

The Dulwich Society

TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

Newsletter 31

January 1976

THE DULWICH SOCIETY: NEWSLETTER 31: January 1976

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SE21 733 2646
Secretary: Edgar Brady, 79 Burbage Road, SE24 274 7941
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FIRST THINGS FIRST

Once again we wish all our members a very happy New Year although perhaps we shall be wise not to emphasise prosperity overmuch this year.

Before we get down to the main items of this Newsletter which you will find overleaf we would like to draw your attention to the three main Spring events for 1976. The first is Bill de Baerdemaecker's annual illustrated talk on Dulwich History on Thursday 5 February in St Barnabas' Hall (8.0 pm). His old photographs are famous and need no introduction by word. The second event is the Annual General Meeting which takes place, as usual, in St Barnabas' Hall, Dulwich Village, at 8.0 pm on Thursday 4 March 1976. The official notification and agenda are included in this Newsletter in accordance with the rules. We hope that you will be free to come to the AGM and possibly even to offer your services in some way to the running of the Society. The third event is the Society Dinner which will be held once again at the Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Golf Club at 7.15 for 7.45 on Friday 2 April 1976; the price for dinner, including table wines, VAT and service, will be £4.50 a head. This event gets booked up quickly so, to ensure that you get tickets, please return the application slip which you will find on the back page of this Newsletter to Mrs Evans as soon as possible and certainly before 29 March. We are very fortunate to have Lord Wolfenden as our principal guest and speaker so it should be an interesting and enjoyable evening.

On a more mundane note we must also add that subscriptions for 1976 are now due and full instructions are given elsewhere in this Newsletter.

THE DULWICH SOCIETY

NOTICE is hereby given that the 13th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the DULWICH SOCIETY will be held at 8.0 pm on Thursday 4 March 1976 in ST BARNABAS' HALL, DULWICH VILLAGE.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the 12th Annual General Meeting held on 6 March 1975 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 1976/77:
 - a. Chairman
 - b. Vice-Chairman
 - c. President
 - d. Vice-Presidents
 - e. Secretary and Assistant Secretary
 - f. Treasurer
 - g. Executive Committee

6. Appointment of Auditor.
7. 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 the 4 March and must be endorsed in writing by the candidate (Rule 9). Nominations may be sent by post to the Hon. Secretary.

Edgar Brady
Hon. Secretary

15 January 1976

SOCIETY MEETINGS IN 1976

Meetings will take place on the following dates in 1976. After April the details of speaker and content have yet to be confirmed, and this will be done in subsequent newsletters.

- | | | |
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| January | - | No meeting |
| 5 February | - | Bill de Baerdemaecker will give a talk on the History of Dulwich, illustrated with a selection from his famous collection of old photographs. 8.0 pm in St Barnabas' Hall, Dulwich Village. |
| 4 March | - | AGM |
| 2 April | - | Annual Dinner |
| 6 May | - | Wild Life |
| 3 June | - | Trees |
| July | - | Trees Walk |
| 7 October | - | To be announced |
| 4 November | - | To be announced |
| 2 December | - | Choral Meeting |

THE SOCIETY AND THE ESTATES GOVERNORS

Members' Meeting, 6 November 1975

Meetings arranged by the Planning Sub Committee, which tend to take place in January, have not always resulted in 'full house' notices outside St Barnabas' Hall. On this occasion however the meeting was very well attended and the audience were filled with keen anticipation since the speaker was to be Mr Ronald Brown, JP, MP, Deputy Chairman of the Estates Governors, and the subject of his talk 'The Dulwich Estate'. Since, for some of us at least, the Estates Governors are a somewhat mysterious body of men in that we do not know much about how they do their work in the Dulwich area, we were delighted when Mr Brown accepted our Chairman's invitation to speak at this meeting, and even more so when we heard that he intended to bring Mr G. V. White, the Secretary and General Manager, and Mr Russell Vernon, the Estates' Architect, with him to answer our questions.

When the meeting opened at 8.0 pm Mr Brown was detained by parliamentary business in the House so proceedings started informally with general questions to Mr White and Mr Vernon. It soon became clear that they were very ready to answer questions on any subject and the audience felt from their frank and helpful responses that both were very sympathetic to the general feeling of members of the Society on matters such as conservation and preservation of the amenity. The first thirty minutes or so were a pleasant and warming curtain raiser.

