



The Dulwich Society

TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

Newsletter 73

July 1986

JULY 1986

I N D E X

News.....	3, 4, 7, 8, 17, 18 19
What's On.....	5, 6
Planning and Transport.....	7, 19
Wildlife.....	7, 12
The Old Blew House - Strawberries and Bygone Summers.....	8
Dulwich Park Changes Hands.....	9
Foxes in Dulwich.....	12
A Virgin Roof Garden.....	13
Charles Barry the Younger at the Gallery.....	14
Two Poems: Norman Lloyd-Miller.....	16
Grapevine.....	17
Grove House: New Building Proposals..	19

Chairman:	Captain D W Wyatt, OBE, RN 148 Thurlow Park Road SE21 8HN Telephone: 693 2123
Vice-Chairman:	P F J Lawson, DA, FRIBA, FCI ARB, FRSA, VPFB 41 Village Way SE21 7AP Telephone: 733 2646
Secretary:	Mrs R F U Taylor 30 Walkerscroft Mead SE21 8LJ Telephone: 670 0890
Treasurer:	A J Davis, FCA 38 Stonehills Court SE21 7LZ Telephone: 693 1713
Editor:	D Nicholson-Lord 27 Woodwarde Road SE22 8UN Telephone: 693 3998

NEWS

SYDENHAM HILL WOOD: The Department of the Environment has decided to hold a public enquiry, probably this summer, on the proposal by the Dulwich Estates governors to build 36 flats on the site of Beechgrove, at 111 Sydenham Hill. The planning sub-committee is joining with Southwark council and the London Wildlife Trust in opposing this scheme.

The DOE is apparently also intending to instruct Southwark to auction off Fernbank, which the trust leaseholds and which the inspector, at the enquiry into the mid-south Southwark local plan, recommended removing from any building development for at least 10 years. Lucy Neville, chair of the trust's Southwark group, says: "Sometimes it seems as if most valuable wildlife habitat is regarded as a blank space on a map that needs to be filled in". The trust finds it particularly galling that the Beechgrove proposal comes from a body - the estates governors - which is supposed to promote the amenities of Dulwich.

62 DULWICH VILLAGE: Portland Homes' proposal for a semi-detached pair of two-storey houses on the former rear garden of the site, a revised and smaller-scale plan than the proposed housing, shops and offices development rejected last year, was turned down by Southwark council's planning sub-committee on 8 April. Reg Collins, chairman of the society's transport and planning committee, put the society's opposition to the proposal at the Southwark meeting.

BELAIR BOTTLE-BANK: This is now being cleared daily, after complaints by the society about the mess and untidiness caused by overflowing containers and abandoned cardboard boxes.

PARK BLACKED: The Newsletter understands that Dulwich park has been 'blacked' by unions at Southwark council because of a dispute over a redundant GLC parks official being re-employed by the council as a consultant. Burgess Park is in a similar position. The parks staff are being paid but other forms of co-operation have been withdrawn. Southwark, meanwhile, which put back the parks opening time as soon as it took over from the GLC, has agreed to reinstate the original opening hour, after a diligent society member complained of loss of amenity and took it up with the society, the parks department and Gerald Bowden, MP for Dulwich. For an account of the park in less troubled times, see the article by Jerry Tester, its manager, on page 9 of this issue.

TURNIPS TO TEATIME: Number 84 Dulwich Village is changing from a greengrocers to a tearoom. The proprietor is a resident of Pickwick Road and the tea room will be a 'high-class establishment'.

NEW COUNCILLORS: Elections for Dulwich wards in the May borough elections saw no change in College, Ruskin and Lyndhurst wards with a Labour gain of one seat each in Alleyn and Rye. The councillors elected were, in College, Eileen Doran and Percy Gray (Conservative); in Ruskin, Andrew Mitchell, Gerald Hartup and John Edwards (Conservative); in Alleyn, David Bogle and Margaret Pedler (Labour); in Rye, Elsie Headley (Labour) and Irene Kimm (Conservative); and in Lyndhurst, Alan Crane, Andy Troke and Aubyn Graham (Labour).

