



# *The Dulwich Society*

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TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

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## *Newsletter 55*

January 1982

THE DULWICH SOCIETY: NEWSLETTER 55: JANUARY 1982

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

February 4th: 'RECREATING NATURE IN DULWICH: The Pioneers, the Present, the Future'. Speaker: Peter Carter, Countryside Educational Trust. Illustrated talk on the work of the late Dr Lillian Clarke of James Allen's Girls' School. Also an illustrated report on work at the Upper Wood site in Dulwich, by the Warden, Mr Jonathan Mullard, 7.45 for 8.00 p.m., St Barnabas Hall, Dulwich Village.

March 4th: The Society's Annual General Meeting, 8.00 p.m. at St Barnabas Hall, N.B. Date not as printed in Newsletter 54.

April 1st: Wildlife Sub-Committee Meeting. Subject to be announced. St Barnabas Hall, 8.00 p.m.

April 30th: The Society's Annual Members' Dinner. This will take place at the Athenaeum Club, Pall Mall, at 7.00 for 7.30 p.m. Numbers have to be limited to sixty, and tickets (price £13.00 each) may be obtained from Mrs Pat Rich, 63 Court Lane, S.E.21. The cost of dinner includes sherry, wines and port, and members are requested to include their cheque, made out to 'The Dulwich Society', when applying for tickets. Gentlemen are asked to wear dinner jackets.

Meetings of the Dulwich Society aim to be interesting and enjoyable, but rely on your support to ensure their success. Please therefore make a point of noting the above dates in your diary.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The official notification and Agenda are printed below in accordance with the Society's Rules, and we hope you will be able to attend. Mr Richard Low, our Treasurer, will not be seeking re-election at the A.G.M., and in addition Mrs Sheila Low, who kindly agreed to be Acting Secretary last year, will not be putting her name forward as either Secretary or Acting Secretary, although she would be prepared to assist the elected Secretary.

THE DULWICH SOCIETY: Notice is hereby given that the 19th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the DULWICH SOCIETY will be held at 8.00 p.m. on Thursday 4th March 1981, in St Barnabas Hall, Dulwich Village.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting held on 5th March 1981 to be read and approved.
2. Chairman's Report, including reports by the Chairmen of Sub-Committees.
3. The Future of the Society.
4. Treasurer's Report.
5. To approve an increase, with effect from January 1st 1983, in the annual subscription for individual members to £2.00 and for a partnership, company or unincorporated association to £10.00.
6. Secretary's Report.
7. Election of Officers for 1982:
  - (a) Chairman;
  - (b) Vice-Chairman;
  - (c) President;
  - (d) Vice-President;
  - (e) Secretary;
  - (f) Treasurer;
  - (g) Executive Committee.
8. Appointment of Auditor.
9. Any other business.

Note: Nominations for election as an Officer or member of the Executive Committee must be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee by two members not less than fourteen days before 4th March and must be endorsed, in writing, by the candidate. (Rule 9). Nominations may be sent by post to the Acting Hon. Secretary.

Sheila Low, Acting Hon. Secretary.

## THE ESTATES GOVERNORS' CENTENARY

(We are grateful to Mr R.W.Hill, one of the Estates Governors, for the following contribution)

The Board of Estates Governors celebrates its centenary this year, and this presents an appropriate opportunity to remind residents on the Estate of the achievements of successive Boards of Governors since 1882.

In the first place, it might be helpful to explain briefly the provisions of the Scheme by which the Governors are obliged to operate. The main object is the provision of funds for the beneficiaries, namely Dulwich College, Alleyn's School and James Allen's Girls' School, the St. Olaves and St Saviours School Foundation and the Central Foundation Schools. In addition, annual payments are made to the Foundation Chapel, the Picture Gallery, and the Almshouses and Pensioners. However, the Governors have always given high priority to preserving and extending the amenities of Dulwich, not only to maintain the value of the Estate for the beneficiaries, but also to create an environment in which the schools can flourish.

The income of the Estate came largely from ground rents, but the whole situation was changed significantly by the introduction of the Leasehold Reform Act in 1967. One of the provisions of the Scheme of Management which emerged from this was the formation of an Advisory Committee. This comprises four Governors and two representatives each from the Dulwich Society and the Dulwich Residents Association. The Governors were appointed Managers, with rights and powers to preserve the amenities of the Estates for the common good, having due regard to any representations made to them by the Advisory Committee.

