

# THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

MAY 1977

TUESDAY 10th MAY 7.30 for 8 p.m. SMALL PUBLIC HALL

PLEASE MAKE A NOTE

AN EVENING OF CIVIC TRUST FILMS AND SLIDES

OF THE DATE

We are relying on the Civic Trust, the parent body of amenity and conservation societies throughout the country, for our entertainment and information on May 10th. The Trust produce an excellent range of films and slide shows on environmental subjects which they hire out to member societies.

The film we'll be seeing on Tuesday 10th is called "New Face for Britain" and is about street improvement schemes with particular reference to the scheme at Windsor which was inaugurated by the Queen. The slide lecture which follows, "Local Amenity Societies", is the latest slide show to come from the Civic Trust. Over twenty varied projects are illustrated including restoration of buildings, campaigns to avert demolition, exhibitions and the work of societies at county and national level. Pat Wilson, one of our two new vice-presidents, who is a dab hand at this sort of thing, has kindly agreed to give the talk that accompanies the slides.

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This Spring has been an exceptionally busy time for the Harpenden Society. Shortly after our Annual General Meeting the "Spotlight on Leisure" EXHIBITION was held at the Public Hall and, rather to our surprise, we found ourselves moved from our usual spot in the smaller hall to a new position in the main hall.

Our stand provoked a tremendous amount of interest, with, as expected, the section devoted to our fight against The Hyde proposal proving the real crowd puller. Eric Meadows took all the photographs on the stand, Gwen Marr did the art work and Ted Ward organised the whole thing beautifully. Our thanks are due to these three and to all those society members who volunteered to man the stand round the clock for the two and a half days that the exhibition was open.

All their hard work was well worth while. The stand was such a success that it was put up in the Library for a further week during which time another three thousand people had the opportunity of seeing it.

Scores of new members joined the Society. In fact, 140 new members have joined the Harpenden Society this year, which is a record for so short a time. We hope to welcome many of them to our meeting on May 10th. For their information... all our meetings take place at the Small Public Hall and we always serve coffee from 7.30 onwards until the business part of the meeting begins at 8 p.m., except at the pre-Christmas meeting when a stronger brew seems in order.

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The Harpenden Society ANNUAL DINNER on 6th April was, as usual, a nappy and relaxed evening with a lively and informative after dinner talk from Mr. Fisher, the Chief Education Officer. John Savage bore the brunt of the arrangements for the dinner and bore it nobly for it was a particularly hectic time for him, as he is also the chief architect of the Spotlight Exhibition.

**ADOPT A TREE FOR THE JUBILEE.** Our Jubilee tree planting scheme has got off to a flying start with lots of people volunteering both to donate money for new trees and to look after them once they are planted. We kept a Tree Book at our stand at the Spotlight on Leisure Exhibition and many people signed this including two local schools, Crabtree Lane and Batford Junior.

John Fryd, Chairman of the Parish Council, planted an inaugural tree for us on the Common in March - a beech, to complete the row of beeches outside the entrance to Rothamstead Park which will hopefully take over one day in place of our sorely missed elms. But the major job of tree planting will now have to wait until November.

The present plan is to plant a row of limes and hornbeams alongside the path leading from Amenbury Lane to the swimming pool, pyracantha or berberis alongside the swimming pool wall in the park, possibly one or two specimen trees on Church Green, or with the church's permission, in the church yard. A row of trees or a tough decorative hedge has also been suggested to front and screen the Bower's Way car park. Any more suggestions for suitable sites for re-planting will be welcomed. It looks as if we shall have the funds to do quite a lot of planting.

**MORE JUBILEE NEWS.** The Harpenden Society is supporting the Parish Council's Jubilee Clean Up campaign during the week of 29th May to 4th June. The aims of the campaign are to celebrate the Jubilee in a positive way by joining in the national tidy up and to raise funds for the Jubilee fund "To help youth to help others" through sponsored litter drives. The Council has set up a small coordinating committee including Harpenden Society committee member Malcolm Parsons and Mrs. Gill Aspinall, who is also one of our members.

We are hoping our members will join in a litter drive on the common during the Jubilee Clean Up week and if any of you have children who would like to undertake a sponsored tidy up sponsorship forms are available at Harpenden Hall. Incidentally, we are very pleased that our committee member Douglas Weston has been appointed Warden of Harpenden Common.