VILLAGE BUSINESS: The Dulwich Village Business Association has been formed, under the chairmanship of John Kirk of the Anvil. The aim is to be a 'positive voice' in the village.

GRASS FOR GEESE: Moves continue by the wildlife committee to improve the habitat for Canada Geese in the millpond meadow, by letting the grass grow. The point has been put to the estates governors: the London Wildlife Trust has also been consulted. The society is also supporting the trust in its ideas for making Belair lake a better environment for wildlife.

FELLED OAK: Residents of Court Lane Gardens have been told by the Dulwich estates governors that an oak to be felled in the nearby amenity area (in front of numbers 1 - 10) was rotten. The governors have also given permission for the felling of a horse-chestnut close to the garage of 20 Pond Mead. Although the society has agreed with most of the governors' decisions on trees, there are several which it has not been asked to consider. The governors are to be told of this concern.

WEST DULWICH STATION: The idea of a pedestrian crossing over the railway line has been abandoned.

GRANGE OPEN DAY: Over 350 people visited the garden at The Grange, Grange Lane on 11 May, contributing £611. Another open day at The Grange - where the popular programme of garden visits began seven years ago - will be held on 27 July. For other garden visits, see What's On.

FRIENDS OF FOE: Friends of the Earth have just set up a Southwark branch and have contacted the society to find out its main areas of interest, and to ensure that efforts are not duplicated. Those interested in FOE Southwark should contact 837 0731.

WHAT'S ON

4-17 July	South London Art Gallery	South London Artists 57th annual exhibition
5 July 8pm	Dulwich Picture Gallery	Dulwich College Chamber Orchestra (cond. Brian Schiele). Tickets from Gallery
6 July 2-6pm	Kingswood House	Family day, organised by Dulwich Wood Tenants Association
7 July		Conservation Forum
10 July 7.30pm	Meet at College Road gate	New trees walk, Dulwich Park
12 July and all Sundays July and August (except 24 and 31 August)	Peckham Rye bandstand	Band concerts (brass, steel, jazz, etc)
13 July 2pm	Dulwich Hospital, north wing	Centenary fete
13 July 10am	Sydenham Hill Wood, Crescent Wood Road	Volunteer work day (London Wildlife Trust's Southwark group)
13 July 3pm	All Saints Church Hall, Blenheim Grove	Illustrated talk to celebrate 150th anniversary of the London to Greenwich railway by David Hayes
19/20 July	Brockwell Park	Lambeth Country Show
22-27 July	South London Art Gallery	Art on the Dole
27 July 3.30-6.30pm entrance 50p	The Grange, Grange Lane	Open day
4/5/7 August 7.30pm	Room 119, Lambeth Town Hall	Brain of Lambeth, 1986 contest

10 August 2.30pm	All Saints Church (meet), Blenheim Grove, Peckham	Rye Lane West, walk with Brian Marshall
16 August 2.30pm	West Norwood Cemetery, inside main gate	Tomb trek
17 August 2.30-5.30pm	118 College Road	Invitation garden visit
1 September		Conservation Forum
14 September 3-5pm	138 Burbage Road	Invitation garden visit
27 September 7pm	23 Eastlands Crescent	Wilderness Expeditions club evening. Slides on Baffin Island: a kayak expedition by Franklin Bloomer
30 September	Norwood Society	Old Dulwich houses, talk by P Darby
1 October - 2 November	Dulwich Picture Gallery	Charles Barry exhibition
5 October 2.30-4.30	Howletts Mead, College Road	Invitation garden visit
18 October	23 Eastlands Crescent	Wilderness Expeditions club evening. Slides: climbing in Norway by Steve Evans

FUTURE LISTINGS: Please send details of local events to the editor

SUBSCRIPTIONS PLEASE: Membership subscriptions for the current year were due on 1 January, with membership officially ceasing if members are six months in arrears. Please check on whether you are up to date: if in doubt telephone the treasurer, Jim Davis, on 693 1713. If you have not paid yet, please send Jim your £2 without delay!

