



Brentham Garden Estate, Ealing

NEWS

Notes from the Chair

Summer is now here. After what was the wettest May on record let's hope the weather picks up so we can all enjoy our lovely estate and the events planned (see back page). Luckily the events that have taken place in the last three months weren't affected by bad weather.

Our stand at the Ealing Art Group day at the Millennium Hall in late April generated a lot of interest. A number of people were fascinated by our archive of old photos and some also bought shares in the Centenary Book. Thanks to the Ealing Art Group for allowing us to be part of their event.

A number of friends from Hampstead came to visit us earlier in May and Clive Hicks took them on a guided walk of the estate. Those who hadn't been to Brentham before were surprised at the similarities with their own estate. Thanks to Clive, to Rosanna Henderson for hosting the tea and to all those who baked cakes and helped to entertain our visitors.

Our plant stall on the green opposite the Brentham Club on May Day did roaring trade - we made over £250. Thanks to all those who donated cuttings and especially to Krys Mackersie, Gill Sylvester and Maureen McCarthy who lovingly looked after them and ran the stall on the day.

We received thanks from the Brentham Allotment and Garden Society for raising their plight on dwindling membership. We can report that enough support was given at their AGM to ensure they continue.

Unfortunately we haven't been so lucky in finding either an enthusiastic organiser to take on the Family Picnic and Sports Day or for a Chartered/Certified Accountant to review and sign off the Society's accounts. Please contact me if you can help.

Barbara Murray's note on the name of the estate generated some views. Two of our friends who lived here many years ago both said that in their day it was certainly "Bren_tham" and not "Brent_ham". One gave as a reason that residents didn't want to be associated with Brent. I wonder why ?

With this newsletter you'll find a copy of the latest Brentham Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter. We've been talking for a number of months about combining our distribution networks to be more effective. The summary of crime on the estate makes disturbing reading. It's up to all of us to keep vigilant and take sensible steps to safeguard our homes and property. Anyone interested in taking more of an active role should contact Paul Fodrio. Thanks to all those who helped coordinate the distribution this time.

And finally I have to report that although membership for 2000 is very healthy at 50% it is slightly down on last year. Thanks to those of you who have joined and especially to those who have given generous donations to the Society. We rely totally on subscriptions to make this newsletter possible and run our programme of events for all to enjoy. At £2 per household this should not be an onerous amount. If you've just mislaid the envelope you can drop off your subs to Rosanna Henderson at 47 Meadvale Road.

Heather Moore (☎ 020 - 8998 - 0234)

Centenary Book

As I write, we are approaching an important milestone in our progress towards publication of ***Brentham: the Pioneer Garden Suburb 1901-2001***. The Co-Partnership Book Share Scheme will have closed by the time you read this, having done a magnificent job in contributing almost half of the £28,000 we've raised so far. This represents nearly 350 Shares sold, so thank you to all readers who have bought an Individual, Family or Business Share – your place in history (well, the history of Brentham, anyway) is assured!

Although we are getting close to our target, we are still fund-raising, with two Lottery applications submitted in the last month. Making a Lottery application is time consuming and detailed, and it takes months to get an answer. But if we are successful it means we can meet all our cost commitments and make the book even better with the inclusion of more colour photographs than we'd otherwise be able to afford.

The focus is now on producing the book. After months of intense activity and midnight oil, Wendy Sender has completed the picture research (with sterling support from Eleanor Cowie), and the edited manuscript and illustrations are now with the designer. There are many more photographs available than we have the resources to make use of, but the book will contain 250, of which 35 will be in colour. The printing process starts in July and the painstaking job of checking proofs goes on over the course of the following months to meet our publication target of mid-November. We are planning a launch party to which all Shareholders will be invited. Look out for details in the next *Centenary Book Newsletter*

In the meantime, thank you to everyone who has made a contribution so far to this extraordinary initiative: by buying a Share, manning a stall, helping with picture research, copy editing and proof-reading, donating car boot sale items, stuffing envelopes, inscribing and delivering Share Certificates, making cakes, writing begging letters to potential donors, and anything else I've missed. It has been a fantastic team effort; we now have the prospect of a splendid publication to mark our centenary.