At about 8.30 pm the star of the occasion, Mr Brown, arrived and was invited to open his talk. His defence of the Governors' stewardship (not, of course, that it was actually under attack) was spirited, not to say robust, and some lively exchanges took place. We have not the space to go into the detail of all the matters raised at this meeting but the important thing is that this talk and the subsequent questions and answers have opened a new dialogue between local residents and the Governors and established new contacts, as a result of which we now know that we can ask for more information and assistance when we need it.

A message from our Chairman

'The Society has much pleasure in announcing that the Estates Governors for Alleyn's College of God's Gift have accepted the Society's offer to provide space in the quarterly newsletter for an article or contributions in any form about the affairs of the College Estates that the Governors may wish to publish.

'The first of those contributions by the retiring Chairman, Sir Noel Hutton, GCB, QC, appears below:

'The Society welcomes an arrangement which will enable their members to learn more about the business of the Dulwich Estate, and so to appreciate some of the problems which frequently confront the Governors. Moreover, the arrangement reflects the close and friendly relations that the Society enjoys with the Estates Governors.'

R. V. LOW
Chairman

From Sir Noel Hutton:

The Estates Board are grateful to the Society for the hospitality of their columns. Future contributions will no doubt deal with current events. This one is designed to set the scene, already perhaps better understood by members of the Society than by the generality of local residents.

No prizes are offered for answers to the question what 'The College' means in the following sentences:

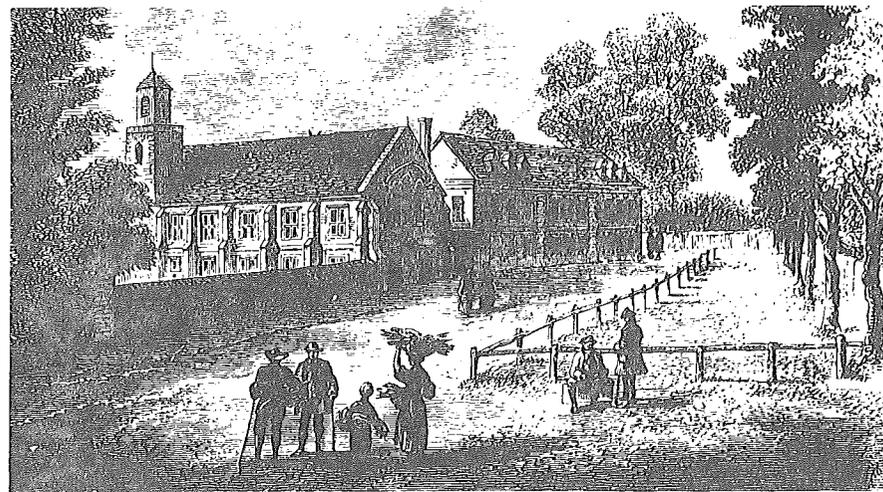
- (1) The Gallery belongs to the College
- (2) The Tollgate belongs to the College

In (1) it is the Board of College Governors who, under the Scheme of 1882, are responsible for Dulwich College, Alleyn's School, the Chapel and the Picture Gallery. In (2) it is the Estates Governors of Alleyn's College of God's

Gift, constituted as such by the same Scheme, who run Edward Alleyn House, manage the Estate (or what is left of it), and provide funds for each of the institutions already mentioned, for James Allen's Girls School and for four important schools in the public sector, the Central Foundation Schools and St Olave's & St Saviour's Schools.

By modern standards the Estates Board is hardly democratic but it is at least representative. Out of 25 members, four are nominated by the London Borough of Southwark, four by other local authorities concerned, eight by the College Governors, and one each by the Boards of James Allen's Girls School, the Central Foundation, and St Olave's & St Saviour's. The other members are co-opted, and at least three of these must be resident in or near the Hamlet. All members are of course unpaid. The Board's accounts are presented annually to the Charity Commissioners and may be seen either there or at the Estate Office, where copies may be had (regrettably on payment) for the asking. The latest accounts show a distribution of about £160,000 of which approximately 85% goes to the Dulwich institutions in shares predetermined by the Scheme.