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT NEWS

Court Lane Traffic: It is common knowledge that this is getting worse and that in particular at the village end there is real and continuing danger to pedestrians and slower vehicles from excessive speeding from the large lorries and cars. The transport sub-committee has discussed remedies but solutions are difficult to find. Traffic humps, particularly towards the lower end of the lane, are being considered. Any suggestions by members would be gratefully considered to alleviate this seemingly intractable problem.

South Circular at Dulwich: Residents on the north side of Dulwich Common are concerned over possible proposals which might lead to alterations to the road along this length. They have invited me to a meeting.

Water Tower Demolition: The water tower on Crystal Palace Parade is "the last complete original structure left standing on the site of the old Crystal Palace complex". Although it is of no aesthetic value it is of historic interest. There is opposition to its demolition and concerned members should communicate with the chief architect/planner of Bromley council.

Sheltered Housing: The estates governors have refused consent to the proposed demolition of 48/50 Half Moon Lane and the erection of 48 flats as sheltered housing. The planning sub-committee had written expressing its opposition to the scheme.

19, Village Way: After conversation with Southwark council's planning officer, I have confirmed that so far no firm proposals have been submitted.

Reg Collins,
chairman, planning and transport sub-committee

WILDLIFE NEWS

GARDEN PONDS: Some of the wildlife sub-committee gave us an interesting evening on 1 May, when about 50 members and friends attended. We were shown the great variety of ponds which residents of Dulwich have constructed in their gardens. Excellent slides, taken by Glynis Williams during visits for the pond survey, were shown, with a commentary on the various "inhabitants" of these ponds. There was also a BBC film dealing with the pond creatures which do not need to live in the water but are cleverly adapted to walk on the surface. A film strip showed the ecology of a pond, and how the levels differ.

We are grateful to Glynis, Rosa Davis and Brian Jones for the hard work involved in the preparation of this fascinating evening.

Marjorie Campbell

This, the fifth in the series of house visits by the local history group, proved as popular as its earlier ones and all tickets were sold well before the day.

A detailed study of the house's history had been made in the preceding six months by the sub-committee which was able to reveal that there had been habitation on the actual site since 1290. By the 16th century the names of most of the householders were known. For the most part they were small farmers: the house itself was a modest dwelling.

In 1676 a shoemaker and his wife, John and Elizabeth Siston, moved from St Clement Danes to Dulwich where Siston took up his new career as a gentleman farmer. He was wealthy by 17th century standards and had leases of properties in Drury Lane, then a highly fashionable street (and the haunt, it will be remembered, of Nell Gwynne).

In 1690 Siston extended his lease and made a number of improvements. Indeed he may even have substantially rebuilt the house. He also added a cottage in the grounds. There were now two Blew (or Blue as it was often called) houses in Dulwich!

The date of the Dulwich Society's visit to the house was something of a coincidence with an event which had occurred on that same day exactly 300 years earlier. Elizabeth Siston picked strawberries in her large garden and presented them to the Master at the College. She was paid 6d for them. It was obviously a much better summer in 1686 than this year!

A full history of the house will be published in the series of booklets being produced by the local history group. With this issue of the newsletter you will receive the history of 'Belair'.

The society is most grateful to Drs Gazzard for opening their home to us and also to The Master of Dulwich College for making the Old Library available for the lecture which followed the visit to the house.

Brian Green

BARRATT'S BROADSIDE: Broadcaster Michael Barratt, whose wife is a Dulwich girl, was guest of honour at the society's annual dinner at the Dulwich and Sydenham Golf Club on 16 May and delivered some strongly-held views on declining standards, in life in general and journalism in particular.

He also spoke entertainingly about his time as compere of Gardeners' Question Time on Radio 4 - Bill Sowerbutts' socks seemed to figure prominently in this account - and told the story of the divorced couple who met again after a gap of several years. Both are immensely taken with each other's looks - the freshness, the youth, the carefree aspect - and spend several minutes in mutual admiration and congratulations before the husband casually asks: 'By the way, how are the children?'

'That's funny', his ex-wife replies. 'I thought you had them'.

By Jerry Tester

With the abolition of the GLC, responsibility for Dulwich park was taken over by Southwark council. Transition has not been without its problems. According to JERRY TESTER, the park manager, however, Southwark is fully committed to the park - and some exciting new projects are in prospect. Here Mr Tester, who began his career as an apprentice at Horniman Gardens and has also worked at Battersea and Holland Parks, looks at the park's illustrious past and promising present.



