-landscaping of that area to blend with the adjacent rock garden. We created a 'Valley Garden' by the winter of that year, which gave us the chance to make a Water Garden out of a neglected and overgrown herbaceous border, that lay at the end of the old kitchen garden. I had often been asked to put a wildlife pond in my garden, but hitherto could see no appropriate site free from large trees.

I got tremendous fun and interest from visualizing my new pond throughout the summer of 1984; plotting its outline with a long rope on the ground in an informal shape that I hoped would be pleasant to see; diverting a path and clearing an area of the soil over about 600 square feet, digging and setting levels with spirit-levels, since the sloping site was too uneven to permit me to trust to my eye alone. Meanwhile I built banks in suitable shapes around the actual new path and pond to use up the excavated soil, but kept the prime London yellow clay from the bottom spits separate for future use. When this had been done the general effect was of a pond in a shallow basin, which looked appropriate to the sloping site.

The three-dimensional garden can be quite interesting, giving scope for the use of alpine plants on steep slopes, and accenting the heights of the hillocks by planting taller shrubs or perennials on the high spots. If you have a special favourite shrub, it can gain dramatically from standing out on a "cliff top". Restrained use of rocks can enable you to show alpines to their best advantage whilst retaining soil at a steeper slope than would normally be possible and giving quick drainage of surface water away from plant crowns, that might otherwise rot. The use of sunken paths increases the apparent height of the raised banks, as well as providing extra soil for bank building.

I intended to make the pond watertight by lining it with butyl. I was warned that this sheet could be punctured easily by any sharp edge of stone, pottery or glass in the surface beneath or on top, or from shoes or wellingtons worn by anyone entering the pond, or by Herons seeking foods. Such leaks are virtually irreparable, even if they can be traced, without a major reconstruction of part at least of the pond. As a precaution against punctures, one must closely examine the finished excavation with the intention of removing any sharp edges and then normally line by patting on a quarter-of-an-inch to half-an-inch layer of fine moist sand. An additional precaution is to line the pond, on top of the sand, with a special felt, about 6' wide, with overlapping edges, before laying the butyl. The liner can be protected to a certain extent,

over the marginal shelves at least, from above by another layer of felt.

Butyl is readily available in three widths, 6', 12' and 18', the two last include butt-welded seams to build up from the standard 6' width. Wider sheets can be obtained, made up specially if desired, but this may entail delays and additional welding expense. The length of the roll is great so that the sheet required will be cut to the ideal length specified.

The normal sheet is rectangular, which is not a natural shape for a wildlife pond. A spare 15" all round the edge has to be allowed for safe anchorage of the butyl. After providing for this and for the rise and fall to the deepest point of the pond, it is possible to plot out the calculated rectangle available within which can be planned a natural-looking outline. The surplus butyl can easily be cut off with a strong pair of scissors. If the largest off-cut is of suitable shape it may be useful for making an adjacent small pond to accept the overflow if required. The butyl sheet that I used was 18' by 23' and was exceedingly heavy for a man to carry single-handed.

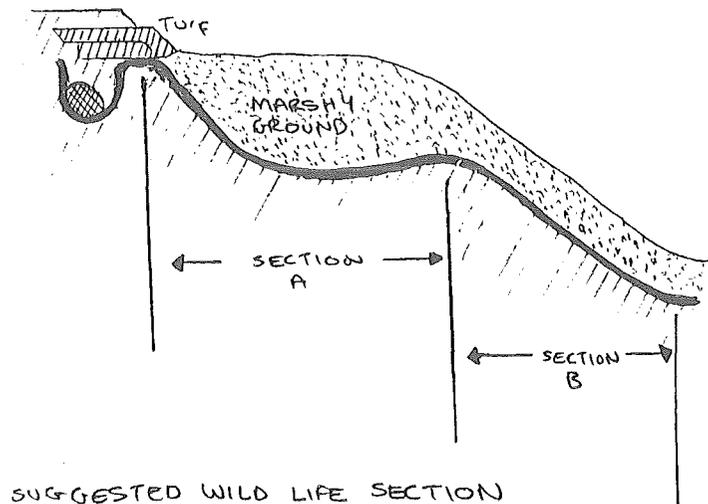
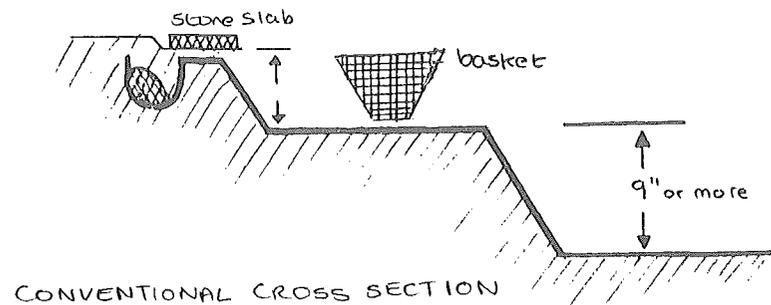
The best aquatic catalogues give the desirable water depth above the crown of each plant listed. For a medium size water-lily this is usually up to 18". This should be planted in a special plastic basket for easy control, which means that allowing for a basket height of 8" and the thickness of the combined linings, 2'4" is a good depth for places where lilies are to be set. More vigorous lilies, which require up to 3' of clear water, should not normally be planted except in very large ponds. The 2'4" depth is adequate for frogs, which may decide to hibernate in the deeper parts.

