



The Dulwich Society

TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

Newsletter 66
October 1984

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

November 6th 8pm	St. Barnabas Hall	Local History Sub-Committee "Dulwich Past and Present" & "Historical Question Time"
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Bill de Baerdemaeker will be presenting a selection of slides from his unique collection of photographs of old Dulwich.

Afterwards a panel from the Local History Sub-Committee will try and answer questions from the audience on aspects of Dulwich's history.

The Lambethans' Society will be holding the following events:-

November 8th 7.30pm	Effra School	"Local Place Names - Derivation and Imagination" by Brian K Vale.
December 13th 7.30pm	Effra School	"It Gives Me Great Pleasure": Bring your favourite pieces of poetry, prose or music. The Christmas raffle will also be drawn.

WILDLIFE SUB-COMMITTEE

Idle Observations on Dulwich Wildlife

Following the previous newsletter there has been an encouraging increase in the number of members reporting their sightings and it is hoped that this trend will continue. The consequent wider coverage has confirmed the suspected status of our commoner species and added to our limited knowledge of Siskin and Stag Beetles.

Foxes appear to have maintained their numbers this year but Hedgehog reports, both live and road casualties, have been few and suggest either a lower population or a failure to report what may be considered to be one of our commoner residents. Rodents, too, are unrecorded. There is, perhaps, a natural reluctance on the part of recorders to admit to other than the local pest officer the presence of undesirable livestock. However if analysis of Tawny Owl pellets gathered in our area is made available to us we should get a better picture of rodent species.

Frogs appear to be holding their own. Toads and Newts have escaped notice.

Bats have not been reported.

It has been a good year for resident Butterflies. Immigrants can be expected, in particular the Red Admiral, before the end of August. Dragonflies, recorded earlier in the year from garden ponds, at the nymph stage, are now on the wing. From cracks in crazy paving flying ants emerge and act as a magnet to 110 Blackheaded Gulls wheeling impressively above the Griffin ground. Other insects and small forms of life go unrecorded save that garden pests must be known to the horticulturists.

Conspicuous among our birds are the Canada Geese which ended moulting and resumed their honking and flying in gaggles of up to 20. They are more likely to be in the air early or late in the day. Swifts in small numbers congregate above and surely fly screaming about someone's eaves - but whose? They will be migrating shortly. House Martins are with us for a few more weeks feeding on flying insects and returning to roost at their nests under the eaves. The colonies in Woodwarde and Burbage Roads

and in Gilkes Crescent now seem well established.

Only Lesser Whitethroat, Blackcap, Chiffchaff and Spotted Flycatcher among summer residents have been reported (other than Swift and House Martin already mentioned) and their nesting has not been noted. Nor are there yet nesting site records in Dulwich of resident birds such as Bullfinch, Redpoll, Goldcrest, Jay, Coal and Longtail Tits although the last has been recorded in a conifer outside our area in Crystal Palace Park.

Post breeding dispersal is now going on and with it more frequent garden visits by woodland nesters such as Woodpeckers, Tree Creepers and Nuthatches. Moreover those keen enough to be about and alert half an hour either side of sunrise Sept/Oct may be rewarded by the sight of migrants; in the air Pipits, Larks, Swallows and Lapwings, on the ground Wheatears and Whinchats. The list is not exclusive. Records please. (693 1666).

Tawny Owls in a Dulwich Garden

When I heard of the success of two people, living in different localities, having tawny owls breeding in nest boxes, I thought I would like to experiment here in Dulwich where tawny owls were once more common than they are now.

In 1971 I made two strong boxes of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick wood, 30 inches long and 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches square. The boxes were attached to the trunks of large trees by very strong metal strips and hung underneath slightly upturned boughs of about 26 inches in circumference. The boxes were erected about 30ft. from the ground, but they need not be so high. Very strong metal for the strips is essential, as the metal on one of my boxes broke in a storm and the box fell to the ground (before the owl nested). Unfortunately, the box similar to mine, erected in the Horniman Gardens in 1974 and later occupied, is now falling to pieces due to the poor quality of wood used.

It is generally thought that it takes three years for owls to get accustomed to a box. In 1973, a squirrel used one of my boxes and three baby squirrels were seen peeping over the edge. In

1974 an owl used the other box, and also the following year - each time only one chick was raised, although usually three or four eggs are laid. Nine years elapsed, until this year 1984, when two owlets were successfully reared and flew.