PLANS FOR THE PARK: THE SOUTH LONDON PRESS OF SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1885

Known by locals and by people all over the country for its grand show of rhododendrons and azaleas, the park was formed from land on the edge of Dulwich Village in 1885 by the Metropolitan Board of Works, predecessor to the London County Council and the late Greater London Council. The land was a gift from Alleyns College of God's Gift and five years later, in June 1890, the park was opened by Lord Rosebery, then chairman of the board.

Laying out the park cost about £40,000 and was designed by Lieutenant Colonel J J Sexby, Chief Officer of Parks. The annual bedding alone now costs over £6,000 a year - a figure that does not include tree or shrub planting.

Last year the park celebrated its centenary. We researched its history and staged an exhibition and as we dug deep into the archives some line photographs and interesting documents came to light. Among these were reports from the first superintendent of the park giving information on the first by-law offenders on 23 March 1887. Three horse riders were insistent on riding on the new park land and were jumping ditches. The board's solicitor was instructed to report on steps to prevent similar cases.

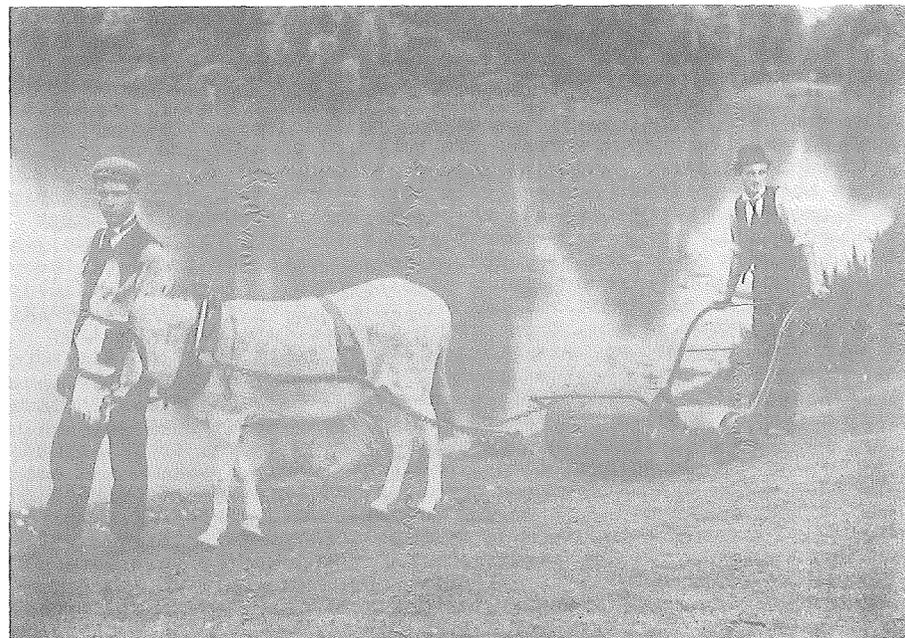


THE AMERICAN GAR

Another gives an application from a boy labourer for an increase of wages. At that time he was earning 1 shilling and sixpence per day. It goes on to say that the superintendent speaks very favourably of the boy and recommends the increase. Perhaps he was lucky and did get more wages!

When the Victorians laid out this new type of park - the country park as they called it - with its winding pathway, man-made lake and semi-wild style areas, they did however include the earlier Victorian style of ornamental bedding. We have over the years attempted to keep it as original as possible - I think we have succeeded. It is one of the most gratifying parks I have ever managed. We have - or should I say nature has - made two ecology areas. One of these is known to staff as the squirrel enclosure and surrounds the old oaks next to the aviary. The other is behind the river on the south side of the park. We have also reinstated four of the original flower beds and hope this year to create a demonstration garden for people with disabilities.

This will be next to the cafe and will be planned along lines recommended by Horticultural Therapy, a national body which not only preaches the message that gardening is good for you but translates it into practice with frequently remarkable results (and not merely with disabled people.) More sport and shows are also in prospect for the summer.



