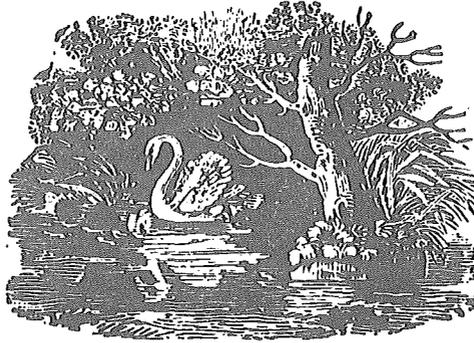


M. & Mrs. Baerdenarter

110 Lakeside



The Dulwich Society

TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

Newsletter 59

January 1983

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Officers:

Chairman: Captain D.S. Wyatt, OBE, RN,
148 Thurlow Park Road SE21
693 2123

Vice Chairman: Peter F.J. Lawson,
41 Village Way SE21
733 2646
Chartered Architect:
representative on Southwark
Conservation Areas Advisory
Committee.

Acting Secretary: Mrs S.M. Low,
88 Alleyn Road SE21
670 1609

Permanent Secretary: To be elected

Treasurer: H.A. Smith,
56 Townley Road SE22
693 8150

Members:

Chairman of Town Planning Sub-Committee: Graham Reid,
15 Allison Grove SE21 7ER
693 8252

Chairman of Trees Sub-Committee: R.D. Still,
138 Burbage Road SE21
274 8002

Chairman of Local History Sub-Committee: P. Darby,
54 Wolfington Road SE27 ORQ
761 5288

Chairman of Wild Life Sub-Committee: Mrs G.D. Howells,
7 College Road SE21
693 7226

Chairman of Traffic Roads & Transport Sub-Committee: J.G. Todd,
21 Lovelace Road SE21
670 2965

Chairman of Membership & Publicity Sub-Committee: J.R. Webb,
107 Woodwarde Road SE22
693 7297

Representing Horticultural Sub-Committee: G.R.C. Fairlie,
The Grange, Grange Lane SE21
693 1187

Editor of the Newsletter: Kenneth Till,
Old Blew House,
Dulwich Common SE21
693 1151

1983 will mark the Twentieth Anniversary of the founding of the Dulwich Society.

The following events have so far been arranged. All meetings are held at St. Barnabas Hall, unless otherwise stated.

<u>February 3rd</u>	8 pm	Trees and Wildlife Joint Meeting. Mr Chris Rose, the Conservation Officer of the London Wildlife Trust will talk on "The work of the London Wildlife Trust and its plans for Sydenham Hill Wood."
<u>March 3rd</u>	8 pm	Annual General Meeting. (See page 6 for Agenda)
<u>April 7th</u>	8 pm	Wildlife. Professor E.A. Bell, Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, will speak on "Plants and Human Survival".
<u>April 14th</u>	8 pm	At Bell House, College Road, (by kind permission of the Master of Dulwich College and Mr A.J.D. Salter, Housemaster). "The History of Bell House", an illustrated talk on one of the oldest houses in Dulwich.
<u>May</u>		Annual Dinner.
<u>June 2nd</u>		Nature Walk
<u>July 7th</u>		Tree Walk
<u>October 6th</u>		Horticulture

November 3rd

History

December

To be arranged

The Editor wishes members to know that contributions for the Newsletter are welcome and should, in the first instance, be sent to the Chairman of the appropriate Sub-Committee.

There is an urgent need for a member to undertake the office of Honorary Treasurer from March 1983.

The Society still needs a Secretary and it is very important that volunteers should offer to help. They should contact Mrs S M Low, 88 Alleyn Road, SE21 8AH.

MR CHARLES PEARCE, OBE., FEIS., JP.

All members will have read with the deepest sorrow of the death of Charles Pearce, who had been associated with the Dulwich Society since its foundation and in later years as a Vice President. There have been many published appreciations of his life's work. Even having reached the age of 93 he was still an active supporter of the Society, attending its meetings and its events and offering the benefit of his experience, always with a smile.

He was a former Governor of Dulwich College, Alleyn's School, James Allen's Girls' School and St. Dunstan's College and Chairman of the Estates Governors from 1958-1960.

His lifetime of public service in a wider sphere, and his activities in connection with education

and young people, will be remembered with appreciation.

He will be very much missed, not only by the members but perhaps more particularly by the Officers of the Society.

