

The Dulwich Society

TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

Newsletter 43

January 1979

THE DULWICH SOCIETY

NOTICE is hereby given that the 16th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the DULWICH SOCIETY will be held at 8.0. p.m. on Thursday 1st March 1979 in ST BARNABAS' HALL, DULWICH VILLAGE.

A G E N D A

1. Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting held on 2nd March 1978 to be read and approved.
2. Chairman's report, including reports by the Chairmen of Sub-Committees.
3. Treasurer's report.
4. Secretary's report.
5. Election of Officers for 1979/80
 - a. Chairman
 - b. Vice-Chairman
 - c. President
 - d. Vice-President
 - e. Secretary
 - f. Treasurer
 - g. Executive Committee
6. Appointment of Auditor.
7. The Future of the Society.
8. Any other business.

Note: Nominations for election as an officer or as a member of the Executive Committee must be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee by two members not less than fourteen days before 1st March and must be endorsed in writing by the candidate (Rule 9). Nominations may be sent by post to the Hon. Secretary.

R. M. S. Maude
Hon. Secretary

15th January 1979

Chairman:	Roger V. Low, 41 College Road, SE21	693 2953
Vice Chairman:	Peter F.J. Lawson, 41 Village Way, SE21	733 2646
Secretary:	Lt Col R.M.S. Maude, 19 Oakfield Gardens, Dulwich Wood Avenue, SE19	670 7963
Treasurer:	R.C. Low, 88 Alleyn Road, SE21	670 1609

THE FUTURE OF THE SOCIETY

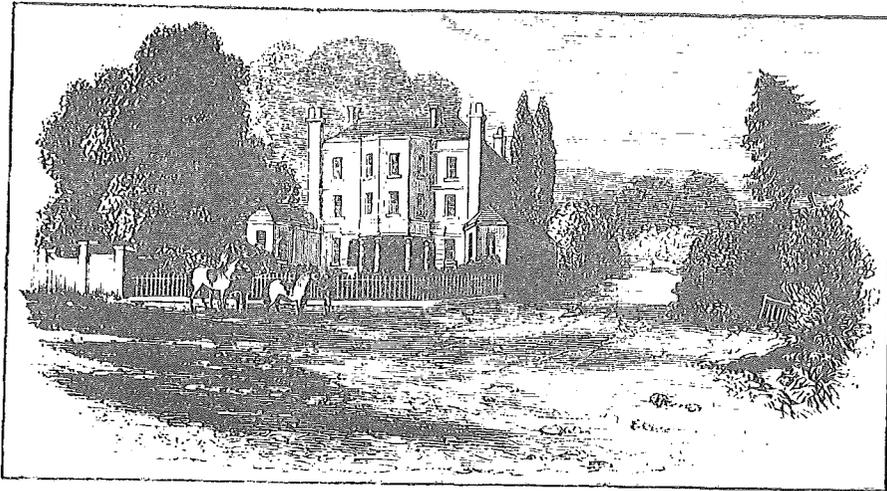
Stimulated by a note from one of its members entitled "The Dulwich Society - How badly do we need it?" the Executive Committee has recently been discussing the question of what the Dulwich Society now stands for and how it can best carry out its responsibilities. This has, not unexpectedly, produced a number of differing points of view and we have therefore decided to throw the question open to all members by bringing it up as a topic for discussion at the Annual General Meeting on 1 March 1979 so that we can hear your views on the matter.

The Statutory Notice promulgating the A.G.M. which appears in this newsletter therefore includes this item on the agenda, and we shall provide at the meeting a sheet setting out some of the main points for discussion. Meanwhile, for the advance benefit of those who will be able to attend the meeting, and for the information of those who cannot, here are some of the salient points which we in the Executive have been talking about. If you wish to make your ideas known in advance please write to the Secretary to tell him what you think.

The Dulwich Society - How Badly Do We Need It?

The original paper which started the discussion was produced last August and may be summarised as follows:

"Since the Leasehold Reform Act was completed there has been a lowering of activity within the Society. This is because, apart from a current threat to Lapse Wood, the area covered by the Society is scarcely threatened. We seem to be living in a secure environment in which it might be agreed that



Where the Grove Tavern now stands, on a busy corner of the South Circular Road, was once the site of Dulwich Wells, and then of Grove House. In the early 19th century, this became the Grove House Academy, under the direction of Dr Glennie; Byron was a pupil here, before going to Harrow. The illustration shows Grove House c. 1820.

nothing very much would happen if the Society ceased to exist.