GARDENERS CUTTING THE GRASS BY THE LAKE, 1900

We are now under the control of the London Borough of Southwark and its new leisure and recreation department and they, like other controlling bodies over the years, are aware of the major need to maintain this wonderful park to a high standard. Like previous controlling bodies they have committed themselves to keep Dulwich Park as original as possible.

As Lord Rosebery said at its opening: "This park is dedicated to the public for ever." For ever! Not for a miserable hundred or thousand years - but for ever.

There must be few households in Dulwich in which people have neither seen foxes nor been aware of their activities. Many of our urban foxes are now so accustomed to co-existence with humans that they move about freely during the hours of daylight and may be seen crossing roads, trotting across gardens and, sometimes, sitting or sleeping in a sheltered corner. When a group of College boys conducted a fox survey in 1972 they were given a splendid photograph taken by a householder in Alleyn Road of his wife asleep in a deck chair and a fox asleep on the roof of a summer house a few feet from her head. Most foxes are more wary than that but can often be enticed by the offer of food.

Foxes call to each other, particularly at night time. When the background noise from traffic subsides, their cries, varying from a high pitched bark to a scream, can be heard clearly and over a considerable distance, sounding rather eerie.

Even when we neither see nor hear them we may find signs of their recent presence. Dustbins and polythene sacks of waste are often rifled for food, though sometimes the culprits are dogs and even cats. But the urban fox has learned to recognise dustbins of the affluent society as a ready source of discarded food.

The creatures are sometimes blamed for the disappearance of cats and other domestic pets. They are no doubt occasionally guilty but in making microscopic examination of the hairs found in fox scats (droppings) over several years I have most commonly found squirrel hairs, vole fur and pigeon down-feathers and very, very rarely cat fur. The scats, which may be found in gardens and on lawns, are distinctive, usually with long, pointed, tapering ends, quite unlike the droppings of cats and dogs.

We have a few current records of the breeding sites of Dulwich foxes, often under garden sheds which provide dry shelter. But the wildlife sub-committee would very much welcome up-to-date information from readers, particularly if they have foxes breeding in their garden or have had a sighting of cubs. The more precise their information - location, numbers, time of year and time of day - the better. A note or a 'phone call to a member of the sub-committee or to me at 16 Mount Adon Park, SE22, 693-3698, would enable us to build up our records and work towards a new Fox Survey. The RSPCA (Causeway, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 LHG) publishes a useful booklet, "Foxes in your Neighbourhood?", costing 50 pence, and would welcome your support. Please join in.

Brian Jones

BELAIR: The society put itself on public show at the gala weekend on 14 and 15 June thanks to a highly impressive stand constructed and assembled by Bill Hale, the first such display the society has mounted. The stand, which showed detailed maps of the Dulwich area together with some fine photographs and linked this cogently to the society's committee structure, was manned by volunteers on both days and drew a stream of visitors. Eight new members were signed and 15 Belair booklets sold. In view of the fact that the gala weekend is a Southwark-wide event, rather than geared specifically to Dulwich, this was reckoned to be a good response. Bill Hale's stand will next go on display, it is hoped, at a Kingswood estate family day on 6 July, to be held at Kingswood House by the Dulwich Wood Tenants Association.

By Bill Hale

Just a hundred feet above Kensington High Street, but a world away from its jostling, tooting, choking traffic is the old Derry and Tom's roof garden, now owned by Richard Branson's Virgin empire. It provides a diminuendo counterpoint to his more raucous properties.

Turn right out of the underground station, right again into Derry Street, and take the lift to the sixth floor. Entrance to the garden is free, yet on a sunny morning this spring, with hawthorns, rhododendrons and camellias in flower, with the fresh green unfurling leaves of the many trees at their most attractive and with mexican orange blossom adding its scent, I had the gardens to myself. No doubt when meals are being served more visitors can be expected, but the space is large enough and to spare for all the diners, who many choose to take a postprandial stroll.

Conceived by Mr T A Bowen, a director and one time chairman of Barkers of Kensington, the garden, opened in 1938, has been kept very much in accordance with Ralph Hancock's original design of three totally different interlocking gardens - the Spanish garden, the rose garden and the woodland garden.

