



# *The Dulwich Society*

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TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

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*Newsletter 79*

*January — February 1988*

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1988

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We apologize for the late publication of this Newsletter: the need to include important news on the estates governors' controversy meant that the production schedule was delayed. All contributions for the April issue, please, to the editor by February 19.

NEWS

GOVERNORS REPLY: The Dulwich estates governors have responded quickly to the criticisms of them contained in the last issue of the Newsletter. Mr E G Chandler, chairman of the board, has declined to discuss individual cases mentioned in our columns but says all criticism is taken seriously and 'determined efforts' are made to resolve problems. He rejects claims that the governors are 'shadowy figures' and that they are out of touch with reality. Many of the attacks have been uninformed, he says, coming from local newspapers seeking an eye-catching headline. See Letters to the Editor.

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TOLLGATE COTTAGE: The building, which is not listed, has been judged uninhabitable. The estates governors are to decide whether or not to sell it once a report on College Road and the future siting of the toll control has been studied.

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STONEHILLS SUES: A resident in Stonehills Court is taking legal action against the estates governors over a 20 per cent management supervision charge considered to be extremely high compared with other charges, the society's executive committee heard in October. Rent for the September quarter was also being withheld by the Old Scholars of Dulwich Hamlet School, who are trustees for the Old Grammar School, after lengthy disagreement with the governors about who is responsible for maintaining the fabric of the building. It was thought that the governors might have lost their files.

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HORTICULTURE CHAIR: Brian Jones has been elected chairman of the horticulture sub-committee in succession to Gerald Fairlie, an appreciation of whom appears in this issue. John Robinson is the new deputy chairman. Mr Fairlie's old house, The Grange, is up for sale: there have been many enquiries. As with Grove House, one developer is proposing to demolish the house and redevelop the whole site. English Heritage has said these are no grounds for listing the building as the ground plan did not follow the original lines of the house, built in 1823. Tenders for the Grange opened on 12 November. Its garden was featured in the October issue of the Newsletter.

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SOCIETY BUFFET: On Saturday 17 October an informal get-together and buffet lunch was enjoyed by members of the executive committee, the sub-committees and many of those who had given willing and practical help to the society. Wives and husbands were included. The Conference Rooms in Belair Mansion were the venue. The event was a repeat of a lunch held two years previously.

## NEWS

DULWICH ESTATES MAP: The estates governors have recently prepared an updated map of the estate - the first since 1973 - which includes many pieces of information of interest to all residents of Dulwich. The map is at a scale of 1 to 5,000 or approximately 10 ins to one mile. The map is poster size, two feet wide and four feet long. It is attractively printed in five colours and shows the boundaries of the local boroughs, conservation areas, the estates governors' estate, postal districts and ward boundaries, etc.

Copies of the map are obtainable from the estates governors' office at the Old College, Dulwich Village, and from the Art Stationers Shop at 31 Dulwich Village. The price is £4.50.

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PISSARRO AT THE PALACE: Scenes of Dulwich, Sydenham and Norwood are featured in a new book by local author, Nicholas Reed, on the 16 paintings which Pissarro, the father of French Impressionism, made during his stay in Norwood from December 1870 to June 1871. The book, Camille Pissarro at the Crystal Palace, is published by London Reference Books, price £5.45. The book shows all 16 paintings, 10 of them in colour, with modern colour photographs of the same scenes for comparison. It also includes a map, detailed commentary and many other black and white photographs. The paintings include two pictures of the palace itself. The captions for each view by Pissarro quote the titles devised in 1939 by his son Ludovic Rudo Pissarro. Almost all are wrong! Much detective work by Nicholas and others result in the true description, where known, appearing with the modern views.

The book can be bought through the Norwood Society. Please contact Rosemary Comber, 170 Knight's Hill, SE27; tel: 761 3996.

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ACID RAIN: An illustrated talk on this subject will be given next month by Sally Power and Katy Ling who are researching the subject with particular regard to beech trees at Selwood Park Imperial College in Berkshire. Their talk will be on Thursday 4 February at 8pm in St Barnabas Hall.

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PLAYERS' PRODUCTIONS: "Inherit the Wind" by Jerome Lawrence and Robert Lee is the Dulwich Players' winter production for the 1987/88 season. Producer-director Ted Tunna has planned an ambitious in-the-round production of his famous play about the trial of a schoolteacher accused of teaching the evolution of the species in a small American town in the 1920s. Performances are on Friday and Saturday 22 and 23 January, at 8pm in St Barnabas Hall. Tickets are £2 and £1 from the box office manager, Mrs Merrill Spencer, 7 Pond Cottages, SE21; tel: 693 2043 and the Arts Stationers, Dulwich Village, SE21.