The day to day business is handled by the Manager and his staff at the Old College and the Woodyard. The Board meets once a month on Saturday mornings, and its Committees when required. The Estates Committee (previously Trees and Surveys) advise the Board on debateable questions relating to trees (all timber trees are excepted from Estate leases), after inspections on the site where they are joined by members of the Dulwich Society. They also deal with applications for consent to improvements and alterations of leasehold properties and



DULWICH COLLEGE IN 1750

(subject to consultation with the joint committee established under the Management Scheme) with similar applications by new freeholders emancipated under the Act of 1967. One subject which previously took up much of the attention of the Board and is perhaps of particular concern to the Dulwich Society, is the redevelopment or new development of sites in hand. For economic reasons this question hardly arises at the present time. It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, but be it understood that for the Board and its beneficiaries it is an ill wind.

N. K. H.

WILD LIFE

We are grateful for some reports of sightings made by members since the last issue but we should like many more. Two of the most interesting were of a heron (presumably the same one each time) more than once seen visiting pools in gardens in West Dulwich. Another was of a fox seen dragging a dead squirrel towards the Sydenham Hill railway bank. Less common birds seen were: cock bullfinch, green woodpecker, lesser spotted woodpecker, nuthatches; more surprisingly, a parakeet was seen again at the north end of Dulwich. Redwings were seen and heard flying over the village.

We are pleased that a number of members have expressed a special interest in wild life. The committee hopes to keep in touch with these and to receive suggestions and frequent precise reports of sightings from them.

Other welcome information is that the Borough of Southwark has bought the derelict Nunhead cemetery and intends to keep part of this as a nature reserve. It lies near enough to Dulwich for its flora and fauna to affect the wild life in our area. Should you wish to see the cemetery you will find it just east of Peckham Rye Common and just south of Nunhead station (on page 79 of the A-Z Street Atlas of London).

TRAFFIC

The Traffic Sub Committee has for some time been concerned about the overnight parking of heavy lorries at various locations within the Society's area of interest. It is good to record that the ban which had previously operated in other parts of the London Borough of Southwark has now been extended to Dulwich. Signs have been affixed to lampposts at intervals in the roads where there is no ban on car parking, prohibiting the parking of lorries of 2½ tons or over between the hours of 6.30 pm and 8.0 am.

One of the activities of the planners in the GLC recently has been a survey of routes taken by lorries and heavy commercial vehicles through London. As a result the GLC have published a consultation document and a map which shows a number of 'preferred' routes. This has, of course, been considered by our Traffic Sub Committee who are not altogether impressed by the suggested routes in the Dulwich area. We are printing a copy of a letter on the subject which members may find of interest.

Letter to the Controller of Planning & Transportation, GLC,
from the Chairman of the Traffic Sub Committee:

Dear Sir,

LORRY ROUTES

This Society represents a very large number of residents in the Dulwich area, where there has been active discussion of the question posed in your consultation document and map. What follows can claim to be the representative views of a great majority after active canvassing of opinion.

The Dulwich Society wholly accepts the GLC's aim of reducing the impact of the heavy lorry on the environment. We would urge that the greatest possible effort should be made to find the alternative means of transporting freight into Central London by rail and waterway. Only when the largest lorries as described in the document are thereby eliminated will the proposed network of lorry routes be acceptable.

The Executive Committee of the Society wishes to make two major points about the roads within its environmental interest. First, we have noted with great surprise that a route should have been suggested between Crystal Palace and Herne Hill, which not only passes through residential roads, but has several dangerous features. No doubt the reasons why this has been identified as a 'problem route' arise from the steep gradient in Dulwich Wood Park, from the danger of the roundabout at the foot of Gipsy Hill and from the narrowness of the curving road under the railway bridge before the right angle turn from Croxted Road into Norwood Road opposite Brockwell Park. The route is almost entirely residential and for its major part, over a length of 1½ miles, is bordered by houses without garage facilities in Croxted and South Croxted Roads, where yellow lines would restrict parking. The route is in any case one which is very near to the conservation area in Dulwich, and overcrowding of vehicles might produce more traffic in the very part of the area where it is the intention to reduce it. We, therefore, suggest that the problems associated with this route are so great that it should not be further considered.

Secondly, the so-called 'South Circular Road' runs through the centre of Dulwich, and for part of its way within the conservation area. If the principle of inner ring roads has now been abandoned, there is no justification for regarding this as a lorry route. In this connection any ban of lorries within the inner London area should include this section of the 'South Circular Road' itself.