The Estates Governors are frequently under pressure from residents wishing to make alterations which are not acceptable, and it is a pleasing feature of the meetings of the Advisory Committee that the members representing the Society and the Association are most co-operative in their appreciation of the problems, when reasons for the Board's decisions are given. So often there is a division of opinion on local problems, based perhaps on personal considerations, but it is the considered duty of the Governors to have regard to what they believe to be the overall interests of the community.

THE DULWICH SOCIETY - to foster and safeguard  
the amenities of Dulwich

## YOUR 1982 SUBSCRIPTION

Subscriptions for 1982 are now due. 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.

As intimated by the Treasurer at last year's A.G.M., the Executive Committee is obliged to give notice that it will be necessary to increase the annual subscription for membership of the Dulwich Society, which has remained static since 1974, with effect from January 1st, 1983. This is to avoid a future deficit, and to meet increased costs for services such as printing and hire of premises, all of which are beyond the Society's control. A proposal to this effect appears as Item 5 in the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting, printed on page 3.

HOWEVER, FOR 1982 IT'S STILL ONLY £1;  
PLEASE PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PROMPTLY.

These centre pages are designed to be pulled out of this Newsletter and returned to the Treasurer, once you have completed the form overleaf in accordance with your individual preference. You can pay your subscription either:

1. By straight subscription, in which case please complete Parts 'A' and 'C' of the form overleaf; or
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.

In addition, whether you choose 1 or 2, you can benefit the Society at no extra cost to yourself by completing:

3. A Deed of Covenant, which enables the Society, as a registered charity, to recover income tax on subscriptions covenanted for four years. If you do this, we will guarantee no increase in your subscriptions during the period of the covenant. To avoid administrative difficulties, we have had to anticipate the A.G.M.'s decision regarding next year's subscription increase in formulating the Deed. To effect a Deed of Covenant, you must complete Part 'D' overleaf, as well as either Parts 'A' and 'C' or Parts 'B' and 'C'.

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

## YOUR NEWSLETTER

Like any society, we need good communication with our members if we are to continue as a lively and useful part of the community. In our case, personal contact between members is obviously the most valuable - but after that comes this Newsletter. It is a vital source of information about what the Society is doing and, of course, about future events.

In order to work well it requires two things: that it should be efficiently edited and produced, and that it should be promptly distributed. Some of you may well have complaints or suggestions, particularly about distribution, so we are taking this opportunity to explain the system of production and distribution and also to mention some recent developments.

### Form and Content

As you can see, your Newsletter is produced cheaply. We hope it is not so cheap as to be unattractive, but nonetheless we keep the price to a minimum. It is typed as neatly as possible, then printed directly from the typescript. For a number of years both the typing and liaison with the printer were done by John Westwood. He was a professional typographer, with great experience of layout and the technicalities of production. Unfortunately he has now left us (see October Newsletter), but we are lucky in that Mr Kenneth Till (also a professional editor) has kindly agreed to take on the task.

Meanwhile, we would like to thank Patrick Darby, who has nobly filled the gap for the October issue and this one.

### Distribution

Getting the Newsletter into some 1,200 homes is a difficult task for a volunteer force. There are late deliveries from time to time, and mistakes happen, but we are doing our best to distribute the Newsletter on time.

The whole area is divided into Zones, each with a Zone Distributor. He or she divides a bulk package of Newsletters into area allocations, and delivers these to an Area Representative, who then takes each Newsletter to each member's home. Information on changes of address, lapsed members, new members and so on, is passed to Zone Distributors via the Society's Secretary and the Chairman of the Membership and Publicity Sub-Committee.

For some time, delivery has been rather behind the date on the Newsletter! This is perhaps only to be expected, as all our distributors are giving their spare time, and this cannot always coincide with the scheduled date for distribution. During the past few months we have met and discussed ways to speed delivery, and these depend mainly on getting the Newsletter printed early. If we are to aim for distribution in the second week in January, April, July and October, as we hope to, it will be necessary for 'copy' to be in the Secretary's hands six weeks beforehand in each case. Prospective contributors please note.

If you are not getting your Newsletter, or you feel that it is arriving exceptionally late, please tell the Chairman of the Membership and Publicity Sub-Committee. If you are receiving it satisfactorily, spare a kind thought on these cold winter evenings for all those people who work so hard to bring it to you.