MEMORIAL TREE FOR MR JOHN W TOLER

At 11.30 am on 13th November, Mrs Rosemary Toler planted a beech tree on the property of the Dulwich Estates Governors (with their kind permission) on the west side of College Road between Howlett's Mead and Love Walk. Denys and Gillian Wyatt and Peter Lawson, together with members of the Wildlife and Trees committees of the Society and guests, attended the planting and the reception at Rosemary's house afterwards. Alan Barnard spoke and reminded us most movingly of John Toler's dedicated enthusiasm for Dulwich Wildlife and birds in particular.

The tree is well sited and has plenty of room to grow into a fine specimen. It was provided and finally planted by Mr N McWhirter, who has recently been appointed tree consultant to the Estates Governors. He told us it is the first tree he has planted in Dulwich.

Our thanks go to Rosemary for entertaining us and making the reception such a happy occasion.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The official notification and Agenda are printed overleaf in accordance with the Society's Rules and we hope verymuch that you will be

able to be present. As mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter, Mr Harry Smith, the Hon. Treasurer, will not be seeking re-election.

THE DULWICH SOCIETY: Notice is hereby given that the 20th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the DULWICH SOCIETY will be held at 8.00 pm on Thursday 3rd March 1983 in St. Barnabas Hall, Dulwich Village.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the 19th Annual General Meeting held on 4th March 1982 to be read and approved.
2. Chairman's Report, including reports by the Chairmen of the Sub-Committees.
3. Treasurer's Report.
4. Secretary's Report.
5. Election of Officers for 1983/84:
 - (a) Chairman
 - (b) Vice Chairman
 - (c) President
 - (d) Vice-President
 - (e) Secretary
 - (f) Treasurer
 - (g) Executive Committee
6. Appointment of Auditor.
7. 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 3rd March and must be endorsed, in writing, by the candidate. (Rule 9). Nominations may be sent by post to the Acting Hon. Secretary.

Sheila M Low
Acting Hon. Secretary

SYDENHAM HILL WOOD AND THE LONDON WILDLIFE TRUST

Members may be interested to be reminded that one of the incentives for the formation of the Dulwich Society was in response to the development taking place in the Sydenham Hill Wood area. Since then the Society has fought a continual battle to preserve this site from development that would destroy the character of this unique area of unspoilt woodland in inner London.

Significantly also, almost all the sub-committees of the Dulwich Society have played an active role in protecting the woodland on Sydenham Hill. The Planning Committee has been foremost in making the case for preservation but they have been ably supported by the work of others, including a detailed tree-by-tree survey of the area prepared by John Westwood of the Trees Committee, comprehensive bird records of John Toler of the Wildlife Committee, and the surveys of plant life also deriving from the Wildlife Committee. More recently, in the history supplement included with the October issue of our magazine, the nature of all the woodlands that once surrounded Dulwich were described in detail.

All this work demonstrated the value put on the

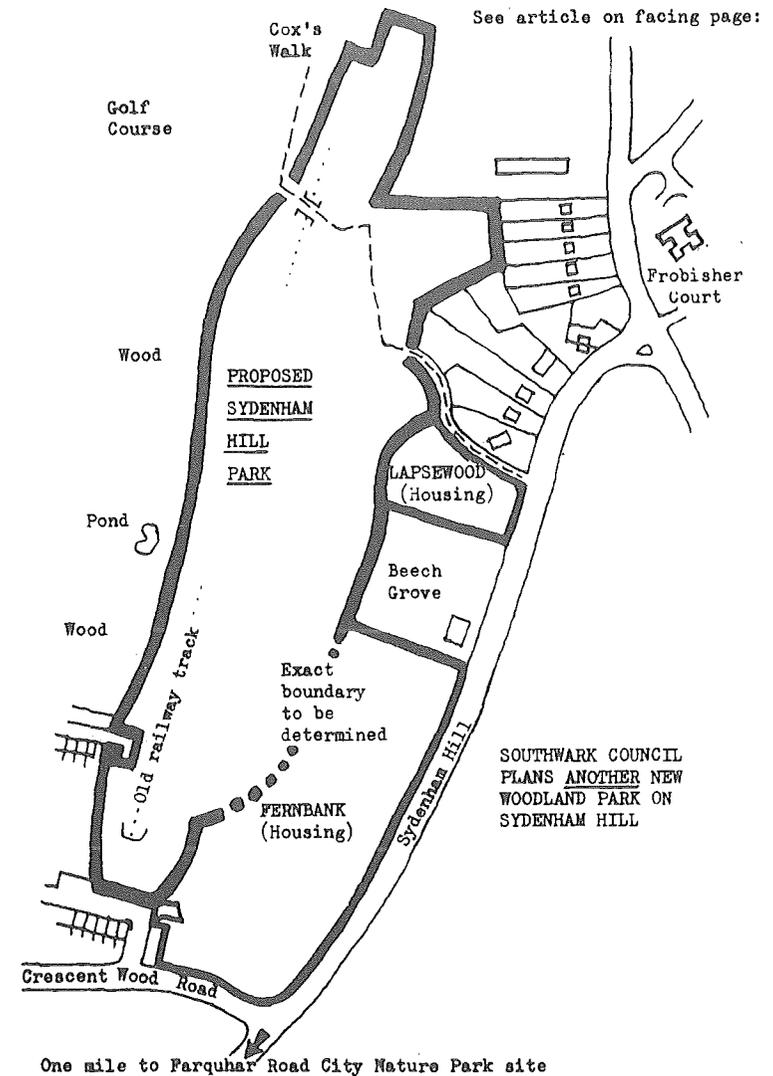
woods locally as an area of value in their own right, and worth preserving for the community as a whole.