Tawny Owls start to nest in March, and the first signs of occupation of my box was the frequent calling; then later, when the hen was sitting, the male was seen perched in a nearby tree all day, occasionally calling. At dusk, before flying off, he called to the female, and she replied, presently following him. The young only came to the entrance of the box when they were nearly ready to fly.

The number of young is said to be governed by the availability of food.

The recent increase in the local cat and fox population must be the cause of the decrease in wood mice which is the owl's principal diet.

There has also been a decrease in the number of suitable nesting sites, especially in the old elms which were ideal for owls. Over 1,000 elms in the Dulwich area were removed as a result of the Dutch Elm disease.

It would be nice if we could increase our local Tawny Owl population, and members can help in two ways:-

- 1) By erecting boxes in their gardens if they have suitable trees. (I would be pleased to advise or show my boxes if those interested would like to telephone me any morning before 9am at 670 3011 - Miss R Davis)
- 2) By spreading the information on the various neutering services available to prevent unwanted cats being born. Telephone 856 5839 or 859 3573 or obtain leaflets from Miss Davis.

Sydenham Hill Wood Nature Reserve.

Sydenham Hill retains a wooded environment, particularly in contrast to the stark urban scene elsewhere in the London Borough of Southwark. If we want to keep this pleasant local woodland, we must continue to fight against the demands for excessive building development.

The Dulwich Society has for long campaigned to save the remnant of what was once a forest, and which even two hundred years ago still covered much of the rolling hills of South London. Since the coming of the Crystal Palace to Sydenham during the early 1850's, woodland between Forest Hill and Upper Norwood was fragmented by the building of homes, roads and railways, for the increasing population that moved to this fashionable residential area. Today the remaining small blocks of woods continue to be eliminated one by one.

Thanks to the early vigilance, and flora and fauna surveys of the Dulwich Society, London Natural History Society, and the South London Botanical Institute, the importance of these old woods as a special area in London, became obvious. These can provide community nature reserves, where people, particularly children, have a chance to appreciate nature.

The London Wildlife Trust was founded in 1981, and is one of Britain's newest County Trusts for Nature Conservation. Both the L.W.T and the Ecological Parks Trust campaigned to get leases from the GLC and Southwark Council. As both land-owners were sympathetic to nature conservation, they were willing to listen to proposals to create nature reserves in these woods. However it must be said that probably the greatest influence on their decision was the fact that the sites were on steep slopes, making the ground difficult for building. Finally in 1982 and 1983, it was agreed to lease nine acres of Upper Wood to The Ecological Parks Trust, and twenty-three acres of Sydenham Hill Wood to The London Wildlife Trust. The L.W.T. gained a 25 year lease on Sydenham Hill Wood, although this is never secure, as Southwark Council retains the option of cancelling this with little or no notice. They also retain the land running along the Sydenham Hill boundary of the wood, and plans are being made to build here. The L.W.T. is of course objecting to the proposals, as these will jeopardise the seclusion of the nature reserve, and reduce its value as a sustainable wildlife habitat.

Sydenham Hill Wood is presently the largest of the London Wildlife Trust's reserves, and because of its size and location, it is already popular with the public, and has potential as a nature park.

During the last two years, the L.W.T. and its local Southwark Wildlife Group, have been busy with basic management work, such as improving access and pathways, developing and improving habitats, surveying the flora and fauna, and the never ending task of rubbish clearance. So far we have mainly had to work alone, but it is hoped that our solo efforts will inspire local borough councils, trust funds, business and other conservation organisations to assist in the creation of a valuable wildlife sanctuary, and enjoyable public amenity.

The summer of 1984 was a time for ambitious plans for the reserve. It has been decided that as soon as finance is available, Sydenham Hill Wood will have a properly laid out and signed nature trail, visiting the most interesting parts of the wood, including the railway and tunnel-mouth, the sloping "oak and beech hanger", grassy glade, coppice and remnants of the Victorian garden, with its exotic shrubs and gothic folly. A priority for the nature trail, are the many steps required, particularly up and down from the old railway. Water is an important natural habitat, and although there are some small ponds in and about the wood, all are badly silted and shaded by trees. Therefore, a large pond is soon to be dug by an excavating machine, and this is sure to attract new animals and plants.