#### "LOOPING THE LOOP"

Can any other member of the Society match the following recollection from Mrs R.B.Davis of College Road?

In about 1906 or 1907 I can remember one lovely summer week-day going with a friend to the Crystal Palace for the first time. After walking around the Palace and sampling the various attractions in the grounds, we came upon a notice inviting us to 'Come and loop the loop'. We paid, and walked up a long, steep flight of steps to the railway and sat on two seats, whereupon the attendant placed a metal bar in front of us which held us tightly in our seats. He sat behind us, also barred in, looking very unconcerned as he folded his arms. We found it very pleasant gliding along high above the grounds, and then a sudden rapid descent made us gather great speed, which created the impetus to take us round the loop. We finished at the same platform we had just left, feeling rather shocked. Descending the steps, we were confronted at the foot by a large mirror showing two very white-faced figures with hats awry. Before leaving, we were handed tickets inscribed: 'I have looped the loop'.

#### WILDLIFE

Dulwich is a most fortunate London suburb in having a large area of varied open spaces, consisting of woodland, playing fields, allotments and parks. Like the rest of Britain, it has not escaped the division of large estates into smaller units, thus reducing suitable habitats, and increasing the population, not only of humans, but also of dogs and cats. The latter must destroy considerable numbers of birds, especially of young in the breeding season, and also of mice, the main food of owls. This accounts for the disappearance of the Barn Owl and Little Owl over the last twenty years. Another important factor in the reduction of small birds is the disappearance of the Dulwich gamekeeper, who kept down the numbers of crows, pigeons and foxes. In the 1930's there were no magpies or grey squirrels, both of which have penetrated from outer London. At that time the cuckoo was extremely common in Dulwich, and a red-backed shrike nested in the fields of Woodhall in 1948.

A most important sanctuary now is the railway embankment, where the lesser whitethroat sometimes finds a home after being driven from the Kingswood estate. The disused line near Lapse Wood is a wonderful area both for flowers and birds.

The passion today for tidying up everywhere, and the use of pesticides, has eliminated many flowers, butterflies, dragonflies, grasshoppers and frogs. All these used to come to our garden, but they have become rare. So too have the hedgehogs which we used to feed, victims of the increase in traffic, foxes, and the use of slug bait. Flowers have probably been least affected, and some gardens can boast over one hundred different species. At present in Dulwich we have well over 200 different flowers and grasses and 23 grasses growing wild, and probably more to be recorded. Have you something unusual in your garden?

The golf course, playing fields and allotments produce interesting records during migration - wheatear, redstart and whinchat are sometimes seen. Some very good records kept by the boys of Alleyn's School in the 1950's have been most useful for comparison with our own. A few years are not really sufficient to build up a true picture, as so much depends on different factors such as the number of recorders, the season and time given, and the wind and general weather. It would appear, however, that the total number of species has not changed very much, and it is

usual today to average about thirty different species on a four mile walk. Our real loss is in the number of breeding birds, although we have gained the Canada goose, coot (to the detriment of the little moorhen, which has decreased), house martin and swallow, all of which are now breeding.

There is little doubt that with careful management the numbers and variety of birds could be increased.

### HELP MAKE OUR EVENTS SUCCESSFUL

Apart from word-of-mouth, our only two ways of letting members know about Dulwich Society events are this Newsletter, and the posters which we display everywhere we can.

We would greatly welcome some help with these posters.

We are looking for people who can undertake the simple task of delivering them to certain shops during the week, probably on average once in every six weeks. This amounts to no more than half-an-hour's work in any single area.

We are looking for distributors for:

1. Dulwich Village;
2. The Plough area (Dulwich Library);
3. Herne Hill (including Half Moon Lane if possible);
4. Croxted Road shops.

The task is to ensure that every shop willing to display posters gets a copy (and puts it up!) in the middle of the week before the event. You will have noticed that we now have a standard form for our posters, on bright gold-yellow sheets (18"x 8") with the Society's name at the top, beneath our now-familiar 'logo' of the swan woodcut by Thomas Bewick. This form of poster is of a size that shops will accept, yet is as neat and as eye-catching as we can make it.

If you are willing to help, please ring Jeremy Webb, Chairman of the Membership and Publicity Sub-Committee, on 693 7297.