



**Berkhamsted
Citizens
Association**

NEWSLETTER

May 1984

Something Special for You – 15 June

The 'Summer Wine' social gathering of members will this year be held on Friday 15 June (7.45 for 8pm). These get-togethers are always enjoyable either at Christmas or mid-summer, in the Court House or Victoria School. But, this year, being the 60th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) a special location, and special arrangements have been organised. So please note:-

Ashridge Houseis the place

Friday 15 June is the date

7.45 through till approx. 10.30pm is the time

A super evening.....is the promise

but Admission is by ticket only and not at the door so, please make sure you obtain your ticket beforehand.

Whether held indoors or in the grounds, Ashridge gives most events held there a special ambience and if the weather is kind, a glass of wine on the patio, or a stroll along the gardens provides us with something special. In addition a programme of serious and not so serious music is being provided by those well-known songsters of very high repute 'Part Four'. Wine and a buffet supper will also be provided. It will be a largely informal evening but there will be a few moments of high drama when Mr David Sherratt proposes the toast to the Association, with Mr Norman Williams, our Chairman, replying! For those members not having recently visited Ashridge, this is an opportunity not to be missed - and the same for those who have not yet been able to acquaint themselves with the splendid atmosphere of the House and gardens. Tickets for this rare occasion are £6 per person, and are available from Potters Pride, Town Hall Arcade Lamb Shops; or from our Secretary Sheila Walton 11 Murray Road, Tel. 5988. Tickets are limited unlike our normal Summer occasion - due to capacity of rooms allocated and need to arrange a fixed number of buffet suppers - so please hurry to obtain tickets, a large proportion of which are now taken up.

Cut along dotted line

To: Mrs S. Walton, Hon. Secretary, Berkhamsted Citizens Association
11 Murray Road, Berkhamsted. Tel. 5900

From: Name.....

Address.....

I wish to attend the Diamond Jubilee gathering of BCA members at Ashridge on Friday 15 June. I require..... tickets at £6.00 per ticket and I enclose* cheque for £.....

Cheques should be made payable to Berkhamsted Citizens Association

Signature.....

2. A Chairful of Chairmen

(or if you prefer – Chairpersons) We don't know what is the appropriate collective noun for this sort of gathering. A composite? A chore? The latter it certainly wasn't when 12 ex chairmen and their spouses contributed to a celebration of the 60th Anniversary. The 'Span' of 'cover' ran back to 1954. For interest, a list of all chairmen since the Association's inception is given at the end of this newsletter.

3. Diamond Jubilee History

Several of those present at the above have contributed comments and suggestions to the booklet being prepared by Hugh Gardener, who has performed a near miracle in creating the ' first draft from nothing in a very short period. From nothing is accurate because the BGA has no archivist as such and most of the source documents have had to be newsletters and Chairmen's 'Annual' Reports. The production process and costs are being worked through so that the eventual booklet is not expensive nor a drain on our limited funds. As the first 25 years were marked, by a short written history, the 60th year should not pass without updating the record, particularly as the second 25 years has not yet been described. It was originally hoped to have the booklet ready for 15 June, but amendments and, particularly, reviews of costs have caused delays. It is now expected to be published in September. As the book of walks is also under developments and available before the end of 1985 we are very much in the publishing business. An immense amount of individual effort by Hugh Gardener and others lies behind these projects and we are extremely grateful for this. Detailed acknowledgement will be given at an appropriate date.

4. New Lady Mayor

Councillor Mrs Janet Dunbavand has been elected by the Town Council as the Town Mayor for 1984/5. Much success to her in her new role. During the past 12 months she has been chairman of the Town Planning Committee and as this committee meets nearly once every fortnight throughout the year it is the most onerous task of all the committees, particularly as this invariably means looking 'on site' at many applications for planning permission. Councillor Peter Ginger is elected Deputy Mayor - a well deserved accolade. Jim Medcalf deserves our thanks, as he retires from the position of Mayor - held for 4 years - and takes up chairmanship of Town Planning. The position of mayor has it's active, social and (some say) glamorous side. Perhaps socialising 2 to 3 times times a week may get too much of a good thing? The Mayor is also chairman of the council and Jim Medcalf has had to use all his experience from time to time to cool tempers and to hold together a healthy consensus. So it is not all easy street. The chairmen of other

committees have not yet been officially announced - similarly at Dacorum - and it is hoped we can give this information in our next newsletter.

One of the opportunities available to a New Mayor and a 'new' Council is to innovate. They could ask "What are we here for?" or "What can we do for the Town that doesn't have to be arranged through Dacorum District Council". What specific projects (just a few) can we set our hand to with a reasonable chance of success? The BCA representatives made these points at the Annual Town Meeting last month and we believe some councillors accept them as good questions. Some positive thinking and innovation has to be done if the Council is not to be just a hand-maiden of the DDC. If it exists it ought to have a definable and acceptable role - not merely reacting to events. An example of positive action was the Arts Festival which added a dimension to life in the Town which would not otherwise have occurred but for their initiative. So some aspects need improving - so improve them!