Although it is not suggested that we should disband the Society (there may well be occasions in the future when it will be badly needed) we should perhaps consider curtailing its activities to match the current level of interest.

Our most active sub-committees are Trees, Wild Life, Local History, whereas Planning, Traffic and Legal attract less attention. This might give an outsider the impression that we are more of a 'country' than 'urban' society. We are very different from our neighbouring societies in this respect (e.g. Peckham and Camberwell).

It is therefore suggested that we continue to publish a quarterly newsletter but that the number of members' meetings be reduced to five or six per year including social gatherings.

This paper has been discussed by each of the main Sub-Committees and subsequently discussed by the Executive Committee.

We have agreed to break the subject down to five main sub-headings as listed below, although there may be others, but one general conclusion of paramount importance must be mentioned first. This is the question of membership:

Membership: It is crucial that we maintain and even increase our membership since, in the event of any future crisis, our power to influence public and other authorities is directly related to our numbers. We realise that many members pay an annual subscription and take little or no active part in the affairs of the Society, but your very existence is what counts in a crisis, so please stay with us.

The five sub-headings which we would like to discuss at the A.G.M. are as follows:

1. The Newsletter: Our main source of communication to our members, and our biggest expense.

Do you like it as it is, or do you want it different?
Should it be larger, smaller, more or less frequent?

2. **Members' Meetings:** The popular ones are generally Local History, Trees, Wildlife. The less popular ones Planning and Traffic.

Do you want more or less meetings?
Do you want organised visits outside Dulwich?
Do you want a higher standard of outside speakers (cost?)
Have you any other ideas?

3. **Joint Meetings:** Would you like us to organise joint meetings with other Societies (Norwood, Camberwell, Friends of the Gallery etc.)?

4. **Publicity:** What suggestions have you (and how can you help) to improve our publicity? Posters, advertising, notice-boards, etc.

5. **Social:** Should we, or should we not, be more social?

Should we have social evenings with or without entertainment and without a formal speaker?

Should we attempt to be a social society at all?

Finally, and especially because the subject can be related to all the five sub-headings above, how can we stimulate the interest of the younger generation and so encourage them to contribute actively and constructively in achieving the Society's objectives?

These are the bare outlines of our recent discussions which will serve as a basis for the A.G.M. We now list the meetings so far planned for 1979.

The 1979 Diary

Please note the following dates in your diaries:

1 February 8.0. p.m. St Barnabas' Hall

Mr Alan Mitchell will give an illustrated talk entitled 'Trees in Britain - When and How They Came'.

Mr Mitchell joined the Forestry Commission in 1952 and is now in charge of the Westonbirt Arboretum and the National Pinetum at Bedgebury. He is currently compiling a National Tree Register and his book 'A Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe' will be on sale after the lecture at £3.95. We hope you will be able to come and hear this great expert and enthusiast on our trees.

1 March 8.0. p.m. St Barnabas' Hall

The Annual General Meeting. As required by the Rules, the Notice of the Meeting is given on page 3 of this Newsletter.

This will be followed by light refreshments.

5 April 8.0. p.m. St Barnabas' Hall

Bill de Baerdemaecker's historical talk on Dulwich Past and Present, illustrated by a selection of his excellent slides.

If members have any special requests for scenes which they would particularly like to see, please contact Bill before the end of February (tel. 693 4017).

20 April

The Society Dinner

This will be held at 7.15 for 7.45 p.m. on Friday 20th April in the small dining room of Dulwich College (by kind permission of the Master). The price per head will be £7.00 which will include table wine.

The principal guest and speaker will be Dr John Rae, MA, Head Master of Westminster School.

Dress: Lounge suits for gentlemen.

Note: Numbers which can be accommodated are limited so please apply for tickets in good time to Mr Sequeira using the application slip on the back of this newsletter.

We can arrange tables to suit your convenience, so if you would like to be seated with any one in particular, please add a note to the slip.