The players' spring production in April will be "The Beaux' Stratagem", the delightful 18th century restoration comedy of manners by George Farquhar. Full details will be given in the April newsletter.

## NEWS

RESIDENTS SPEAK ON GOVERNORS: A public meeting, to be chaired by Gerald Bowden, MP for Dulwich, is to be held on 29 February, in which a panel of Dulwich estates governors will answer questions put by residents. It follows an extensive campaign by the Society to canvass the views of all residents on failings and problems in the governors' management of the estate. A wide range of concerns was expressed in surveys and at open meetings, from road maintenance to property development on previous greenspace. See Brian Green's report in this issue.

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### THE ESTATES GOVERNORS: RESIDENTS AIR THEIR COMPLAINTS

The Dulwich Society, prompted by a number of expressions of anxiety by its members, wrote in October to 75 residents of different roads and developments in Dulwich. These residents, the majority of them members of the society, were asked to be representatives for the purpose of a survey to be conducted by the society to establish whether there was evidence of disquiet amongst Dulwich residents about the management of the college estates by the governors and staff.

Subsequently, on 20 October, 65 representatives attended a briefing meeting at the Old Grammar School. It was clear from that meeting that many residents welcomed the society's initiative in allowing them to channel complaints through the medium of the survey in the hope that previously unresolved problems could be brought directly to the attention of the governors.

The survey produced almost 300 replies. Of these the most detailed were from residents of leasehold properties who had had very unsatisfactory experiences of external decoration performed by the college's sub-contractors. These were claimed to be several years behind schedule in many cases resulting in deterioration of woodwork while the painting, when done, was often badly executed and poorly supervised. Several are still the subject of great disagreement between the tenants and the college.

The freeholders in the college estate, who pay a five-yearly (quinquennial) charge for the maintenance of the general environment under the terms of the scheme of management, expressed their concern with the deplorable state of the Old Grammar School and the College Road road surface. Many felt that the college had a duty to point out to the local authority any shortcomings, whatever their responsibility, especially the poor state of many footways and roads. The number of empty houses belonging to the college, often in a very neglected state, was a concern of many people. However, since the survey was conducted a number (but not all) have been placed for sale.

Loft conversions were high on the list of items for concern and many residents felt tighter control should be exercised by the college as administrators of the scheme of management.

A number of direct tenants also had problems. Many of these concerned 'small works' which had been reported but were not dealt with even after lengthy delays. The running-down of the college's own maintenance force has made dealing with small works the subject of protracted delay.

Satisfaction was expressed by some at the way the green spaces were maintained by the college's own men, but lessees had unhappy experiences with their sub-contractors. The lessees also complained of high maintenance charges for which little detailed information was supplied and the high cost of the maintenance of the private roads. One of the residents of College Road questions what kind of road it is! He says: 'It has the worst features of a private road (cost to residents, badly maintained etc) and the worst features of a public road (noisy, always being dug up by utilities and so on).' He calculates that the volume of traffic down the toll road should enable it to pay for itself.

Many people wanted to know more about the estates governors. Who were they answerable to? Whom do they represent? How are they elected? Concern was expressed about the age of some governors and their ability to manage a multi-million pound estate, with pressure on them by property companies to develop.

Development featured in many residents' comments on the general anxieties, especially the matter of infilling. The Rosendale Allotment Society and the Camber Allotment Society both expressed concern that they had not heard from the college whether their leases would be renewed in 1988.

Many residents expressed satisfaction that some of the matters of concern which had been mentioned during the year had now been satisfactorily dealt with by the estates governors - parking in College Road, the repair of the chapel and burial ground gates and the re-ordering of the stocks site. The publication by the governors of an information leaflet was welcomed but this was not felt to be informative enough.

Some people thought the estates governors should have an improvement plan for the area. The condition of Dulwich Woods was mentioned as an instance. Others looked for an extension of the conservation area, the provision of more green and chain link fences.

It is hoped that comment on the findings of the survey and also an explanation of the governors' role and financial responsibilities will be given at a public meeting to be convened by the Dulwich Society on Monday 29 February at St Barnabas Hall, Dulwich, at 8pm. The meeting will be chaired by Gerald Bowden, MP for Dulwich. Mr Bowden is a former lecturer in estate management and is a lawyer. A panel of estates governors have agreed to attend. Written questions should be sent prior to the meeting to Reg Collins, 6 Eastlands Crescent, SE21.