Catalogues often present an ideal way of how to construct a butyl-lined pond, but these ponds are to a large extent sterile, and artificially stepped to receive individual planting baskets, with the intention of limiting the soil in the pond to that which is in the baskets.

The first such baskets that I put temporarily into my pond soon proved to be a death trap to a newt, which got its head and fore-legs through one of the holes in the basket side, could neither advance nor retire, and was dead when the basket was lifted again a few days later.

With my soil, I found the suggested section for a wildlife pond, with full soil cover to the butyl lining, very unsatisfactory. The soil in section "A" mostly would not stay without a line of cobbles at its lower edge to retain it, and the soil put on section "B" vanished almost entirely to the bottom. Section "A" was also too shallow to take baskets near the bank where, in a small pond, most submerged marginals look their best. The baskets are tapered to a smaller base. They will not stand upright on a slope but tend

to roll over. They need support from more cobbles, that in turn need wedging with turf to prevent them also from rolling down.



The planting shelves do not need to go all round the pond. The baskets are very useful for control of the more invasive plants, and the plants will soon put their roots through the basket holes into surrounding soil. The shelves should be at least 12" below high water level, to allow for the basket, the linings and say 2" of water cover. One can always put a little soil under the basket to raise it, but it is virtually impossible to force it down after the lining is completed.

Nurseries usually tell you to make the pond as simple in outline as possible and "avoid intricate designs as these are rarely a success". However for a wildlife pond irregularity is appropriate, and I think that mine is an interesting shape. I have the pond that I envisaged, and think the final result well justifies the extra trouble taken.

The site of the pond should be well free from overhanging trees and shrubs, as fallen leaves will poison the water. Most gardens in Dulwich have something of a leaf-fall problem each autumn, but this can be overcome by erecting a temporary "tent", made from a specially fine nylon net, readily available from nurseries. This can be hung from a line stretched high up across the centre of the pond and anchored at ground level by special hooked pegs, supplied with the net.

Initially the butyl is laid as a flat sheet over the site, the edges overlapping the banks of the pond hole all round, and temporarily kept in position by placing weights on it at intervals. After the water has been put in, the butyl is pressed down by its weight so as to fill entirely the bottom of the hole excavated and the weights can be eased-up to leave the sheet free to do this. Pleats have to be made at suitable points to dispose of the surplus sheeting as the water rises up the walls. These pleats partially open again to fit over the horizontal sections. The final anchorage is made by digging a shallow trench about 6" wide outside the top of the walls, so that the material, once trimmed, lines the trench; soil may then be pressed down to bury the whole. Care must be taken to maintain the top of the pond wall level throughout until the casing of butyl can contain it securely.

During excavation, the water level was kept established by driving wood stakes into the bottom, whose tops were at high water level. Before lining, these were replaced by a series of clay buttresses built into the walls around the perimeter, based on the shelves.

The bottom spit or so of my pond was in prime London clay, so that rainwater from a catchment area of 200 to 300 square feet could not soak away. This had all to be baled out before lining, and to facilitate this I linked the waterlily holes by short "canals".

Many ponds have the top of the anchorage covered over by flag stones. This cannot look natural for a wildlife pond and growing turf is not very practical. The black butyl can finally be covered with an anchorage made with old turves, folded longitudinally, grass-side inside, along a slightly off-centre line. The crease of the folded turf is then laid to project slightly over the water, as shown, with a thin skin of the border soil covering the turves. The hard line will soon be broken by the use of creeping plants or an occasional stone, if required, and the borders freely planted with "marginals" which thrive from the adjacent moisture.