The Southwark Wildlife Group continues to recruit new members, especially welcoming those who can help in volunteer work in Sydenham Hill Wood, or in fund-raising. If interested please contact the Group's Field Officer, Patrick English, at Kingswood House, Seeley Drive, SE21 8QN. (Telephone:- 01 670 6080).

You may also like to visit the Reserve (access is available via Cox's Walk or Crescent Wood Road), or perhaps attend one of the monthly guided tours; these are advertised in the Southwark Wildlife Group's Newsletter available from their office at Kingswood House.

Pond Survey

The pond survey is continuing and Miss Williams and Miss Davis would be glad to hear of any garden ponds (however small) that they have not already visited. Please phone before 9 am - 670 3011.

HORTICULTURAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Pelargoniums

Pelargonium is the botanical name for a group of plants which includes Zonal Pelargoniums, Regal Pelargoniums, Ivyleaf Pelargoniums, Scented Leaf Pelargoniums and Miniature Pelargoniums. Most gardeners are familiar with them and have grown them: they are adaptable under all sorts of conditions, but they will not stand frost. There is confusion in the nomenclature, as most plant lovers and even horticulturists call Pelargoniums zonale "geraniums". A Geranium is not a Pelargonium: it is a hardy perennial or biennial and some of the varieties are welcome in herbaceous borders and rockeries. Both Pelargoniums and Geraniums belong to the natural order GERANIACEAE.

The word Pelargonium comes from 'pelargos' which literally means a stork. The plant originates from South Africa and is therefore not hardy, but it will submit to rough treatment. The well-known bedding 'geraniums', so often seen in many brilliant coloured varieties, of which 'Paul Crampel' has long been the best known, are strictly speaking Pelargonium Zonale. The original species has, in its native habitat, foliage with a dark horsehoe zone. Many of the modern hybrids have unmarked leaves, which may be due to the introduction of Pelargonium inquinans which helps to provide the large red trusses which we see today. In the trade Pelargonium zonale are known as "Zonals".

The Show or Regal Pelargonium originates from Pelargonium domesticum which has been grown in Britain for very many years; in America they are known as Martha Washingtons. These have large blooms in many colours and are best grown under protection. Few, if any, of the Regals will flower

during winter, which the Zonals frequently do if given good treatment. Regals make admirable pot plants.

Ivyleafed Pelargoniums originate from Pelargonium peltatum and Pelargonium hederifolium. The stems of this section are thinner, harder and longer-jointed than the Zonals. Whereas Zonals keep on throwing flower spikes in rapid succession, the Ivyleafed Pelargoniums usually produce a mass of blooms at one time; they then tend to rest awhile, afterwards producing another profusion of flower-heads. They will sometimes flower in winter but cannot be relied upon for this purpose.

Scented leaf Pelargoniums are more closely related to Regal Pelargoniums as they have regal type flowers. They are grown chiefly for their scent and foliage and are fascinating to grow. On small plants the flowers are insignificant, but large specimen plants can be very lovely as they are then floriferous. The scent may be lemon, orange, pine, nutmeg, or rose, or a combination of these. The leaves may be used in sweet bags to induce sleep, or they may be used in jellies and sponges to impart a delicate flavour.

Miniature Pelargoniums are less than eight inches tall, with small leaves, single and double flowers in every pelargonium colour, and have green, black, silver or tricolour leaves. They have tremendous flowering potential quite unexpected for their size, and for many gardeners who have space problems, these plants are ideal. They make good windowsill plants as they do not take up too much room or obscure the light.

Variegated foliage appears in all groups with the exception perhaps, of the Regals. The extent of variation seems to depend on the amount of light and general treatment. The colours are more pronounced on the young growths so that it pays to nip the growing points to produce this growth on bushy plants. The flowers generally, are not so striking as the attraction is in the leaves which may be black, bronze, "butterfly", gold and silver. Tricolours are slow growers and may prove difficult.

It would be unwise to recommend varieties in an article of this nature, as there are now so many

excellent introductions each year. For instance, the "stellar" varieties recently introduced from Australia are all worth growing: they have unusual deeply serrated leaves and narrow forked petals. To acquire reliable stock plants, it is advisable to obtain these from a specialised nursery as these will be true to name and free from disease, and in the end will be less expensive than those offered by departmental stores or garden centres.

This article deals with garden cultivation, but Pelargoniums make excellent pot plants and are very decorative in window boxes. Cultivation under these conditions will be dealt with later as will the treatment of pests and diseases.