Following a second meeting of representatives on 24 November a file of residents' views, comments and complaints was forwarded to the chairman and vice-chairman of the estates governors. The governors were asked to respond to specific complaints direct to those who made them. A synopsis of the document was sent to each governor.

#### GERALD FAIRLIE

It is with very great sadness that we have to record the death, on 22 July, of Gerald Fairlie, chairman of our horticulture sub-committee and long-serving member of the wildlife sub-committee, at the age of 88.

Gerald's mother was widowed while he was still young, and it was the memory of his grandfather that dominated the family in which the boy was raised. John Fairlie, whose bust stood in the entrance hall of The Grange, had, as a young man, been equerry to the Duke of York and therefore part of the circle at the court of George IV. He married three times, Gerald's grandmother being the third wife. The charming portrait by Thomas Lawrence that hung in the drawing room was of John Fairlie's first wife, the daughter of the Earl of Airlie. His second wife was the daughter of Viscountess Canterbury and it was through this line that Gerald acquired his horticultural pedigree since both the Canterburys and John Fairlie himself were briefly tenants of Wakehurst Place - 'Kew in the country' - and at the time of his death Gerald was planning a trip to Wakehurst and in particular to the gate lodge built by his grandfather in about 1826! It will be seen that Gerald's ancestry was somewhat convoluted: he believed that Gerard Fairlie - Bulldog Drummond - was a second cousin.

As a young man Gerald served in France as a guards officer in the First World War, being wounded at Fontaine les Croissilles on the Hindenberg line. After demobilisation Gerald went into industry. On one occasion in the Second World War his factory, which at that time was producing parachute harness and other supplies for the allied forces, was bombed during the night. He took great pride in the fact that with the help of the whole workforce he was able to resume production within 24 hours in nearby workshops. After the war, with the honorary rank of Colonel, he was sent to Germany to advise on German industrial reconstruction.

In 1933 with his mother and two of his sisters, he had taken over the lease of The Grange, then sadly dilapidated. In 1935 he negotiated a new lease with the estates governors and began the enormous job of repairing the house. Unfortunately that work was destroyed when in 1940 a land mine exploded in Grange Lane substantially demolishing both The Grange and the farm buildings on the site. The second rebuilding had to wait until after the war, so it was not until 1953 that Gerald and his two sisters were finally able to return to the house, and it is from this time that the substantial development of the garden dates. His philosophy of gardening was to encourage riotous luxuriant growth which would in turn encourage the wild life he wished to attract, particularly the butterflies, which were an especial interest.

In 1979, after the death of his surviving sister, Vera, whom he had nursed with great devotion, Gerald conceived his idea of opening gardens in Dulwich. With a good deal of trepidation he opened The Grange garden to members of the Dulwich Society and from this meeting of interested individual members of the society the horticulture sub-committee was formed under its first chairman, Theo Frankel, whom Gerald had met when they both worked as

volunteers at the Blackfriars Settlement. Subsequently Gerald devoted much effort to organising the programme of garden visits, not only the production and distribution of the invitations themselves but also the persuasion of hesitant garden-owners. It is from this exercise that his noted tea parties evolved.

In 1985, to mark his 50 years at The Grange, Gerald first opened the garden under the National Gardens Scheme, part of the proceeds of these openings being donated to the Hospital and Home for Incurables at Crown Point with which his sister had been associated. It was this opening that prompted him to change the vegetable garden into a flower garden blazing with colour, and in his 86th year he dug his wildlife pond. This was such a success that he was offering to dig ponds for other less active society members, 30 years his junior!

Gerald was a man of simple tastes, whose only excesses were in his generosity. Although preserving a rigorous integrity, a patent honesty, and a sense of the fitness of things from his roots in the nineteenth century, he so adapted himself to the latter half of the twentieth century that he maintained that buoyant interest in events and that keen enthusiasm which kept him young until his death.

His deep and abiding Christian faith was a central element in his make-up and his attendance at the early service at St Stephen's even in his last illness, was very important to him; it was at St Stephen's on 31 July that more than a hundred friends gathered to give thanks for the life of a very gentle man.

Bill Hale

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#### THE HAMLET RAMBLERS CELEBRATE 80 YEARS

In 1907 a rambling club was started by the Old Boys' Club of Dulwich Hamlet School, which already provided facilities for gymnastics, football and cricket. By 1910, according to the school magazine, the ramblers were making regular trips to the countryside, together with outings to museums, newspaper offices and the Surrey commercial docks.

By the 1930s women also participated and membership was open to those who had no connection with the school. Regular rambles were enjoyed, frequently followed by tea.