If the pond is filled to an accurately maintained high water level, very little butyl will be visible, but in rainy weather overflowing will be continuous. In these circumstances it is best to have a control point, so that the boggy area can be suitably used by plants that thrive in these conditions. At this point a small depression can be made in the anchorage line and the overflow directed into a small auxiliary pool which can disperse it in turn as desired. In dry weather the main pond can deliberately be overfilled to ensure that the boggy area does not dry out. The boggy area can be lined with surplus butyl off-cuts, partially pierced to delay drainage.

Access to the pond is important both to examine plants and wildlife and for routine maintenance. Stones or rocks placed in the surrounds assist this. From time to time it may be necessary to reach nearer the centre. If an expanding ladder is laid across with a scaffold board on it, this will make a useful "bridge", but it is essential that it crosses well above the tops of the anchorage, or additional overflow points will be created. These can be repaired by inserting more soil, but this entails unearthing a length of anchorage and relaying, which is an awkward operation.

This all sounds very complicated but the actual laying of the sand, felt and butyl for the main pond was done in about six hours by two professionals, on whom I danced attendance throughout, and the final filling and most of the anchorage in about four hours the next day. I was able to make a small auxiliary pond to deal with the overflow from surplus sand, felt and butyl, single-handed without any difficulty.

Since my pond has been filled, I have felt that I must, whenever possible, go down to "purr" over my new acquisition, now at last achieved. I was shocked therefore when I showed it to a very competent gardener friend, who said "So you've got a pond! So what! Why do you want a pond?" I did not realise that so good a horticulturalist could be purblind to the natural intimate association between gardens and water, which I look upon as a vital element of a garden, if it can be introduced.

TO BE CONTINUED.....

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#### TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE

##### West Dulwich Station

Members who use West Dulwich station will have been wondering what the end result may be of all the work which is now going on. Essentially, British Rail intends to rebuild the two platforms, which were in danger of slipping and taking the whole embankment with them but leave the station building on Thurlow Park Road (which is a listed building) and the access unaltered.

The down platform (from London) is being dealt with first and will be rebuilt in concrete, based on concrete piles. While this is being done, passengers will use a temporary platform a short distance further along the line, towards Sydenham Hill, but it is hoped that this inconvenience will last for a short time only. The access to Thurlow Park Road will essentially be unchanged. The idea of installing a footbridge has not been dropped, but it does not form part of the current plan. (The idea of the footbridge was to save staff by having only one entrance, on the up platform (to London), with down passengers then climbing over the footbridge to reach the other platform.)

After the down platform has been completed, though probably not for a year or two, the up platform will be dealt with similarly and again passengers will be inconvenienced during the actual work by having to use a temporary platform.

Shelters will be provided on the new platforms, but these are unlikely to be of brick, which we think desirable to blend with the adjacent buildings. Current plans are for an improved version of the metal bus shelters and the Society has written to British Rail urging for something more elegant to be provided.

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#### LOCAL HISTORY SUB-COMMITTEE

For the past three summers, the Local History Group has arranged visits to, and talks on, notable Dulwich houses - Kingswood, Bell House and Belair. In addition to pleasant and informative evenings being enjoyed by large audiences from the Society, it has also been possible for the Group to produce an extremely detailed history booklet for each of the houses. One copy will be deposited at each house and an additional copy will be placed in the Southwark Local History Library (John Harvard Library, Borough High Street, SE1).

This summer the Group plans to undertake a detailed study of the pre-history, history and occupants of GLENLEA, the exquisite Georgian house on Dulwich Common. The house was built by Charles Druce, the College Steward, in 1804. The design was by the notable architect George Tappen who was the Surveyor to Dulwich College, and plans for 'Glenlea' were exhibited at the Royal Academy. The house remained in the hands of the Druce family for over forty years. In 1939 the house was acquired by the present owner, Mr A.G. Costa.



During the Second World War 'Glenlea' was leased to the Dutch government (from 1943-45), during which time it was used for the accommodation and training of secret agents who were to act as radio operators and were parachuted into German-occupied Holland. They made contact with resistance groups and other agents parachuted into Holland on sabotage missions.

Purely by chance, Mr Costa met one of the surviving agents last year when the former agent was visiting England, and through this meeting another agent was contacted who has sent a great deal of information on the training, life and eventual fate of the young Dutchmen who lived at Glenlea. The agent has sent this list:-

2 agents were killed when the plane in which they were being transported was shot down.

14 agents died in action; resisting arrest or in subsequent concentration camps.

6 agents arrested while in action were lucky enough to survive the concentration camps.

5 agents completed their missions and returned to Allied territory.

8 agents completed their missions but remained in Holland until the liberation.

It is hoped that one of the surviving agents will be among the speakers at THE GLENLEA EVENING on THURSDAY, JUNE 6TH.