3 May

8.0. p.m. St Barnabas' Hall

Mr Wragg of the Borough of Southwark's Engineering Department will talk about the Borough's plans to redevelop the Victorian Nunhead Cemetery for amenity, recreation and conservation purposes.

Members may remember that we published a note on the Nunhead Cemetery in the April 1976 Newsletter.

Saturday

2 June

2.30 - 5.30 p.m. at 118 College Road Miss Rosa Davis will open her garden in aid of the South London Botanical Institute. Entrance 20 pence per head, and tea will be available for a moderate charge. Plants from the garden may be purchased and orders will be taken for later collection.

21 June

Plans are in hand for a Wildlife Walk around the Old Alleynian grounds to be led by Dr Thornley of the South London Botanical Society. Details of the venue and time will be in our next newsletter (April).

THE LEASEHOLD REFORM ACT 1967

Members may be interested to read the following extract from the recent report of the Advisory Committee to the Estates Governors concerning applications under the Act.

"1462 applications to enfranchise have been received as at 1 September (1978) and 1435 valuations dealt with. There have been 1362 completions. There have also been 30 sales outside the Act to 1 September."

PROPOSED NEW SPORTS PAVILION IN DULWICH PARK

Plans have recently been approved by the GLC for the building of a new sports pavilion in Dulwich Park, to be sited on the edge of the cricket field near the Park Superintendent's office. It will replace the existing small cricket pavilion which will be demolished.

The design of the proposed building and its facilities have been considered by both the Planning and Trees Subcommittees of the Society and constructive suggestions for improvements made to the GLC. As a result the Society is satisfied that the new pavilion will merge in well with its surroundings and that the additional facilities it provides for sporting activities will be greatly appreciated.

It is hoped that work on the new building will start in September 1979 and that it will be completed in time for the 1980 cricket season.

It is intended that the new pavilion will also be used by footballers during the winter months and to enable this the football pitches will in due course be transferred to the cricket field. The present football pitches will thereafter become available for general recreational use.

These centre pages are designed to be pulled out of this Newsletter.

RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 1979 are now due. The centre pages of this newsletter are designed to be pulled out and returned with your instructions to the Treasurer.

It would be of great assistance to our overloaded administration if you could deal with this small matter straight away so that we do not have to worry you with reminders later. You can pay in one of three ways which are, in order of preference:

1. A straight subscription, in which case please complete Parts 'A' and 'C' of the form overleaf.
2. By Banker's Order. This, of course, saves both you and the Treasurer a lot of trouble. If you do not already pay by this method please complete Parts 'B' and 'C' of the form overleaf.
3. By Deed of Covenant. A bit more difficult for you, but best for us since, as a registered charity, the Society is able to recover income tax on subscriptions covenanted for seven years. If you do this we will guarantee no increase in your subscriptions during the period of the covenant. To effect a Deed you must complete all Parts 'B', 'C' and 'D'.

Please select the system that suits you best, fill the form in now, and return it by the next post.

RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1979

Please complete ONE of Parts 'A' and 'B' below, and 'C'. In addition, to effect a Deed of Covenant, please complete Part 'D'. Then send the whole of this sheet by return of post to R.C. Low, Esq, Treasurer, Dulwich Society, 88 Alleyen Road, SE21 8AH

Part 'A' - Renewal of subscription or resignation

- * Please renew my/our membership of the Dulwich Society)
- * I enclose £1 (one pound) for the year 1979) Delete as
- * I do NOT wish to continue my membership) necessary

PART 'B' - Banker's Order

To: Bank Limited Account No.

Name and address of member's bank:

.....

On receipt of this order, and subsequently on 1 January each year until further notice, please pay to the debit of my account the sum of £1.00 (One pound) to the National Westminster Bank Ltd., Cheapside (NP) Branch (Sorting code 50 10 12) for the credit of the DULWICH SOCIETY (A/c No. 78 44 557) quoting my name and address given below in Part 'C'.

Part 'C' - Signature and address

Signature Date

Name (block capitals)

Address Tel

* I would like to take an active part in the work of the Society and my special interests/qualifications are

* I would like to join one of the sub-committees/help with administration etc

* Delete as necessary

Part 'D' - DEED OF COVENANT - DULWICH SOCIETY

I (full name) of

..... hereby covenant with the Hon. Treasurer of the Dulwich Society that I will, during the term of seven years from or during my life (whichever period shall be shorter, pay to the said Society each year such a sum as will after deduction of Income Tax at the current rate amount to the sum of £1.00 from my general fund of taxed income so that I shall receive no personal or private benefit from the said annual payments.