The journeys to the countryside were made by train and this method of transport was used until the 1960s when the ramblers switched to hired minibuses. Rambles are still held every month, but members now use their own transport.

Walks are usually in Surrey or Kent, centring on one of the lovely villages. Lunch is taken at a pub with a walk of six to eight miles, divided between the morning and afternoon, but alas tea shops are very rare these days!

Enquiries can be made to the secretary at 113 Burbage Road, Dulwich SE21 7AF.

Rita Green

#### GREENING THE CITIES AND RESETTLING THE COUNTRYSIDE

A "new villages" programme, similar to the New Towns programme which was brought to an end a decade ago, should be launched as part of a large-scale programme of resettling people from the cities into the countryside, according to a new book. It could provide one answer to the problem of surplus farmland.

The Greening of the Cities also calls for the creation of new countryside and greenspace in the heart of Britain's decaying industrial cities, either by using derelict land or by the selective demolition of redundant buildings. It argues for "villaging" cities into small identifiable communities to combat urban decline.

Making cities environmentally attractive - by bringing back wildlife, for instance - is the only long-term solution to ending the exodus of jobs and population which lie at the roots of inner-city decay, the book concludes. The Government's policy of "plugging up the holes" in the city's fabric with new housing and industry is doomed to failure.

The Greening of the Cities, written by Times journalist and Newsletter editor David Nicholson-Lord, a former Press Fellow at Wolfson College, Cambridge, is the first detailed and comprehensive survey of how environmentalism and ecology have changed the face of cities over the last 20 years - two decades which have seen massive population outflows from urban areas and the opening up of large tracts of city land. Michael Heseltine and David Bellamy were amongst the speakers at its launch.

The book looks at the growth of wild gardening, urban food production, recycling, city farms, the urban wildlife movement, the creation of school nature reserves and ecological parks and a host of other initiatives through which people, often against considerable odds, have sought to reintroduce nature into cities.

It also examines the rediscovery of "lost" urban wildernesses - the great Victorian cemeteries, for example - and describes how new skills in reclamation and landscape design offer immense potential for the reshaping of cities and the creation in them of wildlife corridors and habitats.

Greening is a form of therapy for demoralised communities, a technology for rebuilding communities from the bottom up. Through the "new village common" of city farm and nature garden, the city is being cooperatively redesigned"...its waste space thus offers scope for...a whole neighbourhood to display its talent, its industry and its sense of identity, probably without precedent."

On rural resettlement, the book deploys evidence from a wide variety of research studies to show that, whatever Government policy may aim for, logic, human need and socio-economic trends point to a growing search for the values identified with the countryside and thus an increasing disenchantment with those of the old industrial city.

The New Towns programme, launched after the last war, was intended to disperse city populations. This objective was overtaken by rapid national population growth which meant that the cities remained crowded. Relative population stability now offers the chance to try again.

A second New Towns programme will be very different from the first, however. Developments in the old cities during the 1970s and 1980s were a "dress rehearsal for the post-industrial resettlement of the land", centred on designing human settlements to include nature.

The book adds: "Design with nature provides the prospectus for a new programme of resettling the countryside."

"New constellated cities or village clusters could create a grazed, coppiced, walked-through, lived-in and altogether better husbanded countryside richer in wildlife than the empty farmland or drab green belt they replace."

"Reuniting jobs and people in more spacious settlements would constitute a measure of enormous social efficiency, saving energy, enhancing local self-sufficiency and pride, and opening up new prospects of home-centred economic revival."

"Places, particularly if they were cooperatively designed and built and thus achieved a balance between private and communal space, would be better-loved, their laws and institutions commanding readier assent."

"This is the programme that has emerged in the free space of cities and now struggles desperately for a foothold in the countryside."

The Greening of the Cities is published by Routledge and Kegan Paul, price £6.95.

## BELAIR: NOT SO MANY BLACK MARKS FOR SOUTHWARK

By Rosa Davis

I would like to add some points to the note by Lucy Neville on Belair that appeared in the July Newsletter when she mentioned the trap installed by Southwark's parks department in the pond but criticised the council for planting conifers and for destroying the old pollarded oak in the play area. Simple measures to protect pollarded trees had apparently not been considered by Southwark, she said.

The trap was installed not only to prevent leaves, but also silt from the playing fields, flowing into the water. And perhaps planting conifers near the water course was not such a bad thing: at least they do not shed leaves and dead wood continually into the water like the all too numerous weeping willows.