The Spanish garden, surrounded by lime-washed stucco walls and cloisters with pantiled roofs supported by narrow twisted columns, consists of an immaculate emerald lawn intersected by canals (the Mediterranean was never so blue) with fountains, palms and annuals cascading from terracotta pots. A light, airy and colourful garden, it is an Englishman's caricature of an Iberian garden and none the worse for that.

A paved walk, beneath a pergola, leads to the rose garden (originally the English garden), where weathered brick and wisteria-clad stone arches provide an altogether more tranquil atmosphere. Here roses, bedding plants, shrubs and small trees combine to form a very pleasant sheltered corner in which to relax.

The largest and most remarkable of the three gardens is the woodland garden. Here the picture windows of the restaurant (open to the public for lunches) look out onto a lawn sloping down to an expanse of water in the form of a lazy, shaded stream, with a stone hump back bridge leading to the principal planting of trees and shrubs. Here too a pair of pink flamingos mix with mallards and other passing waterfowl. Among many trees, growing with a vigour that belies the shallow depth of soil, were noted chestnuts, sycamore, eucalyptus, a weeping willow, a walnut, a red oak and a golden rain tree. These in turn, set off by flowering shrubs, provide a most beautiful setting in which to marvel at the audacity of the conception and the flair with which it has been executed.

From the south-facing viewing platform, even on a hazy day, the Crystal Palace mast stands soldier straight atop Sydenham Hill ridge, a backdrop to Dulwich below. Next time I go shopping in Kensington High Street I shall take by binoculars with me. So should you.

Bill Hale is a member of the horticulture sub-committee

CHARLES BARRY JUNIOR AT THE PICTURE GALLERY

By J R Piggott

The New College at Dulwich was among the best works of Charles Barry, Junior, son of the architect of the Houses of Parliament. This autumn Dulwich picture gallery chronicles the achievements of the younger Barry, the main architect of Dulwich.

For the month of October the Dulwich Picture Gallery will mount an exhibition, 'Charles Barry and the Dulwich Estate', to chronicle and illustrate the work of the architect, both locally and elsewhere. There will be an illustrated catalogue with a lengthy introduction discussing his life and buildings.

The National Portrait Gallery has kindly agreed to lend the portrait of Barry's father, Sir Charles, with the moonlit Houses of Parliament under construction in the background. Sir Charles was surveyor to the Dulwich estate from 1830 to 1858, and built the old grammar school in Dulwich village in 1831.

The Royal Institute of British Architects is lending the portrait of Charles Barry, Junior, who won its gold medal in 1877, and was its president from 1876 to 1870. The speech presenting him with the medal cited the buildings of the New College at Dulwich (1868-70) along with the forecourt at Burlington House as his most successful works.

The drawings collection of the British Architectural Library will be lending designs by Barry for his country mansions, seven very fine water-colours of the college shown by Barry at the Paris Exhibition of 1878 and Barry's unsuccessful competition designs for London buildings such as the Albert Memorial, the National Gallery and the Foreign Office. The college will lend a selection of the many very splendid contract drawings for the new buildings and the perspective drawing of Barry's (now demolished) high level station at the Crystal Palace.

Barry's great-grand-daughter has kindly lent his diaries for 1846-7 when at the age of 23 he was helping his father at the Palace of Westminster site. These give a fascinating account of his father's work, the problems of building the palace, the Barrys' domestic life and the young architect's ambitions.

Barry's local buildings such as the North Dulwich railway station, St Stephen's, St Peter's and the Webster Memorial Fountain will be documented and illustrated. The many prints from Victorian architectural journals - of, for example, Barry's Burlington House, the roof to the Royal Exchange and the former building of the Institute of Civil Engineers - will also be shown. Further material of local interest will be borrowed from the estates governors, and there will be some discussion in the catalogue of Barry's architectural practice (with his partner R R Banks) which was responsible for so many local villas.