IN WITNESS whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this day of One thousand nine hundred and

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED BY THE ABOVE NAMED

.....

Witnessed by

Name)

Address)

.....)

Occupation)

(Signature of Subscriber)

12

13

PLANNING NOTES

Lapse Wood

The Planning and Development Committee of the London Borough of Southwark have agreed to receive a joint deputation from the Dulwich Society, the Dulwich Residents' Association and the Peckarman's Wood Residents' Association to put our case for the permanent preservation of the last remaining piece of unspoilt natural woodland for the enjoyment of future generations of South Londoners. Our date with the Council has been set for Tuesday 9 January and a blow-by-blow account will appear in our next issue in April.

Mid-Southwark District Plan

The last issue of the Newsletter reported on Southwark Council's consultations with local residents, both individually and through representative bodies, about the District Plan for our part of the Borough. During these consultations the Council have been distributing a questionnaire which individuals and organisations have been invited to complete and return as a contribution to the debate. However, the questionnaire contained a number of 'idiot child' questions designed to be answered with a straight 'yes' or 'no' but clearly incapable of being sensibly answered in such simplistic terms. For example, 'Should through traffic be prevented from using residential streets and be concentrated on main roads?', To which the only possible answer is 'yes, but.....'

Because the questionnaire was so unsatisfactory the Society, in consultation with the Dulwich Residents' Association, decided to offer its own contribution, based upon the general framework of the Council's questionnaire but comprising more extended answers founded on the special circumstances of Dulwich. Our effort has now been submitted to the Council and is reproduced, as follows.

MID-SOUTH SOUTHWARK DISTRICT PLAN

DULWICH SOCIETY REPLY TO STAGE II CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

This paper describes the views of the Dulwich Society and Dulwich Residents Association on the questionnaire. Contact can be made with:

Mr Ivor Lightman,
Chairman of Dulwich Society Planning Sub-Committee,
22 Walkerscroft Mead,
London S E 21.

The Association has 500 members and the Society has 1,000.

The area of immediate concern to the Association and the Society is the southern tip of the borough west of Lordship Lane and south of Red Post Hill and East Dulwich Grove.

LIVING IN THE AREA

1. Should more provision be made for home ownership?

The area of Dulwich, with its high proportion of home ownership, is unusual in the borough.

In general it is felt that communities should have a balance between private and public housing. The Dulwich Society sees Dulwich as an area of special character which it would like to maintain, including the present proportion of home ownership. For the borough as a whole, however, the influx of good quality housing in areas of opportunity in the north of the borough would improve the overall balance.

2. Should the number of houses that are converted into flats be limited?

Within the Dulwich area an increase in density of occupation would detract from the amenities provided and hence the number of conversions should be limited.

The Society would submit that conversions should be allowed only if the house is too large for single family occupation, if it can absorb the necessary car parking etc. and if it is a house which contributes to the nature of the area and would be lost altogether if conversion were not permitted. (In areas of rising housing cost multiple occupancy may be essential to arrest falling population.)

3. Should old, unfit housing that is structurally sound be modernised or replaced?

The Society feels that if a house is one which contributes to the nature of the area then it should be preserved.

4. Should communal space on housing estates be divided to provide some private gardens and allotments for tenants?

Dulwich is well supplied with allotment space, but new developments tend to be short of garden space increasing the pressure on existing allotments. Given that smaller groups of housing are generally more successful the society is of the view that private or public housing should be developed in small groups or designed so that there are small sub-groups in larger developments. The defensible space close to the buildings

should be given over to individual use both to reduce pressure on existing allotments and to increase the identification of tenants with their homes. This concept may have application in existing estates as well as new ones.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

A number of these questions have been addressed in the Dulwich Society statement to the borough of December 1977.

5a. Should priority be given to improving access to the West End, Lewisham, Croydon or Brixton/Lambeth?

5b. For these destinations should priority be given to public transport or facilities for the motorist?