The oak in the children's playground was removed for the very good reason that it was rotten and therefore unsafe. The more usual explanation for pollarding is that commoners were allowed to cut wood on common land that was low enough to be reached. The very good example of this is in Epping Forest where there are many pollarded hornbeams.

Today in Belair Southwark's groundsmen were busy spreading sand over the playing fields near the cork oak. The reason for this, I learnt, goes back 15 years to when the lake was cleared out. The topsoil had been removed from the playing field and also a second layer. In their place all the sludge was spread over the field. On top of this the topsoil was replaced. As we remember this killed a fine copper beech and ash. Since then the sludge has compacted and made the ground uneven.

Now, after the sand has been spread, the ground will be spiked to a depth of 16 inches allowing the sand to filter down, aerate the soil and stabilise the area. This work was carried out two years ago.

24 August 1987

Miss Davis is a member of the wildlife sub-committee

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## WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS

Our wildlife recorder has remarked on the lack of reports this year of sightings of goldcrests, siskins and redpolls in the Dulwich area. Very few reports of owls have also been noted. During the autumn and winter we should be seeing the return of the wintering thrushes, redwings and fieldfares - please continue to watch for them.

The Kent Trust for Nature Conservation, in its recent report to members, has mentioned the plight of these birds, which feed on berries and seeds. In the great October storm, so many of the trees and shrubs were destroyed just as they were in full fruit, so apart from the loss of habitat, many species of birds will have lost a natural source of winter feed. Maybe in our gardens we can help to compensate for this.

Marjorie Campbell (670 8766)

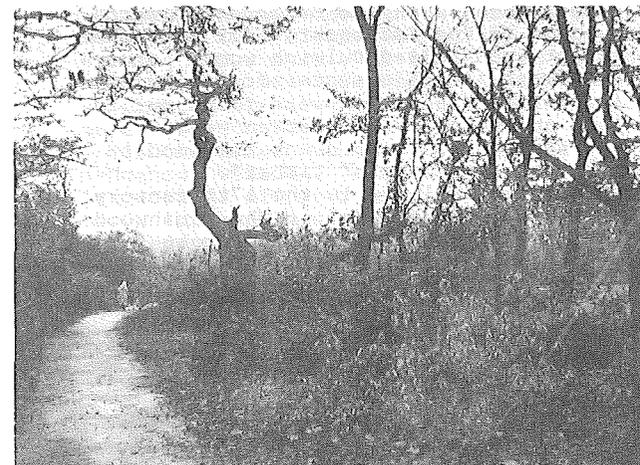
DULWICH TREES AFTER THE HURRICANE: DULWICH PARK AND BELAIR

Few people will forget that night last October when hurricane-force winds struck the south of England. In comparison with many rural areas like Kent and Sussex, Dulwich escaped relatively lightly. But as the pictures below show, the winds still took their toll. The two main parks of Dulwich, with their wealth of old specimen trees - Dulwich Park in particular - will never be quite the same again.

Socially, however, the effect of the hurricane was rather like that of the Blitz. It produced, notably in embattled rural villages, a brief flowering of community spirit. It also produced a rich crop of anecdotes, memories and tall stories. Do any readers remember anything unusual or intriguing about the night of the hurricane or its aftermath? What did we do - how did we react - when the winds struck? How bad was the damage and how long was the clearing - up operation?

If you do have any notes, comments or stories that you think might interest fellow residents and society members, do please let us know. Write to the editor at the address on page 2. It ought to make fascinating reading for us all.

Incidentally, the pictures show, from left to right and top to bottom: Dulwich Park, near the Court Lane gate; Belair, below the mansion; Dulwich Park, looking towards Court Lane below the gate; and Belair, by the waterway.



## TALL TALES FROM THE WOODS

By Brian Green

Conservationists who campaigned for the preservation of Dulwich Woods last year registered a great success. One of the arguments which was put forward but which does need qualification is the claim that Dulwich Woods are part of the Great North Wood, that great tract of woodland which stretched from Honor Oak to Croydon and remnants of which are still in evidence. These include Honor Oak itself, Dulwich Woods, Central Hill and part of Beulah Hill.

The trees in Dulwich Woods are indeed growing on what has always been ancient woodland, but to imagine that it has remained virgin forest would be a great mistake. It is quite certain that Dulwich Woods were "forested" before the Norman Conquest but the first documentary dating discovered so far is in the proceedings of the Justice in Eyre court for the Hundred of Brixton (the judicial area of which Dulwich was part and which included the modern London boroughs of Wandsworth, Lambeth and part of Southwark) of 1235.