The map in this issue (which first appeared in the July 1981 issue) illustrates the whole Sydenham Hill Wood area. The old railway track and embankments and the Lapsewood site have long been owned by the London Borough of Southwark. The Lapsewood site had been zoned for housing development as had the Fernbank area owned by the College Estate Governors. Early in 1978 the Governors sold this 15 acre site to Southwark, who now owned the whole area (excluding Beech Grove) amounting to 24 acres, and quickly announced plans for development for some 460 persons on 7 acres of the Fernbank site.

The Dulwich Society in liaison with the Peckarman's Wood Residents' Association and the Dulwich Residents' Association, responded quickly with objections and provided an alternative proposal for a lower density development beside Sydenham Hill Road. The case was propounded forcefully both in writing and in meetings with the Council Planning offices and committee.

Early in 1981 Southwark Council announced that they had abandoned their own plans for development and were selling the site on the open market. At about the same time the Libraries and Amenities committee of Southwark produced a report that stated that Sydenham Hill Wood was one of the only major areas of woodland in the Borough that could be made available for unrestricted use by the public and described it as "an extremely rare and important resource".

The committee went on to propose that the area should be leased to some expert body to devise a management plan for the area, with the Council



undertaking site work. Subsequently the London Wildlife Trust were chosen to submit a plan to develop the wood "sympathetically along natural lines".

At the end of 1981, we, the Dulwich Society, were advised that no developers had shown any interest in purchasing the sites offered, and that it was proposed, subject to obtaining the necessary committees' authorities, to include them with the leasing of the adjoining land for amenity open space pending possible future development for housing.

At the time of writing this article it appears that the necessary authority was not forthcoming, as the draft lease to the London Wildlife Trust does not include the Lapsewood and Fernbank sites. We are still hopeful, however, that these areas will ultimately be included with the amenity area and that the whole site can be developed in a manner sympathetic to its historic local significance as an area of fine and interesting trees, shrub and plant life, and a home for a great variety of birds and animals.

The London Wildlife Trust was formed in May 1981 (President Richard Mabey and Patron Lord Melchett) as a charitable trust and the only wildlife group dealing specifically with nature in Greater London. It has established local groups in many boroughs and liaises closely with local wildlife and amenity societies. The Trust aims to run wildlife parks, set up ecological parks, give advice and generally conserve London's wild life.

For Sydenham Hill Wood a local committee has been formed, on which our Society is well represented, to assist in developing ideas and doing the associated work.

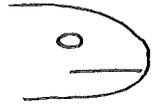
The object of this article is to summarise the

background to the present status of Sydenham Hill Wood and to stimulate your interest in the joint meeting of the Trees and Wildlife Committees of the Dulwich Society to be held on Thursday, 3rd February 1983 at St. Barnabas Hall. This meeting is to be addressed by Mr Chris Rose, who was appointed full-time conservation officer to the London Wildlife Trust in April 1982, and has prepared the management proposals for Sydenham Hill Wood. He will be talking about the work of the Trust in general and plans for Sydenham Hill Wood in particular. Do come and hear an up-to-date report on a situation that could develop fast over the coming months.

