



Brentham Garden Estate, Ealing

NEWS

SUMMER NEWS

This edition of the newsletter is full of thoughts of gardens and sunshine. The former is guaranteed and we hope the latter will continue shining for the rest of the summer.

Our first piece of garden news is that Sarah Wood, a professional garden designer, is to give a talk on how to make the most of a small garden.

Later this year, at the AGM, we will again be giving the awards for well cared for front gardens. Volunteers have been asked to look at the gardens once a month until September and select the ones which have given them most pleasure. The final decision will be made in September.

An idea we have for next summer is that we hold a Garden Open Day, when residents would open their gardens to other residents for a small fee. We could all gain ideas and inspiration from each other and the money collected could go to charity. Anyone who is interested in this idea and is willing to open their garden next summer should contact a member of the committee.

Many residents came to enjoy the annual strawberry tea in Barbara

Murrays's lovely garden. The weather was perfect and the strawberries delicious - delicious enough to merit the attention of a very tame carrion crow who just loved them. Our thanks to Barbara for the use of her garden and kitchen, and to all of you who helped in any way. Donations for plants amounted to £20 for OXFAM's Rwanda Appeal.

BRENTHAM GARDEN SUBURB-A Personal Comment by Stephen Smith

Recently I attended a Brentham Society exhibition of architectural drawings. As a landscape architect involved with the planning and design of new towns, I have put together a few thoughts influenced by my occupation, family connections and personal recollections of Brentham.

Aware of the numerous articles written about the historical and architectural significance of the Brentham Estate I have chosen to dwell primarily on the social aspects of Brentham, of which community issues are particularly important, influencing as they do, our feeling of comfort and security.

My family connection relates to my great grandfather Hubert Brampton, a founder member if the original committee of management of the Brentham Estates Ltd., and to my childhood memories of visiting my grandmother Elizabeth Brampton, (wife of Hubert's son Thomas) at 17 Brunner Road in the late 1950's. I fondly recollect watching the May Day procession and maypole dancing at the 'Institute' to the sound of piano music over the loud speakers; I believe an aunt of mine Ena Webster was probably the first May Queen.



A photograph of Hubert Brampton founder member of the Brentham management committee

When I visited Brentham again after an absence of some years I was impressed by the sense of

A cutting taken from the Ealing Gazette 1940

Diamond Wedding

MR. AND MRS. HUBERT BRAMPTON, 71, Woodfield-road, Brentham, received a telegram of congratulation from the King and Queen on the occasion of their diamond wedding on March 15.

Mr. and Mrs. Brampton are both 84 years of age. They were married at Holy Trinity Church, Marylebone-road. Mr. Brampton has lived in Ealing since he was ten years old and Mrs. Brampton since she was seventeen.

For twenty-five years Mr. Brampton was with the old Ealing Volunteers, in which he rose to the rank of sergeant. He was a member of the Ealing Town Council for six years; was one of the founders of Ealing Tenants Ltd., and served on the committee from the commencement until the transfer of the company.

He was a prominent Trade Unionist, and was secretary of the Plasterers' Union (Haven Arms branch). He also acted as hon. secretary to the Ealing Otters Angling Club till two years ago. He retired from active work at his trade at the age of 77.

Mr. Brampton's Three Homes

MR. BRAMPTON lived as a child in Oak-street, behind Ealing Broadway, and he remembers a time when the Oak-street, Wells-place and Bakers-lane area was called Ealing New Town.

It was in the little front room of his later home, 44, Haven-lane, that the meeting at which the first £100 subscribed to the labour co-partnership company which founded the Brentham Estate was held. When John Burns came to open the Brentham Institute, Mr. Brampton was deputed to present him with an oak casket containing "the freedom of Brentham." On that occasion Mr. Burns examined one of the newly-built houses of the estate, 17, Brunner-road where Mr. Thomas Brampton, Mr. Hubert Brampton's son, now lives.