Here we get some indication of the value of the woods to the landlord - at that time the Priory of Bermondsey. A local man - William Gerard, the Priory's employee looking after the woods - discovers a woman, stealing brushwood. He wounds her in the arm and takes her cloak (probably to ensure her appearance at the Manor Court). In fact she takes the Manor servant to the Eyre Court, which, although finding her guilty of stealing brushwood waives her fine in view of her poverty and puts the servant into custody for treating her so roughly.

More than a century later, in 1357, the Priory was still jealously guarding its interest in Dulwich Woods. In that year Bermondsey Abbey leased the Manor of Dulwich to one Thomas Dolsaly. Dolsaly must have been Dulwich's first yuppy! He was a pepperer - which in the 14th century was a very elite guild, dealing as it did in the import and re-export of rare spices from the Orient. It was clearly stated in the indentures between the Priory and Thomas Dolsaly that the woods would form no part of the lease; they would be retained by Bermondsey Abbey.

The same exception was made in 1530, just five years before the Abbey went into voluntary dissolution, when the Manor of Dulwich was leased to John Scott, a baron of the Exchequer - 'of the manor of Dulwich, excepting the "great wood called Dulwich woode" etc!'

In the following century Edward Alleyn's successors prosecuted two men for cutting poles in the woods and they were found guilty, sentenced to Brideswell prison and whipped. Thirteen years later, in 1681, the college employed workmen to "cutt downe the wood to preserve the straitest and lyklyest standard of timber".

Pages of the account books of the college in the 17th century deal with items relating to income from the wood. The brushwood undertimbers were bundled into bavons or faggots. The cost for making these ran to £5-10-0 per thousand in 1715. They were used to fire the ovens of the college kitchen or sold to the villagers. There was also a contract to supply them to a Camberwell baker.

It was Edward Alleyn himself who really put the woods on a firm business footing. He divided the wood into 10 coppices, each of 20 acres. Each coppice had a name - King's Coppice, East Peckarman's Coppice, First Low Coppice, and so on. Each coppice was felled every 10 years giving a sensible cycle of husbandry.

The adjoining wood to the west remained in the ownership of the Archbishop of Canterbury until the last century.

Brian Green is a member of the local history sub-committee

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## HEDGEHOGS, WHISKAS AND SUEDE SLIPPERS

By Rosa Davis

Hedgehogs have two litters a year, in spring and autumn. If it has been a late spring, however, the second litter will not be born until September or October and consequently will not be able to put on enough weight, 1½ - 1¾ lbs, before the time for hibernation. This is the reason why many do not survive the winter - hence my adoption of three babies.

It was in October 1986 that I read in the local paper about a litter of three hedgehogs that had been rescued at Thornton Heath by a lady who found the mother dying in her garden. She collected the three babies (one male and two females) and made sure there were no others, as they usually have five or six in the litter. She was pleased to find they had no fleas. She lit a fire in the room, filled a hot water bottle, wrapped a blanket round the babies and put them in a cardboard box. They were fed three times a day on Whiskas cat food (not fish based) and given water. She was glad to be relieved of the job when I took them over in mid-November.

I kept them in an old cellar inside the house, put down plenty of paper on the floor and a cardboard box filled with hay. By this time they slept all day and emerged about 7 - 8 pm in the evening for supper. I tried them on dog meat which is cheaper than Whiskas but this was not acceptable. I also gave them some worms but these were left and I wondered whether they were seen, as hedgehogs do not appear to have good sight. I gave up worms and tried peanuts which proved very popular. The baby hedgehogs were very active at night, running round and building large balls of paper under which to hide. They were nervous at first and hid when the door was opened, but the largest one was so greedy or hungry that gradually he became bolder and would be standing on his hind legs at the door at supper-time (the cellar is 15 inches below floor level). He was so busy eating he took no notice on being stroked on his underside of very soft fur. Once or twice he started to lick my suede slipper and this started the performance known as self-anointing. Frothy saliva is produced and flicked over the back and head.

By mid-March they weighed 2lbs 10oz, 2lbs 3oz and 1lb 10oz: the smallest one later died. At this time a friend who has a procession of animals and birds which she restores to health

wanted to borrow them to mate with her own hedgehogs, primarily to produce a family for television photography.

Hedgehogs resent any disturbance near the nest and it is impossible to inspect it and follow events. After some weeks one young hedgehog was found and he accompanied the original two back to Dulwich where they were immediately released in the garden. They have not been seen since, but must be around as the Whiskas and peanuts disappear each night. This food is placed in containers only large enough for hedgehogs to get in, otherwise foxes and cats would enjoy the free meal.