Cultivation

Geraniums are not hardy, but they can be planted out in the last week of May, when fear of frost is past, and, if dead-headed regularly, will continue to flower until killed by frost, or longer if protected. The exception to this is the Regal Pelargoniums, which have a shorter flowering season. The growing tips should also be pinched out from time to time to encourage bushy growth, especially with ivy leaf varieties.

Geraniums are not fussy about soil, in fact they will flower better in a poorish soil, so long as they get plenty of sun. It is a waste of time planting them in a shady spot. Too dry a soil, although it will improve the leaf colour of variegated varieties, will inhibit growth. This will prevent the plants from reaching their full, luxuriant potential, and it will also make it difficult to find enough shoots to make the cuttings for the following year.

Propagation

Although plants can be successfully overwintered (kept almost bone dry in any frost free, light place) they become straggly and woody, and it is better to grow new plants each year and, of course, to increase one's stock.

Taking cuttings has been the traditional method of propagation. A good, bushy plant can produce up to

eight or a dozen shoots, each of which will make a new plant. Cut them with a sharp knife just below a node, to make a cutting about four inches long. In a wet season, when the plants have made plenty of growth, this might be just one joint; in a dry season the nodes will be closer together, and it might be several joints. Also, some varieties especially the miniature ones, are much shorter jointed than others, so cuttings from these will not need to be so long. Cut off all except the top two or three leaves, and the stipules (the small leaf like structures below each joint) and put them into compost either in trays or round the edges of pots, four or five to a $3\frac{1}{2}$ inch pot, only covering the bottom joint of the cutting with compost. Soilless compost is ideal, plastic pots are better than clay ones as they do not dry out so quickly, and the cuttings do not need rooting powder. Alternatively, the cuttings can be put into Jiffy 7 peat discs. These enable later potting up to be done with a minimum of root disturbance.

Water the cuttings well, and leave them in the shade. Be very sparing with subsequent watering, to encourage the cuttings to send out roots. Also, as most of the leaves have been removed, the cuttings will not lose much water by transpiration.

The warmer it is, the better the cuttings will root. This means that if taking cuttings is left until the end of the summer, so as not to spoil the appearance of the parent plants, there is likely to be a high failure rate. It is a good idea, therefore, to take a few cuttings at intervals throughout the summer. This will not spoil the parent plants, but will give them the opportunity to grow new shoots which will themselves make cuttings later.

Before there is any likelihood of frost, the cuttings should be moved indoors or into a greenhouse with a minimum temperature of 45 degrees F. At about Christmas time they should be potted up individually and then about a month later the tips should be pinched out to make bushy, respectable plants ready for the summer. They should always be kept on the dry side, especially in very cold weather. Many ailments, notably damping off and rust, are aggravated by moist conditions.

It is debatable whether it is worthwhile nurturing geraniums in expensively heated greenhouses for up to eight months of the year in order that they may bloom in the garden for the other four. It is now possible to buy seed of many varieties, and as this does not need to be sown until January to produce plants for summer bedding, several months of heating cost can be saved. However, the seed is expensive (around 10p per seed) and it needs a temperature of 60 degrees F. to germinate, so the savings for the small-scale home gardener are likely to be small.

TREES SUB COMMITTEE

Sheffield Park Gardens

I understand the Horticultural Committee are organising a party visit for the society to Sheffield Park towards the end of October, and since the Trees Committee have arranged for the Head Gardener of this garden, Mr A V Skinner, to speak to us on the first Thursday in February 1985 (the 7th), Members may be interested to read a little background to this splendid park.

The gardens, which are situated near Uckfield at the far end of the Bluebell Railway, were originally laid out by Capability Brown for the first Earl of Sheffield around 1775. One of the Earls of Sheffield founded the Sheffield Shield cricket tournament in Australia and the Australian cricket team used to play their first match of each tour in the grounds of the Park. In 1909 the estate passed to Mr Arthur Soames who created the magnificent gardens as they are today.

In 1954 the estate was sold off and shortly afterwards acquired by the National Trust. The house, which is a very early Gothic Revival building by Wyatt, is not owned by the Trust, but is a most fitting focal point for the gardens as a whole.