The introduction to the catalogue will place Barry in the context of his formidable family. Of his brothers, Sir John Wolfe Barry built Tower Bridge and Barry Dock at Cardiff, and the more subtle Edward Middleton Barry built Covent Garden Opera House and Charing Cross Station. It will also consider the sources for the college buildings and the quotations from his father's work made by Barry: Brightlands which follows the rear of the Travellers' Club and the college buildings which quote from King Edward VI Grammar School at Birmingham and Halifax Town Hall. It will show how Barry's Italian tour resulted in the elaborate and affectionate enrichment of the college with its allusions to the Certose di Pavia and the other north Italian buildings that had fired his imagination.



"MR. CHARLES BARRY, Architect of Dulwich" - Illustration from The Builder, February 5, 1870.

Barry's experiments with terracotta, his part in the development of the Dulwich estate and the improved professional status of architects that resulted from his years at the RIBA will also be shown. There will be pictures of demolished houses and churches.

References to articles of the period will help us to understand our main local architectural figure who had the chance, like a boy's dream, to design and set up an estate with a college-palazzo, two churches, a library, railway viaducts and stations, and villas large and small. The minutes of the estates governors show that he had a hand in the ordering and planting of the many horse-chestnut trees planted in the 1880s.

Mr Piggott is head of English at Dulwich College

BOYS AND GIRLS COME OUT TO PLAY

Boys and girls get out CLEAR OFF!
I don't like your noise as you play.
I know that you'll think I'm a silly old sod!
Don't matter, just go right away.

We've got to play somewhere, Oh where can we play?

Won't tell you again, BUGGER OFF!
I'll speak to your father, he'll give you what for!
Stop kicking your heels about SO near my door.
Your Mother's at Bingo, go wait for her there
Now you've got a latch-key, to grumble's not fair.
The Council should make more provision than this
They ought to do something, with these Blimmin kids.

Not wanted, Not wanted, kids know very well
They don't ask to come here, and hate it like hell!
They're nowt but a passport to the DHSS
No wonder their upbringing's in such a mess
Right left and centre, they're hounded away,
Boys and Girls CLEAR OFF ---- DON'T PLAY
So! What do they do?

On the death of Philip Larkin

R I P Mr Bleaney

Door open, door shut.
What drove him?
Wry smiler
Ever patient

Discipline disorganised and
Framed his
Every chore -
Yet free spirited

And his
Evening pen
Lit lamps
For us.

What fed him?
What urges died
Unclipped with
His going?

What dark
And jealous weight
Holds his pen down?
Holds his pen now?

Norman Lloyd-Miller

GRAPEVINE

ANYONE FOR CROQUET?: Stephen Badger is trying to revive the Burbage Road croquet club after a fallow period in which membership has declined and only golf croquet (apparently an inferior version of the game) has been played. Stephen has been attempting to bring back full Association croquet: his membership drive began last season. No previous experience of the game is necessary (although a degree of commitment is asked for) and equipment can be borrowed. The club itself, which has existed for many years, has two good lawns: play is in the evening and at weekends. The same club also has facilities for tennis, squash, bowls and so on. Telephone 274 8126 or write to Stephen at 154 Burbage Road, SE21 7AG.

WHITE WATERS AND WILDERNESS: From their home in Eastlands Crescent Richard and Clare Munday run Wilderness Expeditions, which organises regular club evenings devoted to films of far-away places and trips where members can translate dreamed adventure into reality. Among the trips lined up for this summer are canoeing in the Wye (June), climbing in Norway (July), canoeing in northern Ontario (August/September), walking and climbing in the Cairngorms (September), more canoeing and walking in the Wye and on the Black Mountains (October), and walking in the Peak District (November). Trips vary from a weekend to a fortnight. Slide shows planned (See What's On section) include Nepal, South America, Baffin Island, Norway, Africa and Algeria. Club evenings cost £1 to cover costs and consist of a simple meal at 7pm, followed by slides/lectures and informal discussion. Club membership is £5 a year. Telephone 693 4094 or write to 23 Eastlands Crescent, SE21 7EG.