It is surprising that neither of the alternative routes should have been considered and marked on the map as possibilities, either that to the west from Knights Hill or to the east along Lordship Lane into Dog Kennel Hill, both of which are mainly in commercial occupation. The difficult features of both these routes are admitted, not least the awkward junctions to be negotiated nearer London which affect every approach to the Capital.

For this reason we urge as a matter requiring the highest priority the early implementation of a policy which would considerably reduce the access of lorries into London which constitute a growing menace to the environment.

Yours faithfully

OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

Crystal Palace Park:

In the last Newsletter we reported on discussions in the Crystal Palace Forum and suggested that in the present economic climate very little more than cosmetic treatment, the reinstatement of statues and so on was likely in the foreseeable future. Since then there has been a further meeting of the Forum, and it now seems that our forecast was right. We may therefore hope to see, perhaps by next summer, the way opened permanently for visitors to walk from Crystal Palace Parade down the old terraces into the Crystal Palace Park and most of us will find this a very satisfactory outcome indeed.

Gypsies:

At a meeting of Southwark Borough Council's Planning and Development Committee in October it emerged that the present temporary site in Bermondsey will shortly be required by the Council for development, and that without prejudice to the possibility of providing a permanent site in the Borough a new temporary site will be required very soon. Several sites were discussed, none of them fortunately in Dulwich, and the tone of the Committee's discussion about the permanent problem was such as to lead our observer to conclude that although the 'danger' to Dulwich, both in the short and long term, has not disappeared it is at least a fairly remote one. We shall however remain watchful.

Planning Applications:

No. 2 Dulwich Wood Avenue

Applications have been lodged for (alternative) developments of this site:

- (a) To erect 16 2-bedroom flats in one 4-storey block, and to provide 16 parking spaces.
- (b) To fully convert the partly converted existing house into six 1-bedroom and one 2-bedroom flats; and to erect six 2-bedroom and three 3-bedroom maisonettes and provide 13 parking spaces.

We have received a number of comments about this application from neighbouring residents who are members of the Society. They tend to favour, or more correctly to view with slightly less disfavour, Plan (a), on the grounds that since this would involve placing only one building on the site it would be less dense, less destructive and less unattractive in appearance than the retention of the existing building and construction of a further one. More important, however, is the fact that the plans lodged with the Council misrepresent the trees to be found there now, by ignoring some fine mature trees at one of the sites while promising to retain existing trees at the other which are no more than pollarded sycamore stumps. Since the retention of worthwhile trees is one of the major factors in a decision about this site, our Trees Committee have made representations to the Council in order to ensure that their consideration of this application is based on an accurate plan of the site and its present contents.

RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscription for 1976 of £1.00 per household is now due and may we ask you all who have not previously signed a Banker's Order or Form of Covenant to deal with this small matter at once while you think of it. All that you have to do is to complete the form on the centre pages of this Newsletter and send it with cheque, P. O. or banknote to the Treasurer (cheques payable to The Dulwich Society please). If you sign the form for a Banker's Order or Covenant it is naturally a great help to us administratively and, in the long run, saves you trouble too so we recommend this course to you.

DULWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

The next concert by our sister society will be on Saturday 27 March 1976 at 7.30 pm in Southwark Cathedral when they will perform Bach's St John Passion. Ticket prices have not yet been fixed, but tickets may be bought at the door.

TREES

Dulwich Park:

It has recently come to our notice that some rather strange rumours appeared to be circulating about future plans for the general layout of the park, particularly with respect to the flower and shrub beds which have for so many years been so great a source of pleasure and delight to innumerable visitors.

In an effort to seek the facts, questions were put to the GLC Parks Department and we are glad to be able to publish the following extract from their reply:

'It is true that as a result of economies on public expenditure we are having to reduce our staff numbers and consequently we must keep all our labour intensive features such as flower beds, under review. But, with one small exception, we have not, to date, taken any positive decision to turf over flower beds and we have also recently decided to reprove the one exception, at least for this year. We shall continue to maintain the beds for as long as we are able but some minor changes in outline and content which we feel are beneficial will be carried out.

Mr Wood, the Park Manager, has sent me the following list of major works he is executing this winter which have been discussed with and have full approval of our horticultural advisers and head office management. Mr Wood (and/or myself) would be pleased to meet you to give fuller details if you feel any points need clarification.