The design of the gardens combine the most fastidious composition with an abundant richness of varieties of trees and shrubs. The view from the top lake is breathtaking, with banks of rhododendrons in the spring, water lilies in the summer and an exuberant richness of colours in the autumn, all within a varied and harmonious framework of mature evergreens and deciduous trees. In the heyday of this garden fully-grown trees were moved to perfect a vista, and the trunks of the birches were scrubbed to provide highlights.

The soil is acid and ideal for rhododendrons and autumn colouring trees and shrubs. There is a particularly rich variety of trees from eastern North America - Nyssa, Amelanchier, Cornus, Liquidambar, Taxodium and red and scarlet oaks. Those who visit the gardens in October will also see a great variety of Acers, Birches, Fothergilla, Sorbus, Vaccinium and Euonymus and many other trees and shrubs all with superb autumn colouring.

Mr A Skinner was appointed Head Gardener in 1971 and is in great demand to speak about the garden. He has also contributed to the National Trust magazine and last year won a gold medal at the RHS Autumn Show for a display of autumn foliage from Sheffield Park. I understand he has introduced 400 new varieties into the garden and also is developing a wild meadow richly sown with the Orchids found wild in this part of Sussex. This happily perpetuates a traditional feature of the gardens - the naturalizing of plants growing wild locally, such as Birch, wild Daffodils and Bluebells.

Do visit these lovely gardens in October and come to hear Mr Skinner speak to the Society on Thursday, 7th February.

HISTORY SUB-COMMITTEE

'Belair' Visit Report

More than a hundred members and friends gathered on a fine warm June evening to firstly enjoy a 'Trees Walk' around the grounds of 'Belair', ably conducted by Richard Still and Stella Benwell. Later they were able to listen to a number of speakers who talked about the House, its history and occupants. Perhaps the most well-received speaker was Harry J. Wall, now in his ninetieth year, who was born at 'Belair'. He delighted the audience with his reminiscences of his childhood when he drove cows down Gallery Road, rescued a peacock from one of the trees in Dulwich College and recalled Sir Evan and Lady Spicer going to church by horse-drawn carriage long after the advent of the motor car. The audience was convulsed when he revealed that Sir Evan acquired a couple of wallabies to compliment his estate - "He didn't keep them long" Harry declared!

The lecture was tape-recorded by Southwark Council and is being edited by Patrick Darby. A typed account of the history of 'Belair' will later be available for study at 'Belair' and a copy will be deposited at the John Harvard Library. Similar 'histories' are also in preparation for 'Kingswood' and Bell House.

What Dekker Road Did In The War!

Can readers of this Newsletter who are old enough to remember the war years, recall their attitude to the expected German invasion of this country?

An interesting little envelope of documents was passed to the Local History Group recently. It contained details of an operation importantly titled "INVASION DEFENCE SCHEME - DEKKER ROAD". The good lady who gave them commented on how ridiculous it all seemed on re-reading the papers some forty years later: "What could we have done if the Germans had landed, fought them with garden forks?".

Closer examination revealed however, that the almost total co-operation of the residents of Dekker Road in early 1943 indicated that Dulwich folk took the threat of invasion or paratroop and commando attacks very seriously indeed and were prepared to resist, with garden forks if necessary!

The Census.

In March 1943 (curiously late in the War one would think), each household in London was requested to complete a census form listing its individual resources in the event of invasion. The Dekker Road Summary of Census makes interesting reading. It notes that the 56 houses held 131 residents, who had radios, which resident was already a member of the Home Guard, National Fire Service or Civil Defence. It established that in the event of enemy damage to the water supply, wells were available locally at Dulwich Hospital and at Honor Oak and that each household had a 75 gallon water tank. One person in the road had experience in running a Field Kitchen, three more were able to administer First Aid and that every house or flat was able to accommodate emergency billeting.

Transport was an important item on the census form and about a third of the households could muster bicycles, more unexpectedly the census also called for a list of households which had prams available! There were spaces on the form to list various tools - anything from axes to garden forks and saws. Almost every household stated that it was prepared to allow poison gas casualties to wash.

Volunteers

The Dekker Road Street Leader also made a list of volunteers in connection with the Invasion Defence Scheme; half a dozen old age pensioners promptly volunteered and three were accepted as Fire Watchers (one stood 120 guards over a two year period) many younger men who were not already members of the H.G., N.F.S., or C.D. also volunteered for fire duties and a number of women added their names to the rosters of Fire Guards and first aiders. Youngsters were enrolled as Messengers.