**MONEY, MONEY, MONEY.....ARE YOU GOOD WITH MONEY?** And if so, would you offer to take over as The Harpenden Society's Treasurer? It should be pointed out that this is not a very onerous job as the Society's finances are quite straightforward, but the Treasurer does attend committee meetings which are held on the third Tuesday of every month in the Library. These are usually interesting and coming to them is a good way of getting to know what is going on in the town. Would any of our 140 new members or 700 older ones like to volunteer for the job?

Here is a list of the other members of the committee for the year 1977/1978

<u>President</u>	His Honour Judge R.G. Dow	
<u>Vice-Presidents</u>	Mr. C.W. Curl, Miss H. Finnie, Mr. E.P. Wilson	
<u>Chairman</u>	Mrs. Anne Russell, 32, Roundwood Park	60496
<u>Secretary</u>	Mrs. Jean Elliott, Cherry Hayes, Mackerye End	4196
<u>Committee</u>	Mr. D.L. Booth, 36, Townsend Lane	2957
	Mrs. Heather Catterfeld, 57 Salisbury Road	60061
	Mr. R.G. Dixon, 19, Steward Road	3418
	Mr. A. Evans, 21, East Common	3498
	Mr. R. Evans, 90, Cravells Road	61265
	Mr. M.R. Harrison, 17, Connaught Road	62957
	Mrs. Marguerite Johnstone, 66, West Common	3504
	Mr. I.A. Noble, 8, Rosebery Avenue	63678
	Mr. M.C. Parsons, 4, Tintern Close	63564
	Mr. C.R.L. Scowen, 11, Yardley Court	
	Mr. J. Savage, 4, St. Michael's Court	
	Mr. E. Ward, 4, Birch Way	3179
	Mr. D. Weston, 60, Topstreet Way	60870
<u>Minutes Secretary</u>	Miss Mildred Ashford, 40, West Common	68643
<u>Membership Secretary</u>	Miss Ruth Spurr, 20a, Douglas Road	60557



# Upper Lea Valley Group

A working group of The Harpenden Society

NEWS SUPPLEMENT  
MAY 1977

First a word to our Subscribers: we are sorry some of you who live outside the valley never heard about our Public Meeting at All Saints Hall on April 15th. We apologise for the omission.

This Sixth ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING was opened by our Chairman, Clive Norman. He explained the action of the Thames Water Authority in dredging the river and clearing out reed beds which had been edging out into the main channel. We knew it had to be done, to maintain the flow, and the TWA conferred with us beforehand. For an experimental period the Authority have agreed to stop routine cutting of ground-cover along the banks. We hope this will encourage the wild life which has been noticeably on the increase.

Clive then gave us a spade-by-spade account of the year's work. That our workparties are fun, as well as productive, was well illustrated by Heather and Egon Catterfeld's film, in colour, which followed. This is their third year's film: each runs for about twenty minutes.

An interval for refreshments allowed the audience to look at the Exhibition of the Schools' field-work for the new ULV Guide, to study maps and photographs, and to be amazed at the tools, bottles and bygones which Les Casey has salvaged from the cress-beds.

The Panel of speakers who followed dealt with questions ranging from horse-grazing to motorways and tree-planting to crayfish: it underlined the range of subjects within the Group's orbit. Panelist Dave Coulter, the HCC's Upper Lea Valley Countryside Manager and new to our district, hopes to stimulate action at County level over the disaster area around LEAS Y BRIDGE, where valuable wetland sites are being systematically lost through dumping, or silting over from dredging, and trees are being ruthlessly lopped and felled.

The "HARPENDEN UPPER LEA VALLEY GUIDE" just published covers Landscape, River, Natural History, Buildings and Local History and is illustrated with a detailed map and photographs of the Through Walk and local surroundings. It folds to pocket size and costs 15P from Harpenden booksellers and newsagents.

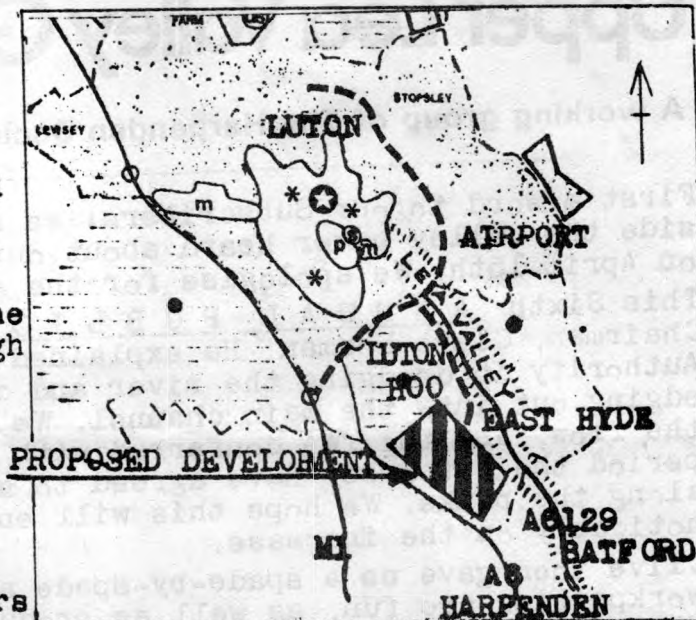
An EXHIBITION of the preliminary field-work for the Guide, done by local schools, will be held in the LIBRARY on TUESDAY 24TH, THURSDAY 26TH, FRIDAY 27TH and SATURDAY 28TH MAY.