6. Should priority be given to improving bus services or extending the underground routes?

Some issues on which we would like to comment in addition to our previous remarks are:

- Bus routes are too long to maintain a regular service (e.g. 3 and 37 buses). A Crystal Palace to Brixton service would probably be of ideal length but it raises the problem of interchange queues and it would require London Transport to introduce a transfer ticket system if through fares are not to rise to discouraging levels.
- The Brixton-Brockley (P4) buses have been most successful. Further use of this type of bus could be valuable particularly east to west in the vicinity of the South Circular Road where there is now a lack.
- In general buses are more suitable as feeder services to the train or underground during rush hours rather than as commuter carriers.
- Bus services are significantly less dense south of Peckham High Street. An extension of the underground along this line together with more feeder services up to it would be a considerable improvement.
- Peckarmans Wood residents are virtually restricted to British Rail Southern Region for their public transport.

7. Should further measures be introduced on main roads which give priority to buses over other vehicles?

This traffic management technique has probably reached the limit of its effectiveness and so further measures should not be introduced.

8. Should through traffic be prevented from using residential streets?

The society endorsed the attitude of the Greater London Development Plan in its submission of December 1977 that local roads should not be used for through traffic.

9. Should traffic be removed from main shopping centres?

Dulwich has no main shopping centres. Pedestrianisation of the village itself would present insuperable problems of parking on and diversion of traffic through neighbouring residential streets.

10. Should priority be given to residents parking on streets where shoppers and workers also wish to park?

We have nothing to add to our submission of December 1977.

11. Should cyclists be directed away from main roads to minor roads?

In general cyclists should be encouraged and facilities for them improved. Hence they should not be diverted from main roads. Their lot might be improved by making available to them the bus only one-way systems.

12. Should priority be given to those road schemes which most benefit commercial traffic?

Major roads in the area are such that use by heavy traffic is particularly irritating. Measures making heavy through traffic unnecessary should be encouraged e.g. the M25 to carry traffic around London or the redistribution of heavy freight generators in relation to the road and rail network to avoid this type of traffic.

For this traffic which is unavoidable schemes should be undertaken which facilitate its passage along the major routes and relieve any tendency for it to use local residential roads.

SHOPPING AND SHOPPERS

13. On Rye Lane and Walworth Road

+
14. Not areas on which the Society has a direct interest.

15. Should long shopping frontages be reduced in length to provide more compact shopping centres?

In general this is beneficial, yes.

16. Should proposals to change corner shops and shops in local parades to other uses be resisted?

In general small shops which provide extended service to localities are worthwhile and should be encouraged. The society regrets major growth in the conversion to service shops, e.g. estate agents or building societies, but recognises that economic factors may override.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

17. Should some sites, currently zoned for other purposes, be allocated for recreational use?

Dulwich is well supplied with recreational space and the current balance should be maintained.

18. Should priority be given to providing indoor sports facilities rather than parks?

This is questions of balancing the population density of an area and the space available.

The first priority should be provide the area with some open space and this in general will be park space which appeals to the widest community.

In areas of high population density indoor sports facilities may assist efficient use of the recreation space available.

Whenever redevelopment is being planned park spaces should be provided.

19. Should the private sector be encouraged to develop and run leisure and sports facilities in areas of deficiency?

Yes.

20. Should large parks incorporating a range of facilities be provided rather than a series of small open spaces?

In general the large park will have more appeal to the community. However a balance is required. As we mentioned above in answer to question 4 it is important to have developments small or feeling small and this may require open spaces between groups of houses.

21. Should more areas for outdoor team games be provided in parks?

This is not a shortage found in parks in the Dulwich area.

WORKING AND WORKERS

22. Should more land, currently zoned for other purposes, be allocated to uses which would provide more jobs?

Dulwich has some areas which have been used for industrial purposes but where employment has reduced. It would be unfortunate if any of these disappeared. The Society feels that with careful planning controlling the scale of the industry and its environmental impact these areas can contribute and should be maintained.

More land zoned industrial would probably not be beneficial.

23. Should small pockets of land close to residential areas be allocated to industrial and commercial uses?

In the north of mid-Southwark this is generally adequate. In the south, however, some of the existing areas are run down and need rehabilitation. Areas currently zoned for industrial and commercial should be maintained as such.