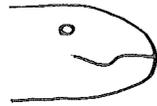
THE BRITISH NEWTS

Of the three British species, one is easily identified - the Great Crested Newt, the other two are more difficult except for the Males during the breeding season. The Great Crested Newt is the largest and can be identified in its adult state by size alone; over 12 cms. Its colour is black above, scattered thickly with small white spots and yellow to orange below. The whole newt is then covered with a scattering of black blotches. By drawing and cataloguing the size and placing of the spots on its underside, each adult newt can be recognised individually throughout its life. The eye is also black with a gold ring, though one individual who lacked the gold ring and had no spots, neither black nor white, has been seen locally. During Spring and Summer the male sports a high crest beginning about level with his eyes running down the centre of his back until it terminates at his tail. The tail grows two fins, the lower is only a few millimetres high, while the upper fin grows to about 10 mm. The whole of the crest

and the upper fin are deeply indented giving the newt the appearance of a miniature dragon. The female, immature and winter male are all similar except that they do not possess the crest or fins. The winter male differs by having a low ridge where the crest grows from, the immature being separable by being sub-adult size; the mouth extends in a straight line, while that of the adult is curved.



Immature



Adult

The Smooth Newt is about 5-8 cm long, the colour of its back depends upon the background colour of the pond, it may be a pale sandy yellow to an olive green/brown, the females varying more than the males. The male again sports a high crest and two fins on his tail, though they are continuous along its back in contrast to being separated at the tail in the great crested, in much the same proportions as the great crested. The belly is a pale yellow, the male also has a brighter orange patch in the middle, running the length of its belly. Again, the underside is covered with black spots, those on the male being larger than the female. In comparison with the Great Crested Newt the spots are much more numerous and smaller in proportion on the smooth newt. In the breeding season, the female has a small crest, or ridge, about 1-2 mm high and almost as broad.

The Palmate Newt is roughly the same size as the smooth, but is generally a little smaller. Both the sexes are similar in their colouring

and shape, the male lacking a crest. The male is safely distinguished from a female (of both smooth and palmate) by his hind legs having webbed feet (hence the name palmate) and his tail having a sawn off appearance, with only a thin filament protruding.



♂ Palmate



♀ Palmate and Smooth

The female palmate does not have webbed feet or the sawn off tail. The only way of separating the female smooth from the female palmate is that if there are no spots at all on the underside of the chin then it is almost certainly a Palmate Newt. If there are spots then it is a Smooth Newt. The only way one can be certain is if there is only one of the two species present in the pond.

Newts can be found in almost any body of water that is not flowing. Newts have been seen breeding in a flooded tyre track and in a reservoir of twenty or more miles of circumference. They usually arrive in the ponds towards the end of February and have begun breeding by March. If you wish to find newts it is best to approach the pond quietly on a warm, still day, anytime between March and May. Sit quietly by the edge of the pond and, keeping reasonably still, watch the surface of the water for the adults as they come up to breathe. If after half an hour no newts have been sighted then it is unlikely that any are present but be

careful of ponds crowded with plants as the newts climb up to the surface without being seen, nor leaving many ripples behind. Later in the Summer the tadpoles can be seen doing the same thing. If the pond has no, or little, vegetation, then the newts may be seen by watching the bottom or turning bits of debris carefully.

The numbers of newts that a pond may hold depends upon the size of the pond and the species contained. An average sized garden pond may hold up to a hundred Smooth or Palmate Newts, but only a dozen Great Crested Newts, less if the species are mixed. Newts are not affected by frogs also inhabiting the pond, in fact both may benefit.

It is hoped that these notes may prove useful in identifying these little amphibians if you happen to come across them. If you have not, why not build a pond in your garden, and you may soon find some. They can be delightful creatures to watch and have some very amusing habits which may be described in a future issue of this newsletter.

WILDLIFE

House Martins were last reported on 16th October and we await next April to see if there will be a further increase in nesting pairs. Song Thrushes resumed singing last month whilst Mistle Thrushes set guard on berry laden trees, among the latter being the Yew which seems to be carrying heavy crops this year. Some wintering Wood Pigeons have arrived to augment the resident stock. Away from the woods and parks have been the usual

post breeding dispersal records of Woodpeckers, mainly Great Spotted, but none of Chaffinches. The abundant Hedgehogs have yet to hibernate and the Fox seems to be maintaining its numbers well. Reports of Frogs are few.

What may have been a good year for fungi has gone largely unreported. In Dulwich Village gardens have been noted Oyster Fungus and the highly edible and big Parasol Mushrooms. With the aid of a good reference book residents could take advantage of free delicacies so close at hand, but the danger of consuming fungi of high toxicity needs always to be borne in mind.

