

THE COCKPIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHISLEHURST RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 1934 MEMBERSHIP 3,500 REGISTERED WITH THE CIVIC TRUST

The Cockpit, on Chislehurst Common, has been the traditional meeting place for Chislehurst people on all great occasions from time immemorial.

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LEISURE FACILITIES IN CHISLEHURST

Yet again there is a renewed surge of interest in connection with this controversial subject. Over the past twenty years or so there have been various attempts to obtain from the Local Authority an extension of facilities for leisure purposes, but they have come to naught. Now a Chislehurst Leisure Committee, composed of representatives of several local organisations including the CRA, has been set up under the Chairmanship of Mr. L. B. Cross of The Meadow, to press for the provision of additional leisure facilities.

On the Council's own admission (see section 10.6 on 'Open Space, Recreation, Leisure', p.66 of the Chislehurst Appraisal Area Report, obtainable in the Library), '... there is a lack of formal recreational facilities within the public open spaces'.

Whilst it is true that Chislehurst has a much greater amount of public open space in relation to its population than the rest of the Borough, members of the Council and Council Officials need to be reminded that

by far the greater part of this public open space consists of Commons, woodlands etc., and that the residents of Chislehurst are only too pleased to share the delights of this open space not only with those within the Borough but also with those from nearby areas. The popularity of Commons and woodlands can be judged by the number of visitors they attract, especially at weekends.

The fact remains, there is only one formal public open space — the Recreation Ground. The rest of the formal playing fields belong to schools, and private bodies such as London hospital students and commercial organisations.

There is a pressing need for additional public leisure facilities now that more domestic building is taking place and a greater number of young families are taking up residence. At the time of writing we are able to say that the matter has been taken up by our local Councillors and is due to be discussed by the LBB Recreation Committee. We hope to report progress in future issues.

COOKHAM DENE

There is no further news regarding proposed development. No formal application has been submitted as yet, but Ferndale Homes are believed to be preparing various schemes. We shall alert our members in Manor Park to any fresh news.

EDGEBURY open space

The Council, at our request, have recently erected a wooden barrier along the verge opposite the allotments. This is to prevent motorists driving on the grassed area which has been badly cut up from time to time.

CHISLEHURST RAILWAY STATION

With the co-operation of the new Area Manager it is hoped that a start will soon be made to clear Station Approach and the railway embankments of the rubbish which has been left over the past months.

BELMONT PARADE BUS TERMINUS

The request that the bus-stand be resited to Edgebury was made by the LBB to Selkent representatives at a meeting of the Selkent Liaison Committee. Selkent did not consider the request to be a viable proposition on the grounds of operating costs. However, they were considering changes to routes and combining services which would substantially reduce the number of buses using the Belmont Parade bus stop.

GOSSHILL ROAD

A site meeting, arranged by the LBB at the request of the CRA was held on 10th November to discuss the fly-tipping problem. Gosshill Road residents were present to meet LBB representatives, as well as Messrs. Hinton Associates, British Rail and the CRA. The LBB officials are now examining various schemes, agreed by the residents, with a view to combating what has become a serious problem.

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SUNNYMEAD

Members of our Committee were called some weeks ago to hear the Council's proposals for the future of this building. Following consideration of these proposals at CRA Committee, and at a subsequent meeting with two of our Ward Councillors, we maintain the view that development of the west side of Sunnymead and Fairlight as proposed (adjoining the Common) should be strongly resisted.

It is understood that so far it has been difficult for the Council to find a buyer for Sunnymead and that they are now tempted to accept an offer which is conditional on planning consent being granted for development (including offices) within the grounds (and those of the adjoining property, Fairlight).

During the past eighteen months the Council's Planning Committees have, quite properly, refused various applications for building on these sites, as this, if allowed, would have affected severely the appearance of the Common and the setting of the Listed Buildings.

It is hoped that the Council will not prevail on its Planning Committee Members to do an about turn on previous decisions but will continue to set a proper example by adhering to good planning principles rather than sacrificing them for short-term monetary gains and far-reaching environmental damage.

ELMSTEAD LANE parking

The parking situation in this road, which is part of a bus route, has steadily worsened. News has now reached us that parking restrictions will shortly be applied. We trust that these will eliminate what has become both a danger to traffic and a nuisance to residents.

AGM — 1983

Our AGM this year will be held on April 25th in the Methodist Church Hall, Prince Imperial Road.

RESIGNATIONS

In recent months the Committee has lost the services of two of its members. In July, Tony Coles, whose services as a Road Steward and as a representative of the CRA at public hearings were invaluable, moved to Cumbria to take up a new position with the Gas Board. We are grateful for his valuable contribution to the Association, and we wish him and his family a happy future in their new home.

In November, Sue Spence, our Minuting Secretary, submitted her resignation from the Committee. Increasing pressures in connection with her profession led to the loss of a most amiable and sensible colleague. We thank her, too, and extend our best wishes for her future career.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The Chairman and his wife represented the Association at the Remembrance Service, and a wreath from the CRA was laid at the Memorial. There was a good attendance despite the abysmal weather conditions.

THE NATIONAL TRUST

The Orpington and Chislehurst Centre of the National Trust has just completed its second successful year. Members have enjoyed a full and varied range of lectures and outings, and many good things are planned for next year. The lecture meetings for the first quarter of 1983 are:

January 27 — 'Treasures of the National Trust', Arthur Foss, Methodist Church, Orpington. 8 p.m.

February 24 — '19th and 20th Century Furniture', Peter Miall, Methodist Church, Orpington. 8 p.m.

March 10 — 'Knole Tapestry', Annabel Wylie, Methodist Church, Chislehurst. 2.30 p.m.

March 24 — 'Royal Hospital, Chelsea', Major B. T. S. Clarke, Farrington's School, Chislehurst. 8 p.m.

There will in addition be many outings during the year including visits to Syon and the Butterfly House, Arundel Wildfowl Trust, The Vyne, Basingstoke and the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

The Centre is still able to accept new members who can be sure of a warm welcome and an interesting year's programme. Further details from the Membership Secretary, Mrs. Diane Saunders, 67 Broomhill Road, Orpington, Kent.

ART COMPETITION

We were sorry that our Autumn competition closed without a single entry.

However, we will announce a new competition early in 1983, and hope that it will attract a good response.

MEMBERSHIP

As a result of the distribution of the leaflets on trees there has been a most encouraging increase in membership. At least one hundred and fifty new members have been enrolled. We welcome them to the Association and thank them for their support and interest.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1983

These remain the same as before:

60p per member or £1 per household

OAP's 40p per member/household.

New membership cards for 1983 will be available through Road Stewards.