And while you're waiting for the Brentham book to be published why not take a look at :

The Arts and Crafts Home

***by Wendy Hitchmough, published by Pavilion
£30 ISBN 1-86205-069-4***

Enthusiasts for Arts and Crafts architecture and interiors will enjoy this recently-published book by Wendy Hitchmough, featured in *The Guardian's* 'Space' magazine recently. More coffee-table reference than serious academic, it is well produced and illustrated, using two great houses – Standen in Sussex, and The Gamble House in Pasadena USA, to illustrate the principles and delights of Arts and Crafts design. It looks at the approach to individual living areas, e.g. the drawing room, dining room and kitchen, as well as outside spaces, using excellent photographs and some quirky quotes. The architect C.F.A. Voysey, for example, gave this advice on front paths: "*You will express decision and determination by forming a straight path or drive from the road to the house, making it wide to suggest hospitality and welcome, and avoiding any wobbling indecision, which only suggests weakness.*" Despite the emphasis on great country houses, there is reference to more humble abodes too – and on page 67 there's a very nice photograph of Pat Baxendale's house in Ludlow Road!

At £30, it's not cheap, but it's a lovely book to have if you are at all interested in the architectural and design principles that were so influential in the building of Brentham. Pitshanger Bookshop will be stocking copies.

Sue Elliott (☎ 020 - 8998 - 9978)

Birds in a Brentham Garden ☘

Since I moved to Brentham in 1996 I have kept a list of the number of bird species seen in and over my garden. The current total is 35, which is only six fewer than I have seen in Pitshanger Park. Brentham is well placed for seeing birds, as we are close to the wildlife corridor along the river Brent, and close also as birds fly to the Selborne Society's nature reserve, Perivale Wood, to Fox Wood and to Horsenden Hill.

However, as is now well known, birds are seriously under threat as a result of intensive farming practices that destroy both the nesting sites and the food supplies birds rely on. Once common species like Song

Thrushes, Skylarks, and even humble House Sparrows are now in decline. So gardens have become increasingly important to birds, and putting out food and water (all the year round, not just in winter) is a way we can all help to support bird numbers, and be rewarded by the interest they add to our gardens. I hang up feeders with sunflower seeds and peanuts, and also a fat ball. These regularly attract Greenfinches, Greater Spotted Woodpeckers, Great and Blue Tits and House Sparrows, while the scraps that fall from the feeders bring in ground-feeding birds like Collared Doves, along with Chaffinches and Robins.

Birds that feed on the ground are at risk from cats. Song and Missel Thrushes, Blackbirds, Jays, Magpies, Starlings and Green Woodpeckers visit the lawn, the latter helping to keep its ant population in check. (If more people would put bells round their cats' necks, fewer birds would fall prey to them as they concentrate on locating worms and insects.) Sparrow-sized Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, which keep to the safety of the trees, have also been seen on the Brentham Estate, so it is possible to find all three British species of woodpeckers here.

I keep a pair of binoculars near the window sill, because one of the life's few certainties is that by the time you have fetched them, that unidentified bird will have disappeared. Some birds will only ever be seen briefly as they overfly the garden, these including Mute Swan, Mallard, Cormorant and Grey Heron, and in summer Swifts, Swallows and House Martins. (As I write this I have just spotted a Kestrel passing overhead.) The garden is occasionally visited by another bird of prey, the Sparrowhawk, whereupon the small birds on the feeder under the apple tree make a dive for the adjacent privet hedge. Probably one reason why that feeder is so popular is that it is only three feet from the hedge: too far for a squirrel to leap across but close enough to provide a refuge in an emergency.

It's worth reflecting that, to birds, Brentham is not primarily an area of houses and streets, but a wood with more or less widely spaced trees and shrubs (supplying food, nesting sites, and vantage points from which to sing, attract mates and lay claim to territory). It is our responsibility not just to maintain the character of the buildings on the estate, but also to preserve it as a habitat for the birds and other creatures we share the planet with.