PEARL-BORDERED FRITILLARY BUTTERFLIES

This butterfly has been reported in the past in Dulwich, but not specifically of recent years, until 1982.

Some were seen in a garden in Grange Lane at the beginning of August 1982. The first was seen in swift flight, to settle on a fig tree and stay for some time basking in the sun. A short time later a pair were seen, in a mating dance, in another part of that garden.

Their "dance" was watched for approximately 20 minutes, until one broke away, out of sight, under a hedge and the other settled at once and basked in the sun on some periwinkle nearby, giving a further opportunity to note the markings and size, for identification.

The "dance" was an unusual sight, consisting of the two butterflies flying with their bodies vertical, face-to-face, and almost touching, while circling within a diameter of about a

foot at very high speed, at first clockwise for a few minutes, then reversing to an anti-clockwise spin, reversing again every few minutes without any reduction of speed. So rapid was their flight, that at the time of reversing they gave the impression that there were three or even four butterflies dancing.

They were about four feet from the ground, when first seen, and slowly lost height as they rather blindly drifted across flower borders for some 40 yards or so. They nearly reached ground level and then turned back on their track, nearly bumping into the shins of their observer, whom they ignored, save for a quick side-step action around him. Soon after they broke away as above reported.

Two days later, a similar dance was seen, from the house, in the distance, in another part of the garden, crossing a lawn at a level of about six feet from the ground.

There has been for some years a border of dog violets, about 18" wide and 10 yards long, near the spot where the first dance was seen and there are many similar patches in this garden. This is the food plant of the larvae of this butterfly and many leaves are eaten, so it is hoped that this is where they had bred.

This has been an unusually good season for butterflies, in many parts of the country. This species does sometimes have a second brood emerging in August.

In the writer's garden, Comma butterflies were also frequently seen, Holly Blue and Speckled Wood butterflies constantly, also Meadow Brown, Hedge Brown, Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Green-Veined White, and, of course, both large and small "Cabbage" Whites.

The Garden Visit programme, arranged by the Horticultural Sub-Committee for 1982, has been most enjoyable, starting in April and running to our closing party on the 9th October.

Our Hosts and Hostesses of twelve different gardens have entertained over 650 visitors this season and all functions have given very great pleasure to our friends. We have been blessed by fine days, sometimes with brilliant sunshine, and even at our October fixture there was no rain and it was comparatively mild with stray beams of sun.

We want to express our sincere thanks to all for this entertainment, which has given us all so much pleasure and for making each visit a successful social event.

Of this year's twelve gardens, seven had not been opened to the whole of our Register before. All were very worthwhile for a visit and, as always, each has its own individual character and charm.

Invitations were sent out to all our Register and one hundred of these households are shown, by our Visitors' Book, to have taken the opportunity to be represented by one or more members at some at least of these functions this year.

As usual we made one outside visit this season. We went to the home and nursery of Mr and Mrs Michael Upwood, near Woking. This was a very interesting and successful visit and several members have been able to obtain supplies of certain plants selected from Mrs. Upwood. Mr Upwood is the Secretary of the Horticultural Club and a well-known plant collector.

The lecture in St Barnabas Hall on 4th November 1982, given by Mr Christopher Brickell, entitled "Plants in Peril" was very well attended and proved to be a most informative and interesting evening. If any member is interested to have details of the slides used at the lecture and would care to apply to Mr Bill Hale, 92 College Road SE21, he would be pleased to supply a list.

SUGGESTED BUS SERVICE TO STREATHAM

The Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee has been told of requests for a bus service linking Dulwich with the Streatham shopping area. Such a link would fill an obvious gap in the bus map, but since there are trains from North Dulwich, Herne Hill (except Saturdays) and Tulse Hill to Streatham at least as frequently as a bus might be expected to run, the demand for a bus may not be very large.

Members who feel they would make frequent use of such a bus service are invited to write, indicating their support, to any member of the Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee (names and addresses in the April 1982 Newsletter). It would be helpful to add the reasons for preferring a new bus service to the existing services so that, if the support appears to warrant it, an approach can be made to London Transport.

The Ecological Parks Trust - a good cause needs your help. The Trust, which pioneered the installation of the William Curtis Ecological Park in Vine Lane, SE1, near Tower Bridge, has been given the opportunity to develop an unused site in Forquhar Road as another urban ecological woodland site. The Trust needs your support and is in need of funds to support its activities. You can help by becoming a member, or by making a donation. Information can be obtained from Mrs Gina Douglas, Ecological Parks Trust, c/o Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0LQ (tel. 734-5170).