Finally, do have a good look under your rubbish pile before setting fire to it and if you use slug pellets place them under a clay pot or other inaccessible place. Straight sided ponds are dangerous; hedgehogs can swim but need a piece of wood or stone on which to climb out.

For those interested, there is the British Hedgehog Preservation Society, Knowbury House, Knowbury, Ludlow, Shropshire. A good book is Hedgehogs, by Pat Morris.

Miss Davis is a member of the wildlife sub-committee.

#### THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The official notification and Agenda are printed below in accordance with the Rules of the Society. With the Society taking a major part in recent discussions about maintaining and improving the amenities of the area, this year's AGM should be particularly interesting.

THE DULWICH SOCIETY: Notice is hereby given that the 25th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the DULWICH SOCIETY will be held at 8pm on Thursday 3rd March 1988 in St Barnabas Hall Dulwich Village.

#### AGENDA

1. MINUTES of the 24th Annual General Meeting held on 5th March 1987 to be read and approved.
2. Chairman's Report and Reports from Chairmen of Sub-Committees.
3. Treasurer's Report.
4. Secretary's Report.
5. Election of Officers and Executive Committee members for 1988/1989:-
  - a. President
  - b. Vice-Presidents
  - c. Chairman
  - d. Vice-Chairman
  - e. Secretary
  - f. Treasurer
  - g. Members of the Executive Committee
6. Appointment of Hon. Auditor.
7. Any Other Business.

NOTE: Nominations for election as an Officer or member of the Executive Committee must be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee by two members not less than fourteen days before 3rd March, and must be endorsed by the candidate in writing - RULE 9.

Nominations may be sent by post to the Hon. Secretary.

Robin Taylor  
Hon. Secretary

#### GRAPEVINE

PALACE PAST: A striking new pictorial record of the Crystal Palace and Upper Norwood area has been published. Illustrated with over 50 paintings reproduced in colour, and many black and white drawings by local artist Audrey Hammond, Crystal Palace/ Norwood Heights - A Pictorial Record, by Audrey Hammond and Brian Dann, has a foreword by the speaker of the House of Commons, Bernard Weatherill. The text is divided into three sections: a brief account of the history of the area from prehistoric times until the present day; notes about the many interesting people who have lived in or been connected with the area, both researched and written by Brian Dann; and a personal record of living in the area since 1955 by Audrey Hammond. There are also poems by Brian Dann, reflecting his delight in and concern for his environment. The book has been designed by Mike Conrad.

Audrey Hammond's pictures have achieved national acclaim. She has exhibited both locally and at the Royal Academy. Audrey studied at Bromley College of Art and has lived in Crystal Palace since 1955. She teaches at Sydenham High School and is a founder member of the Crystal Palace Triangle Community Association. Brian Dann has lived in the area for 50 years and was one of the founders of the Poetry in Croydon group, was also an editor of "Pick" magazine and takes an active part in the Crystal Palace Triangle Community Association. Mike Conrad has lived in Upper Norwood all his life and shares with Audrey Hammond and Brian Dann their interest and concern for it. The book is published by Robert Royce Ltd, of 93 Bedwardine Road, SE19 3AY; tel: 771 2496. It is available in local bookshops and newsagents or in case of difficulty direct from the publisher (cash with order). The price is £12.50 plus £1.50 p & p.

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FLOWER POWER: Volunteers are needed for work on the Horniman nature trail, to spread soil for a wild flower meadow on Saturday and Sunday 19 & 20 March between 9am and 4pm. Enter by the Langton Road entrance. Contact Dr Goodhew on 699 1872 (early mornings).

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STAINED GLASS: Several local artists are keeping the tradition of working in stained glass alive. Among them is Maria McClafferty, of Herne Hill. Maria won the design competition for the great rose window installed at the renovated Alexandra Palace in North London. She has also been commissioned to create 18 large oval windows to be inset into two domes of the official palace of the Petroleum Minister of Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates. Another venture is for a huge curved and sculptured stained-glass skylight which is to be installed in a well-known London art gallery. Maria is also interested in more modest commissions for private houses. She can be contacted at her studio at 119 Herne Hill, SE24 (733 9146).

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor's note: It will come as no surprise to readers of the Newsletter that the criticisms of the estates governors reproduced in the last issue were received without enthusiasm by the governors themselves. Below we publish two letters from the governors, one from the chairman and the second from the general manager, which respond to points made in that issue.