BRIDGE BUFFS WANTED: The bridge section of North Dulwich Lawn Tennis and Social Club want to expand their numbers. They play duplicate bridge twice a week (Tuesdays and Saturdays) during the winter and every Tuesday, with some Saturdays, in summer. All events carry master points. Mary Lawless, the secretary, says: "The club is friendly and we endeavour to make the players feel at home." Contact Mrs Lawless, at 8a Beatrice Avenue, Norbury SW16 4UN (telephone 679 1369) or the club (telephone 693 4554) between 7.15pm and 10.15pm on Tuesdays.

MUGGER-BASHING?: Did you know Dulwich Judo Club had opened at the new James Allen's Girls' School sports centre in Red Post Hill? Classes, on Mondays, for boys and girls (6-16) at 6.30pm and for teens and adults at 8pm (latter covers judo, self-defence and karate weapons). "The give and take nature of the sport is just as suitable for girls and women as it is for boys and men", says the club. "Above all judo is great fun and completely safe". Telephone 764 2919.

LAMBETHANS' SOCIETY: Thanks to Brian Vale, of the Lambethans, for his long and highly informative letter about the doings of our fellow society across the great local government divide. Sadly it arrived too late for inclusion in the April newsletter but some details are included in the current issue - among them the Brain of Lambeth contest. The Lambethans will also be running a simultaneous chess event at the Lambeth country show on 19 and 20 July - any interested participants? Contact Brian at 59 Tulse Mere Road, West Norwood SE27 9EH.

BOUNCING BABES: If you have an energetic toddler between 2 and 5/6 (and not many aren't!), there's a unique opportunity newly opened at Crystal Palace National Sports Centre. Run by the Diving Institute, under the expert supervision of champion divers June Croft and Chris Snode, the Mini Gym offers youngsters the chance to 'let themselves go' in a specially adapted gymnasium, complete with full-size trampolines, dry diving boards, horses, beams etc. - and all well surrounded by crash mats! The ratio of child to teacher is 4:1 for the tinies (the two year olds have an adult with them) and the five year olds are in groups with a 5-6:1 ratio. Fun is the keyword, but it is also hoped to spot talent at a tender age. Fees are £7 for each child a month, and further details may be obtained from the Mini Gym on 659 2986 or 778 0131 ext. 206 between 1pm and 3.30pm.

GROWING GRAPEVINE: News, information, listings, ideas, wants, needs, suggestions, observations - please let the editor know so that they can go into grapevine. Nothing too trivial for consideration! Write to David Lord at 27 Woodwarde Road, SE22 8UN.

ART FOR CANCER RESEARCH

The fourth annual exhibition and sale of art in aid of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, held at Dulwich College, made a record profit in 1985 of almost £4,500. But with local artists clamouring for space in 1986, the burden of organising such a fascinating and rewarding occasion is falling on too few stalwart workers.

Offers of help to hang the paintings and lay out the pottery is desperately needed. So too is assistance on the door and to man the sales desk over the three days. Help with ticket sales in your road would also be greatly appreciated.

Meetings are held in committee members' homes, usually accompanied by glasses of wine or coffee, and are workmanlike and friendly gatherings. Anyone free to assist over the autumn half term weekend will be most welcome.

The fifth exhibition will be open to the public from 8pm to 10pm on Friday, 24 October; 10.30am to 6pm on Saturday, 25 October and 10.30am to 4pm on Sunday, 26 October. A lot of hard work is put in to prepare the wall boards on the preceding Wednesday and Thursday as well as on the Friday.

Offers of help will be most gratefully received by the chairman, Mrs Marianne Emery, on 761 0076 or the artists' liaison officer, Mrs Anne Stone, telephone 670 2798. Give them a ring right now so that you can be invited to the next committee meeting and thus get involved with the planning of what is fast becoming a notable addition to the art world calendar.

Patricia Gaitskell, press officer

Rosebery Gate
(Dulwich Park)

GROVE HOUSE, DULWICH COMMON

As the newsletter goes to press, a proposal has appeared to be considered by the estates governors and Southwark council for the demolition of this large house and the erection of five houses on the site. Security protection would be provided by a lodge house at the entrance to the lane leading off the South Circular Road, with, presumably, a peripheral fence or wall. This raises many issues and Reg Collins, chairman of the planning committee, has attended a meeting with local residents living on the Common who are opposed to this proposal.