Winter Work Programme:

- (a) The College Gate Entrance is under alteration and we are completing the job which was started three years ago. This means more Azaleas and Rhododendrons are being planted, plus additional shrubs of other types.
- (b) At Rosebery Lodge Azaleas will be planted in the border to correspond with the Rhododendron area. A border of Hydrangeas are being introduced as we do not have any in the park. In both places turf is being laid to complete the job.

- (c) The Broad Walk beds have been altered in shape and partially turfed to give a new line. Heavy pruning has been done to give a new life to the overgrown shrubbery. The herbaceous border is being sorted out to group varieties of plants and to cultivate the soil. The herb border has been cleared and some of the herbs are now installed in the herbaceous border. The 'herb' border has been mass planted with 4500 tulips for immediate effect and in the summer a Dahlia display will be introduced.
- (d) The blind garden has been sorted out and cleared of rubbish
- (e) Court Lane entrance will be completed with a very special planting.
- (f) The Queen Mary boundary has been cleared and seeded over (now green) and will be planted with shrubs.

It is always good to have this type of information since members can appreciate from it the problems of maintaining public parks and open spaces.

A letter of thanks has been sent to Mr Evans of the GLC Parks Department for providing the details and allowing us to publish them in this Newsletter.

Gift of Trees to the Dulwich Estate:

Members will recall that the Society set aside £150 to purchase a number of trees as a gift to the Estates. The main reason for the gift is to help fill at least some of the many gaps left by the ravages of Dutch Elm Disease over the past few years. As a consequence of the effects of this disease very large demands have been made on tree nurseries so that we were not able to make a completely free choice of varieties. However, thanks largely to the efforts of Mr Scott, the Estates' Bailiff, we have been able to obtain a most satisfactory and attractive variety.

The following list shows the species obtained:-

2 Sessile Oak	-	Quercus Petraea Sessiliflora
4 Small leafed Lime	-	Tilia Cordata
4 Spanish or Sweet Chestnut	-	Castanea Sativa
3 Weeping Ash	-	Fraxinus Excelsior Pendula
3 Zelcova		(These are the same species as the magnificent specimen at the corner of College Road and the South Circular Road.)
3 Whitebeam	-	Sorbus Aria
1 Swamp Cypress	-	Taxodium Distichum
1 Italian Alder	-	Alnus Cordata
2 Grey Alder	-	Alnus Incana
7 Conical Hornbeam	-	Carpinus Pyramidalis
3 Caucasian Wingnut	-	Pterocarya Fraxinifolia
3 Snake Bark Maple	-	Acer Grosseri Van Hersii

These trees will be planted on the following sites:

Avenue Meadow	(Dulwich Wood Avenue)
Grove Meadow	(College Road/Love Lane)
Old Grammar School	(Gallery Road/Burbage Road)
Old Mill Pond	(College Road - opposite College)
Border of College Sports Centre	(Dulwich Common)

Stop Press:

The Estates Governors have kindly proposed an official Tree Planting Ceremony to mark the gift of trees made by the Society.

The ceremony will be held at 11.30 am on Saturday 7 February 1976 at the Old Grammar School grounds on the corner of Gallery and Burbage Roads, and a plaque is to be installed to mark the occasion.

The Fred Everson Tree:

To commemorate the successful period in the Society's history between 1970 and 1975 when Sir Frederick Everson was our Chairman a tree was planted in Dulwich Village on Saturday 3 January by Sir Frederick himself at a small informal ceremony attended by a number of members of the Society and local dignitaries. The site is on the verge outside Number 60 Dulwich Village where a large tree, which had been an ornament to the area for many years, recently died. The new tree, which we all hope will be even more magnificent, is a splendid Ash (*Fraxinus Excelsior*).

After the planting ceremony coffee and drinks were provided in a room at the Crown and Greyhound opposite where Lady Everson was also able to be present.

THE SOCIETY DINNER

To obtain tickets for the dinner on 2 April 1976 please tear out and complete the form below and return it with your cheque and s. a. e. to Mrs Evans:

~~cut off~~ _____

To: Mrs K. M. Evans, 22 Dulwich Village, SE21 7AL
(Tel. : 693 3522)

Please send me tickets for the Society Dinner at the Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Golf Club on 2 April 1976. I enclose a cheque/P.O. for £.... (£4.50 a ticket) and a stamped addressed envelope.

Signature Name in blocks

Address

Please make cheques payable to 'The Dulwich Society'.