Mr. Hubert Brampton's present home, 71, Woodfield-road, is built on one of the first plots of land bought by the original Brentham Estate Company.

place that exists, and also that the May Day celebrations still take place; probably one of the few places in the country where this tradition continues in a suburban setting. Brentham's sense of village

community and concern for its appearance are frequently lacking elsewhere. I would like to think that this may be due to some sacrifice of individual freedoms in the interest of the common good. This reflects the original social aims of the 'co-partnership' ideal, in spite of the impact of double glazing salesmen and the ever dominating presence of the motorcar with its appetite for even more tarmac.

I feel it is important we try to understand how this has come about for it embraces a number of aspects which are relevant to the development of today's housing:

- local management of the neighbourhood
- a share in communal assets
- a community centre as a focal point
- green spaces, trees, hedges, wildlife and play areas
- clearly understood design intentions

The Brentham Estate was started in 1901, and today nearly a century later we have hardly matched its social and environmental achievements. Whilst it may not be possible to recreate the 'co-partnership' of my grandfather's day, I believe that we have much to learn from Brentham and its aims. I am very pleased to be associated with Brentham and to be able to contribute to this newsletter.



THE WILD SIDE OF BRENTHAM

A double dose of nature notes from **Mike Silverman**.

1. The garden Pond

There's been foul play in our garden pond ! Each year in March the writhing orgy of frogs has duly led to the production of masses of frog spawn. The eggs mature to small commas which then wriggle free of the jelly and.....? Almost overnight, the tiny tadpoles disappear completely. Cats? Herons? Foxes? This year we caught the culprits, newts.

I "reared" some frog spawn in an old sink. The tadpoles hatched in wriggling masses. On a bright afternoon I tipped a bucketful into the pond and peered in. Dozens of common newts in their splendid breeding colours (the speckled males with orange underparts and the fawn-coloured females) emerged from the depths to make short work of the tadpoles. Minutes later none was left.

Newts dominate the pond - we have no goldfish - and are the only successfully breeding amphibians. Eventually they may displace the frogs completely. I wonder if the two species can ever coexist and would be interested in hearing from other pond owners.

2. Since foxes set up home here about two years ago, the night life of Brentham has definitely become more lively. They make their presence known on winter

evenings by caterwauls, shrieks and heart-rending cries. According to David McDonald's delightful account of urban foxes (Running With The Fox : Unwin Hyman, 1987), such cries are characteristic of fox "language", mainly attributed to the vixen. Other signs of the residence include the sweetish, "organic" smell with which territories are marked, and the many earthworks which they excavate in late winter as subsequent dens for their young. A fresh pile of earth beside your garden hut, or a burrow into an embankment or under a hedge means foxes.

Last spring at least two cubs were reared in an earth on Brentham Way. Their uninhibited antics could be observed in the light evenings of early summer. One cub (possibly more) survived its first winter, to judge by the continued presence of a rather small fox, barely bigger than a ginger tomcat but distinguished by a bushy white-tipped tail. In fact, if you see an energetic; small creature leaping a fence or purposefully striding across your garden to leave by an impossibly small hole in the hedge, look twice - it may be a fox! Foxes leave definite "highways" across flower beds and lawns, and seem to follow specific routes around the Estate. They present no threat to cats - we recently watched an inquisitive cat follow a fox into a neighbour's garden, perhaps looking for some leftovers perhaps. We should welcome the arrival of these tidy and resourceful creatures



**A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY.
THE BRENTHAM SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
WED. OCTOBER 19th.
AT THE BRENTHAM CLUB,
MEADVALE ROAD.**

Nominations for Committee.

Please note, any nominations for election to the Committee of The Brentham Society must be made to the Secretary, Gunda Cannon, 65, Brentham Way, by Wed. October 12th.

Our thanks go to Mike Silverman and Stephen Smith for providing us with two varied but interesting articles. May we urge all of you who feel you have the time, to write something for the next edition to the newsletter. It could be a topical comment, or hints and ideas for gardens or opinions about the appearance of the Estate. Whatever it is we would be delighted to hear from you. It doesn't have to be typed. The copy date for the next newsletter is the first week in September.