#### Letter from America

A member of the Society received a photostat from 'The Dickensian' of July 1924 from a relative in the U.S.A. who thought she might be interested. The member kindly passed it on to the Local History Group and it is reproduced below.

"Sir, - It is interesting to see in your April number of 'The Dickensian' an illustration of Pickwick Villa, at Dulwich.

My grandfather, George Temple, born 1753, owned that pretty place for many years between 1787 and 1821, when he died. He had a residence in town, and in the summer was wont to spend the weekends there from Friday to Monday. He journeyed to and fro I have been told, by coach, and the fare was 2s each way. At his death he left the place to his daughter Sarah, my aunt, who married a Mr Samuel Nail, an Insurance Broker at Lloyds. She died in 1866 and he a year or two later, and the place was sold. I was only a boy at the time, or I would have liked to have kept it in the family. It was never known as Pickwick Villa in my aunt's time; it was many years after her death that I noticed one day passing that it was so called.

So pretty was it in the sixties and seventies, the period when I was most there that Queen Victoria, who used to go by on her way to the Crystal Palace, on one occasion stopped to enquire who it was who lived there, and my little aunt came down the garden walk in her habitual yellow dress to greet Her Majesty, who always afterwards, when she passed, gave special and gracious recognition to those who might be waiting to see her.

This aunt of mine would never venture into a railway train. When the Chatham and Dover line first ran on the outskirts of Dulwich, and its shrill whistle, not far distant was heard in the quiet little garden, my aunt would invariably exclaim "There it is again, come and be killed."

Just one incident connected with the house. One summer evening my grandfather was pacing up and down the lawn with his wife when she suddenly noticed she had dropped her wedding ring. A search was made for it all over the garden, but it was not found, and my grandfather bought her another. The following year she died and her sister Catherine came to keep house for him, and she, in the garden one day picked up the lost wedding ring, and the following year was married to my grandfather with it, so the two women were both married with the same wedding ring; Catherine being my grandmother."

#### A Dulwich Connection

For anyone in Dulwich who admires the paintings of the French Impressionists it is somehow rather gratifying to know that one of the founders of the school spent a short but very active period in our neighbourhood.

Camille Pissarro (not to be confused with his painter son Lucien) was born in 1830. Surprisingly, this "French Impressionist" was not strictly-speaking French at all, as he was born of Jewish parents on the island of St. Thomas in the Danish West Indies. He was a Danish citizen, a fact which had some effect on his later life.

At the age of eleven Pissarro was sent to school in France and the rest of the family eventually followed and settled there.

Pissarro was a contemporary and friend of Monet, Manet, Degas, Renoir, Cezanne, Courbet and Sisley, the radical group who were opposed to the established school of painting. Their attitudes seem entirely natural to us now but were revolutionary at the time and aroused strong and antagonistic feelings. They believed simply in painting from life and from nature, on the spot, with natural light. The met at the Cafe Guerbois in Paris, where Pissarro was very much part of the group, debating theories of art and talking about politics.

Pissarro's success came slowly, an experience common to many of these experimental and often misunderstood painters. When the Franco-Prussian War began in 1870 he was forty years old and still struggling for money and recognition.

Pissarro had never been enthusiastic about the Second Empire of Napoleon III and was not indeed a French citizen. With the Prussian armies advancing, he and his family fled to Brittany to stay with relations. The war went badly for France. A Republic was declared and at first he was eager to fight for it. But his enthusiasm was extinguished by the death of his infant daughter. In December of 1870 he borrowed three hundred francs and left for England from Dieppe.

This was how he came to South London.

His mother, who had already left France, found lodgings for Camille and his family at Canham's Dairy in Westow Hill, Upper Norwood. After a few months there, they moved to 2 Chatham Terrace, Palace Road, just off Anerley Hill.

There, Pissarro found himself in something like the London counterpart of the Louveciennes suburb of Paris where he had lived before the war. He was charmed by the essentially English style of Norwood. Its cosy, comfortable villas, decorated in bright stucco, were spread along streets which were at that time unpaved, muddy and still rustic.