The letter from the chairman deserves special comment, however. The estates governors have a standing invitation to contribute to the Newsletter on any subject of their choice, to facilitate the flow of information to Dulwich residents about the governors' intentions - a flow which, sadly, has so far been a trickle rather than a torrent. In our view, that standing invitation has been too rarely taken up. As to submitting articles to the governors before publication, it is worth emphasising that the Newsletter represents the views of the members of an independent organisation.

From the chairman of the board of the estates governors

Dear Sir,

It is the lot of most bodies in some form of authority which involves saying 'no' on occasions, as well as 'yes', to be subject to criticism, often uninformed criticism, in local press articles or magazines seeking an eye-catching headline. But when such criticism is reproduced in the pages of the journal of a respected and responsible local amenity society, it deserves some response from the body concerned - in this case the estates governors of Alleyn's College of God's Gift.

The estates governors' new information leaflet, which summarises their role in Dulwich today as well as outlining their historical and charitable background, has recently been distributed to all local residents and a copy is enclosed with our compliments.

The governors and their staff accept a dual responsibility to manage the estate within the terms of the scheme of management and of leases, and to distribute all their surplus revenues to the nine charities (mainly educational) which benefit under the Act which reconstituted the foundation just over 100 years ago. The quality of the area (and the house prices advertised in these journals which are so critical of the governors!) bear witness to the relative success of their efforts over the years. The present holders of the offices and management positions of the estate are at least as conscious of their inheritance and as determined in their performance as their predecessors.

The individual cases you mention are not a proper subject for reply in your columns, but the governors will continue to tackle the issues face to face with the appointed representatives of the complainants through the arrangements which already exist and which are already in use. In the case of residential leasehold estates, we discuss the local issues with the residents' associations' representatives where they exist, and we encourage the formation of new associations. Issues affecting freeholders and the estate generally are discussed with the representatives of the Dulwich Society and the Dulwich Residents' Association

on a scale which goes far beyond that laid down in the scheme of management. Some issues are capable of quicker solution than others, very few decisions will please every person affected, but by honest effort and constructive goodwill progress is being made. We take all criticism seriously, and make determined efforts to resolve the problems which have arisen, be they real or apparent.

The governors are not 'shadowy figures' - 14 of the 25 live in Dulwich and several of those who now live away from the Village have connections with Dulwich going back for up to 40 years. They are not out of touch with reality, and their ages range from their thirties upwards. There is no secret as to their identity: their names are always available at the estate office, and any letters are passed straight to them - unopened if marked appropriately. The annual accounts are freely available for inspection, and we are always pleased to receive invitations to attend general meetings (public or private): we do our best to accept all such invitations.

The Dulwich Society has been kind enough to extend an open invitation to us to submit material for publication in its Newsletter whenever we wish. We regret, however, that the society has rejected our suggestion that we should have the opportunity to make comments on any critical articles, prior to publication, so that our comments might be published simultaneously. That approach would also help you, Sir, as Editor, to avoid printing (whether at first or second-hand) material which is factually incorrect.

The society and the governors are striving, with many other organisations and individuals, for the best environment for a village and an area which we hold in the highest regard. Let us continue our honest debate in an atmosphere of constructive co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

E G Chandler

From the general manager and secretary of the estates governors

Dear Sir,

I would be glad of an opportunity to set the record straight, following the article on Sydenham Hill Wood which was published in the October Newsletter.

Some of your readers may have inferred from the map, and indeed the article, that the Beechgrove and Lapsewood sites form part of the woods. On the contrary, both consist of the sites of substantial Victorian houses (both now demolished) and their gardens, and both are earmarked in Southwark council's local plan for housing purposes. Both are owned by the estates governors, although Lapsewood is the subject of a long lease to Southwark council, which has plans for development of the site for its own requirements.

The estates governors' own plans for the Beechgrove site, include - as was made clear at the public enquiry last year - measures to protect the garden, and to preserve its attractive character but it is wrong to assume that the garden is simply an extension of what has now become known as the Sydenham Hill Wood.

Yours sincerely,

John Wylie

From Mr Alan Abrahams

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Dear Sir,

I was interested to see the criticisms of the estates governors voiced in the October edition of the Newsletter. I have recently written to the general manager and secretary - reply awaited - regarding Crouchmans Close where I live. But concerns apply equally to the whole estate.

In view of the widespread disquiet, I am inclined to wonder whether the estates governors are in breach of the statutes under which they act or the terms of the management scheme approved by the High Court in the 1970s. Perhaps legal members of the society may be in a position to comment on these aspects of the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Abrahams  
27a Sydenham Hill  
London SE26 6SH

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