When choosing a tree for planting, remember that native species will support far more of the insect species birds rely on than exotics will. Try also to resist the temptation to tidy that damp, neglected corner of the garden where insects proliferate among the brushwood, decaying logs and leaf-litter, and look forward to enjoying the songs of Wrens, Dunnocks and Robins instead.

Michael McCarthy, Holyoake Walk

Garden Awards 2000 □

This year the Committee asked Brian Vaughan - a previous winner of the Rose Bowl for his garden in Meadvale Road - to judge the gardens. Brian writes :

Thankyou for inviting me to judge the gardens this year. I feel that I should briefly introduce myself. I achieved a Balchelor of Arts degree at Kingston Upon Thames in three Dimensional Design in the early 70's. I have been gardening for twenty years and in 1992 I was given the opportunity to take a correspondence course with the English Gardening School at the Chelsea Phisic Garden in Garden Design, after 15 months I achieved a Credit. Since then I have been designing gardens for friends and neighbours.

The objective of the Brentham Garden awards is "to encourage residents to tend to their gardens". The criteria for the awards is :

- * amateur status
- * personal effort
- * interesting and sympathetic use of plant material and hard landscaping
- * awareness of conservation guidelines

Four separate awards will be announced at the AGM in October. There will be garden vouchers for each of the best Spring Garden, Summer Garden and Autumn Garden and the Rose Bowl will be awarded for the best All Year Round Garden.

You don't have to enter for the award. Your front garden will automatically be considered. So good luck and happy gardening.

Brian Vaughan, Meadvale Road

2000 EVENTS - CALENDAR

Brentham Cycle	18th June (Sunday)
Strawberry Tea	25th June (Sunday)
Party in the Park † (Pitshanger Park)	8th July (Saturday)
Garden Day	16th July (Sunday)
Open House Weekend	23rd/24th September (Saturday/Sunday)
AGM (Millennium Hall)	19th October (Thursday)
Launch of Centenary Book	mid November (date to be advised)
Craft Fair (Methodist Hall)	November (date to be advised)
Carol Singing	December (date to be advised)

† Brentham Society stall

Family Cycle

Sunday 18th June 2000
Meet Pitshanger Park 1-00pm
(contact Alan Henderson 8998 6550)

For the third year running we're organising a round trip family cycle from Brentham (Pitshanger Park) to Osterley Park and back. Most of the route is off the public highway and is suitable for all ages as we take it at a very leisurely pace. We stop at Osterley for a cream tea and a well earned rest then make our way back to Brentham and a drink at Duffy's for those who can make it up the hill from the park. Last year 13 of us made the round trip but I'm sure there are more cyclists on the estate than that. So get your tyres pumped up, your sprockets oiled and your saddle polished and join us this year.



Think of all that fresh air and exercise - you won't regret it.

see you there !

Strawberry Tea

Sunday 25th June 2000
2 Winscombe Crescent
(3:30pm till 5:30pm)

Barbara Murray has once again kindly offered to host this popular event for residents and friends in her lovely back garden. Come and meet old friends, make new ones and enjoy the strawberries, home-made cakes and a good cup of tea. As usual there will be a Bring and Buy Plant stall in aid of "Downhurst" for which donations of plants will be very welcome.

£4 a head, (£2 for society members) and £1 for children



Open Garden Day

Sunday 16th July 2000
(contact Rosanna Henderson 8998 6550)

This year we've brought together some new gardens for you to admire together with some of those on show last year. "Hidden Brentham" and "a gem of a Sunday afternoon" was the reaction to the event last year with "blockbuster" and "sheer joy in its simplicity" describing some of the gardens. You'll draw on the enthusiasm of other Brentham gardeners, pick up tips, exchange ideas and go home with lots of ideas for your own plot.

Book in advance (£3-50 society members, £5 others) or on the day all at £5. We will give you an itinerary and map and an eye opener into what can be done with that clay soil of Brentham. Details nearer the time will be posted on the Brentham notice boards.



For Sale

A recently restored original Brentham wooden fireplace surround

For details contact
Jonathan Pearce 8997-2920