Training exercises were arranged, code words were given and terse messages relayed from the local command post to the Street Leaders. Some of these messages relating exercises remain and perhaps seem amusing forty years later - "TO STREET LEADERS DULWICH LIBRARY CAPTURED BUT DEFENDERS WORKING WITHIN OUR AREA. SEND TEN MEN WITH PICKS AND SHOVELS TO CREATE A ROAD BLOCK AT WOODWARDE ROAD END OF DEKKER ROAD".

A New Danger

As 1943 wore on it became apparent that there was little likelihood of a German Invasion taking place. Further, air raids on London had virtually stopped. Folk became less keen to volunteer for the duties which earlier had seemed so important. This apathy must have been widespread as conscription to man these posts came into effect.

In June the following year, at almost the same time as the Allied invasion of Normandy, the good people of Dekker Road were flung into action which was to last until March 1945. During that period no less than thirty five VI 'Doodle-bug' Rockets and three of the dreaded V2 exploded in Dulwich.

The Street Leader of Dekker Road finally 'stood down' on 11th May 1945. Included in the old manilla envelope of census, lists and orders is a receipt for the safe return of his Fire Pump.

Digging Into Dulwich's History

If you are a local history enthusiast or just someone mildly interested in the subject, you will no doubt be aware of the great awakening to the importance of local history all over the country as each community seeks to find out more about its roots and heritage.

Local Studies departments, which are usually attached to public libraries are now much more inviting places than the dusty old archives rooms used to be and in Southwark we are particularly fortunate in having a splendid, modern local studies room at the John Harvard Library in the Borough High Street. Here, preserved on microfilm, are old newspapers, rate and rent books, and census returns. There is also a good selection of maps, documents and photographs and prints.

As the author of two books on Dulwich's history I am well aware of the keen interest there is in Dulwich's own history and in my role as chairman of the Local History Group of the Dulwich Society, I am keen to see more research undertaken. The joy of researching local history is that the investigator can move at his or her own pace, ploughing his own furrow if desired in choosing a particular field of study. There is great satisfaction when the fruits of such research can be made available to others. The Dulwich Local History Group is concerned that there may be a number of people who would like to do new research, either individually or as part of a small group. The advantage of working as part of a group is that there is an exchange of information and advice; often quite daunting investigation can be better handled by a team.

What the Dulwich Group would like to do is to put people interested in doing original research in touch with one another if they wish to be part of a group. Groups will, of course, be at liberty to select a subject for study which appeals to them but the Dulwich Society Local History Sub-Committee would like to monitor the research to avoid duplication with any other group. It would also be pleased to suggest possible areas of research if required. Individual researchers are warmly welcome.

If local history research does appeal to you and you would like to be involved; please write to Brian Green at 133 Burbage Road, SE21.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE

Everyone in Dulwich is aware of road traffic. The volume and speed of vehicles are a nuisance to the motorist, a menace to the pedestrian and damage the amenities of Dulwich for all of us. It is the job of the Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee of the Society to ensure, so far as possible, that any changes bring overall benefit to the community and that possible alternatives, often suggested by residents, are adequately explored. It also presses for improvements to be made for the benefit of the local community, and takes a particular interest in measures to help the pedestrian in the face of the seemingly remorseless increase in road traffic.

The Sub-Committee keeps careful watch on developments in the public transport serving Dulwich, although its role is necessarily more restricted since the decisions with a major effect on BR or LRT are frequently taken at a national level. The Society does have some effect on local decisions, as when West Dulwich and Sydenham Hill stations were threatened with evening and weekend closure, and in arguing that a majority of residents preferred the P4 bus to travel via Court Lane rather than via Gallery Road and Dulwich Common as originally proposed.

Other rewarding activities of the sub-committee in recent years include the installation of the roundabout at the intersection of College Road and Gallery Road (although this has its critics, most seem to agree it is an improvement and preferable to the traffic signals which might otherwise have been installed); the zebra crossing in the Village which, until the Society demonstrated otherwise, had been dismissed as being not feasible; pram/wheelchair ramps in several places; the opening of Dulwich Park to cycling and the installation there of speed control humps.