5. Town Centre Study

One project to be put high on the list please! The area behind the High Street between the Post Office and Lower Kings Road contains an island of land that is doing nothing - not even for some of the owners. It is largely scrub land but with a cottage and two businesses on the edge and these are an important consideration. But, a plan for this area which now exists, can stay a plan for a long time if no one is prepared to take action. The DDC are waiting for a developer to partner up with, ie. to take up the financial risk and the size / shape of the land parcel isn't every developers dream. Being along the Bulbourne and the Canal and looking towards Canal Fields and the tree topped profile of Berkhamsted Place, makes for a splendid outlook. Landscaped offices? A small hotel? Some extra car parking is necessary but a combination of developments including a group of buildings tailor made for a professional group eg. Solicitors, Doctors, Physiotherapist, Chiropodist, Dentist, Architects etc. could make it both a pleasant and profitable development area. It needs the political will to get some action, even if this means actively looking for a developer. The Town needs an escape, a lung off the A41 and this area along the Bulbourne could and should provide it. There are already many pedestrian ways off the High Street down to the car park which could form a framework along which the area could be improved. It is now three years since the BCA took Town Councillors and Dacorum Planners round this area and to his credit, the late Councillor Bill Thomas as Chairman of Development Control gave instructions for a plan to be created. Now is the time to stop further planning and get some action to the benefit of the Town as a whole.

6. Bridge over Troubled Water

The footbridge over the Bulbourne and Grand Union Canal is now nearing completion. The Bulbourne is temporarily choked with rubble but landscaping, is, to be completed when the 'road' for vehicles is cleared away. The bridge will be a major pedestrian access to the canal and swimming pool and the tennis / squash club and so this leisure area will be more easily accessible. It gives us great pleasure to see this project nearly completed as it is the one central aspect which we championed to be retained when the original leisure strategy was being angrily mulled (mauled) over because it involved the closure of the open air pool. That area of Berkhamsted has been too long cut off on the other side of 'The Cut'.

7. Study First - Action Follows

Looking through recent newsletters, it appears we have omitted any description of the Urban Edge Study, on which the BCA among others has been asked to comment. The following is an extract from the summary leaflet on this matter. The main report, price £2, is available from Berkhamsted Civic Centre. Further information is available also from Mr Kerr or Mr Jackson on HH60161, Ext. 2585.

'Dacorum District Council has prepared an Urban Edge Study which looks at landscape problems, development pressures and recreational issues in the countryside around Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Tring, Bovington, Kings Langley and villages in the Amenity Corridor.

The Amenity Corridor¹ is the area where demands for open air and space-demanding leisure pursuits may be accommodated, and where priority is to be given to the improvement of neglected and visually damaged landscape.

The urban edge is where town meets country. It is here where agriculture often comes into conflict with urban living. Building development and transport routes, as well as farming practices and general neglect, can have serious effects on the countryside, causing a range of problems, such as:-

- a) Fragmented farmland, underused and derelict land.
- b) Development pressures.
- c) Raw and unsightly built-up edges around the main towns.
- d) Rubbish dumping, vandalism and trespass.
- e) Ploughed up footpaths, broken stiles and missing signposts.
- f) Conflicts between farming interests and demands for countryside recreation

Dacorum experiences all of these problems.'

List of Chairmen of the Association since its Inception

1924 Nucleus Committee -	Father O'Neill	1956-57	Mr N. Cowan*
1924 onwards	Mr F. Roscoe	1958-59	Mr F.G. Stupples
1925-26	Mr G. H. Whybrow	1960-61	Mr T. Mackrill
1927	Mr C. M. Cox	1962-63	Mr G.H. Cameron*
1928-29	Major G. Jack	1964-65	Mr A. Mayling*
1930-31	Mr H. I. Merriman	1966-67	Mr E. Talbot-Ponsonby*
1932-33	Mr H. T. Curwen	1968-69	Mr M. Day*
1934	Mr E. W. Outlaw	1970-71	Mr D. Goode
1935-36	Mr Z. V. Thompson	1972-73	Mr A. Havelock
1937	Mr H. B. Figg	1974-75	Mr K. Sherwood
1938-mid-45	Mr W. H. Turner	1976-77	Mrs H. Talbot-Ponsonby
Mid-1945-47	Mr E. V. Thompson	1978-79	Mr R.N. Williams
1948-49	Mr L.E. Seegar	1980-81	Mr N. Binks
1950-51	Mr W.A. Woods	1982-83	Mr G. Moores
1952-53	Mrs N. Watt (Rhind)	1984-	Mr R.N. Williams
1954-55	Mr N. Gard		* Indicates Life Member.

Swimming Pool opens Saturday 16 June through to Monday 3 September.