24. Should office development be permitted outside Camberwell Green and Rye Lane to meet local demand?

As with industrial and commercial areas pockets of office development on a small scale are beneficial and should be allowed outside the main centres.

Maintenance of employment is important to London as a whole. Any measures, such as those discussed above, which make more employment available should be encouraged.

THE CLEANER LONDON CAMPAIGN

This movement began when the London Celebration Committee for the Queen's Silver Jubilee came into being towards the end of 1975. An environmental committee launched a number of projects including, among others, the Silver Jubilee Walkway and a tree planting programme. A Clean up London Campaign was organised by a working group chaired by Neville Labovitch (who was also Chairman of a London amenity society) to complement those efforts.

This campaign was active in a number of ways during the Jubilee year and now has a number of objectives for the future.

1. A general education and publicity campaign to make Londoners more aware of problems caused by litter and other eyesores.
2. To examine means to improve litter clearing problems in the West End.
3. To help the Boroughs with grants in local projects.
4. To organise volunteer projects to clean up open spaces.
5. To organise a drive on eyesores.
6. To encourage a clean up of London's buildings.
7. To rejuvenate wasteland areas by tree planting on a wood-land scale.

The address of the Cleaner London Campaign is 161 Drury Lane, WC2 (tel. 242 3706) and they welcome calls or letters from people with ideas on what else can be done.

We print opposite a press release issued by them in November last.

P R E S S R E L E A S E

FILTHY LONDON

A REPORT FROM
THE CLEANER LONDON CAMPAIGN

A report published today, 24th November, by the Cleaner London Campaign analyses the problems faced by the authorities and looks at methods of getting new initiatives and voluntary efforts - 'without these London is going to get tattier and tattier'.

The report finds that finance is not the key to the problem 'though it is amazing what can be achieved with very small amounts of money in local clean-up projects'. The report praises schemes introduced in New York, where businessmen are financing voluntary efforts in areas where local government has no responsibility.

Disused site clearance and planting, pavement cleaning outside premises and in precincts, tree planting, playground provision - these are all being adopted as voluntary projects by citizens in New York. The recent dog litter law under which the owner has to clear up after his pets is proving very successful in New York - an example of changing the direction of public opinion so that more considerate behaviour results.

A representative of London boroughs' cleansing departments states in the report that there is a severe man-power problem, brought about partly by government wage restraint policy but far more by the frequent turn-around of staff due to the nature of the work and the unco-operative attitude of the public.

"Westminster is spending £3 million a year on keeping its streets clean. Spending more and more public money on this problem is just not the answer. There is an excellent slogan in the US 'We're not going to save New York. You are'. And this equally applies to London".

Further Information:

Michael Butler

01-242 3706

24th November 1978

NEW BERMONDSEY BOOKLET

Southwark's family of Neighbourhood Histories has got a new member! 'The Story of Bermondsey', written by Southwark's Local History Librarian Mary Boast and illustrated by Yvonne Hale, has just been published and is available from all Southwark libraries. It joins the previously published Neighbourhood Histories of Walworth, Dulwich, Peckham and Camberwell.

Though mainly aimed at young readers, the booklet will appeal to all age groups. There is historical matter in easily readable form as well as fascinating details about such things as the Bermondsey leather trade, early railways in this part of London, food and drink, Bermondsey at war, and the area's historical buildings. Suggested projects for schoolchildren and titles for further reading are given the end of each chapter. The illustrations, drawn after original material in The Southwark Collection, add much to the value of the booklet.

The approach of the local history series is to show things of interest to the people who live in the locality and who perhaps have had connections with it for generations. The familiar names are enriched by the explanation of their origins: Bermondsey was Beormund's Ey, or the island of Beormund, and Anglo-Saxon landowner; the Neckinger was a stream, and at Willow Walk willows shaded its banks; Grange Road led to the Bermondsey Abbey's grange, the Abbey mill was turned by the stream in Mill Street, an Abbot from Battle in Sussex had a house in Abbot's Lane. Thus the past comes alive, and by learning about the daily life of bygone days, today's Bermondsey dweller will feel part of the continuing chain of its people, proud to belong to this historic part of London.

The booklets are available from any of Southwark's 19 libraries and from the Southwark Library Services Administrative Offices, 20-22 Lordship Lane, London S E 22 8HN. Price 30p (39p including postage).