To do all this, the sub-committee needs the help of members with some knowledge of or interest in matters to do with traffic and transport and who would be willing to give part of an evening (the Chairman keeps the meetings as short as possible!) five or six times a year to discuss topics of current interest. Please remember that a voluntary Society such as ours can only be as effective as its members and the Sub-Committee are dependent on

their members for knowledge of what is going on. If you think you might be able to help the Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee in its work, please contact the Chairman (J G Todd, 21 Lovelace Road SE21; 670 2965) or any member of the sub-committee (names and addresses are in the April Newsletter). They will look forward to hearing from you.

TOWN PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee has looked at the usual crop of planning applications, most acceptable but some warranting observation to the London Borough of Southwark. Apart from this, there are a number of special items to report, the most important one last.

First, Hambledon House is no more. It was demolished - in stages, for some reason - and after a delay the site is now being cleared.

Secondly, there is a proposal from the London Borough of Southwark to extend the Village Conservation Area to the south and east to form a Dulwich Woods Conservation Area. This would take in Dulwich Park, the Grove and the golf course. The boundary would run along Sydenham Hill (so that Fernbank or Copse Wood would be included) along Low Cross Wood Lane, and down College Road to the boundary of the existing Village Conservation Area.

The Sub-Committee met an officer of the London Borough of Southwark to discuss the proposal, and we have since written in strong support of the proposal.

Thirdly, we were informed by the Borough that a building preservation order had been placed on a large house, Beltwood, in Sydenham Hill. The conservation officer considered that Beltwood was worthy of listing, as an excellent example of a particular period in building and environmental history. The Sub-Committee agreed with this, and in view of the demolition of some such houses in the recent past, wrote to the Department of the Environment supporting strongly the case for listing.

Unfortunately, we have just heard that the D O E does not consider the building worthy of listing. We shall consider what else we might do.

Finally, the car park at the Crown and Greyhound has surfaced again. We were warned by residents that a new proposal was being made, and we immediately wrote to the Governors and the London Borough of Southwark reminding them of the Society's previous opposition, and asking to be kept fully in touch with the new proposal, to which we would take the same view.

Together with other objectors, the Society has received a letter dated 14th August from the Estates Governors setting out the correct position. The Estates Governors have agreed that we should publish the letter, as representing their views and the text in full reads as follows:-

"The Estates Governors, at their Board Meeting on 28th July, considered the question of the proposed car park at the rear of the Crown & Greyhound, Dulwich Village and, in view of the concern shown by a number of residents in the immediate vicinity, make this statement:

The Governors have been concerned at the difficulties of car parking in the village for many years. In the 1960's merit was seen in providing facilities for parking on the land behind the Crown & Greyhound, and in 1969 a planning approval was obtained for this purpose; however, as it was not acted on in the time limits laid down, the planning permission lapsed. When the lease was being renewed in 1979, a further attempt at positive action was taken. As a result plans were put forward in 1980 by the tenants for 40 parking places to be provided at the rear with separate entrance and exit roads. These proposals received a hostile reception from local interests and were rejected by the planning authority at Southwark in April 1981. The Governors did not proceed with their requirement to provide additional parking but reserved the right to re-open the matter "if we feel that there is no improvement but we shall wait for at least two years before doing so" (letter 24 September 1981, to the Dulwich Society).

In May 1984, the Governors received a request from the tenants of the Crown & Greyhound for an indication of their views on a number of alterations including the elimination of the forecourt parking. It was stated at the time that there was not to be any parking at the rear and that the gardens were to be improved.

The Governors indicated that the proposals appeared to be satisfactory. Subsequently alternative plans have been submitted, again for an indication of views, but on this occasion there was provision for parking 25 cars at the rear with a single entry/exit road.

This plan was considered by the Board on 28th July. It was noted that it provided for only 25 places (a net increase of 15 after the elimination of forecourt parking) against the 1980 plan of 40. The element of disturbance to local residents was lessened therefore, but so also was the improvement in the parking availability. The Board noted the views expressed by local interests and in particular the question of there being a potential hazard to pedestrians (and presumably through traffic) at the entry/exit point as now proposed.

The Governors feel that the views of the Southwark Planning Authority should be obtained on this issue, and also on the acceptability of eliminating the forecourt parking without any replacement. Further consideration is deferred in the meantime.

The Governors are fully conscious of their responsibilities in the Estate both to the beneficiaries and to the residents and users of the Estate, and in particular, the Village. Their aim is to conserve and maintain the undeniably pleasant environment and to reduce the nuisance caused by the incursion of higher traffic densities."

The Society will of course examine any planning application, and make the appropriate representations to the London Borough of Southwark.