Representatives of Harpenden, Wheathampstead and Welwyn/Hatfield Upper Lea Valley Groups have agreed on a WAYMARK for the THROUGH WALK. Lorna Wang drew the swan: Kath Foreman phoned Buckingham Palace to ask if they minded: Harry Roe made the preliminary moulds, and pupils of St. George's will cast the finished job in the metal workshop at school. At exits and entrances to the Walk the full Waymark will be used but at intermediate points, to tell people they are on the right track, the inner circle with the swan only will be used.



A summer programme of circular FAMILY WALKS from Harpenden and Wheathampstead, led by members of both Groups and the St. Albans & District Footpaths Society has been arranged for Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons. The next is on Saturday May 7th. FULL LIST with all details from Mrs. L. Wang, 44 Manor Road, Wheathampstead for 3P plus SAE.

We think one aspect of Bedfordshire's proposal to develop up to their border at H Y D E has not yet been given the emphasis it deserves. This is that the Lea valley between Harpenden and Welwyn has been recognised by the HCC as one of the County's ten areas of DISTINGUISHED LANDSCAPE: the County Structure Plan defines it as of BEST LANDSCAPE QUALITY. Also the course of the Upper Lea passes through countryside already designated as an AMENITY CORRIDOR of AGRICULTURAL PRIORITY and GREAT LANDSCAPE VALUE. Thus large-scale development at Hyde would contradict a basic concept of the Structure Plan.



We have emphasised this point in a letter to the County Planning Officers

of Beds and Herts, urging them to get together on the Lea Valley Corridor idea and to bring Luton Borough and St. Albans District Councils into their consultations. Cooperation at County and District levels is needed to make the Through Walk from Leagrave to Ware work - AND to stop the Hyde expansion.

Two members of the Group, Tony Pattison and Bert Derrett, have made and put up a new B U S S H E L T E R S E A T at Batford Corner. The Stop is used by many people, especially from the Council's new OP flats opposite. The previous shelter was accidentally demolished and the Group was instrumental in getting the new one put up. The Highways Department at St. Albans were helpful in speeding up the erection and the Council provided materials for the seat. It is solid in design, of varnished Iroko with concrete supports.

The Group's voluntary work involves S P E C I A L I S E D H E L P. Interested individuals with background knowledge and experience, who can spare an hour or two now and then, are invited to contact the Secretary, Mrs. Heather Catterfeld, 37 Salisbury Road, Tel. Harpenden 60061

P L A N N I N G : keeping checks on applications likely to affect the area: advice on local implications of traffic/road proposals or major developments further afield.

L A N D S C A P E : architect- or arborist-cum-ecologist, designing schemes for indigenous planting: advice on management of trees and habitat.

S U R V E Y I N G : measuring up for materials used in jobbing and tasks: preparing estimates for District Council.

T O O L S : keeping in good order - repairs and sharpening, servicing mower: keeping parts and supplies in stock.

P R O M O T I N G Lea Valley GUIDE: supplying bookshops regularly, keeping records and accounts (under ULVG Treasurer's eye).

#### A L S O

W O R K E R S (regular or casual) every other week-end throughout the year.

W E E K - D A Y S : an additional workparty on alternate Wednesdays throughout the summer from 1.30 - 3.30. The next is Wednesday May 11th.

Also perhaps one or two Pensioners might like to shovel, saw, rake or similar gentle exercise between workparties ?

TO Mr. Alan Stacey, Hon. Treasurer ULVG, 28 Wroxham Way, Harpenden

I wish to support the Group's work and enclose a year's subscription: (Individual member- 75P: Family membership- £1: OAP or under 16- 50P)

MR/MRS/MISS

BLOCK LETTERS

ADDRESS