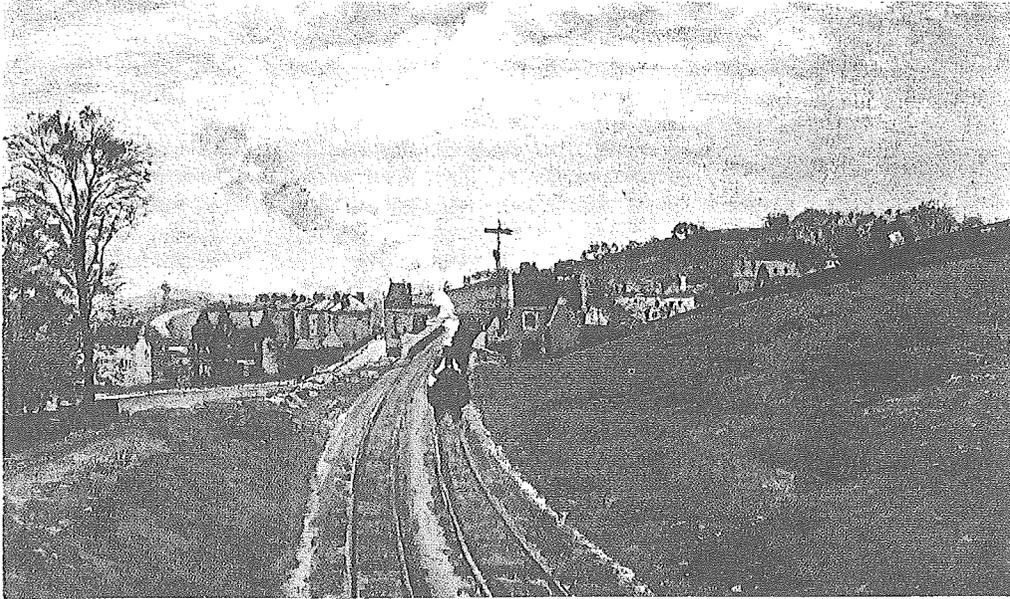
People have thought of him at this period as an isolated exile, but this was not the case. He lived near his mother, his brother Alfred and family and other relations who had all settled temporarily in the neighbourhood. He also went often to the Hotel de la Boule d'Or in Percy Street and to Audinet's Restaurant in Charlotte Street, where London's French radicals met.

Pissarro immediately began again his practice of painting outdoors and is thought to have completed something like twelve paintings before going back to France in 1871. One of his earlier paintings is Lower Norwood, Effect of Snow, which you can see in the National Gallery. He completed two paintings of the Crystal Palace, which had recently been moved from Hyde Park to its final site. These are attractive because Pissarro treats the building not as a piece of remarkable architecture but as a part of the new local suburban landscape.

However the most interesting picture from a purely Dulwich point of view is the painting of Dulwich College, executed in 1871 - in early spring to judge from the state of the trees. This shows the present college buildings soon after completion, from a point just beyond the pond. It is a brilliant picture, full of cold light and colour, but unfortunately one has to visit Toronto to see it.

Also of note is a view down College Road, recently reproduced in The Times, which has scarcely changed at all, and another in the area of Hunt's Slip Road, which the author of this article cannot now identify. But perhaps Pissarro's best-known work is the picture formerly called "Penge Station, Upper Norwood". This is fascinating, for several reasons: firstly its subject was for a long time wrongly identified. It is in fact Lordship Lane Station, which has now been demolished for twenty years or more. The line ran along the lower (northern) edge of Horniman Gardens and into the station, which was on the site of the new houses beside Sydenham Hill. It then went on through the tunnel in Dulwich Woods to the Crystal Palace Station. Secondly, although the Impressionists found railways an intriguing subject, Pissarro was the first to

treat a railway scene so naturally; fortunately this is a picture which can easily be seen, at the Courtauld Institute Gallery in Woburn Square, Bloomsbury.



Lordship Lane Station by Camille Pissarro (1830-1903), painted in 1871. The line and station are now demolished. The line crossed Lordship Lane by a bridge at the north corner of Horniman Gardens, just beyond the station shown in the picture.

During his stay in England Pissarro sold some of his paintings, but the Impressionist style was still unfashionable in England at that time. (Ruskin had the effrontery to say that landscape painters were taught "to ignore outline and think only of colour .. hence it is that landscape has become frivolous and justly despised"). He disliked the English social and political systems but was warmly attracted to the countryside and to many English customs.

Pissarro went back to France with his family in June 1871. Their home at Louveciennes had been ransacked by the Prussians who had stolen or broken everything and used the house as a stable, but life gradually returned to normal and Pissarro continued to produce a vast number of paintings over many years.

It is estimated that Pissarro may have produced as many as 200 works in his lifetime. While not the greatest of the Impressionists, he was one of the true originators of the movement and a man who believed in learning constantly from experience and going through

many changes of style. There can be doubt that he learnt and discovered much during his short spell in the Dulwich area. Naturally the Dulwich Gallery is in no state to buy any of the pictures which he did here, but it would perhaps be appropriate for first-class photographic prints of relevant paintings to be displayed there.

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