



September 1980

The traditional Holiday Season is now nearly over - the journalists' so called 'silly season' when nothing much seems to happen and they invent or look for all manner of outlandish situations. Well your Chairman and Committee may have been on holiday and not met all together for two months but all hasn't been quiet. Letters and meetings have continued on a number of issues some of which are referred to below.

### Swimming Pool

Following our letter to Dacorum Leisure Services, Mr Robert Peake the Chairman of the Leisure Services Committee, agreed to meet the Chairman and Guy Moores. Prior to this we had received a very informative reply from the 'Recreation Officer Mr J.F. Nisbet. We had written asking about the longer term plans being made to avoid a repetition of this Summer's situation. The gist of the reply was:

1. Herts County Council have withdrawn from use of the Berkhamsted Pool for the schools' swimming programme i.e. loss of significant financial contribution.
2. The net subsidy by the ratepayer far exceeds that to any other recreational facility in the District.
3. A Pool whether indoor or outdoor is not economically viable as a single facility.
4. Covering the Pool and providing ancillary facilities would be costlier than the provision of a new Pool.
5. The Leisure Services Committee have decided to 'Pool' resources with Herts County Council using a school site. Tring School is given as an example of the advantages of such a policy,

The meeting with Mr Peake confirmed in more detail that a site at Ashlyns school would be the aim. This would provide for use by all the schools in Berkhamsted and for adults at certain times. Also it would combine a Pool site with other recreational facilities e.g. Trim Track and Tennis Courts and possibly the Gymnasium / Badminton Courts.

Ashlyns existing swimming pool is not large enough to provide for all the requirements of the town. Over the years, the pool has been available for at least one other school and adult evening classes in swimming, but they can do no more.

Whilst acknowledging that Ashlyns is not the ideal site, it is probably as practical a solution as is possible in the present and foreseeable economic climate. Provided action is taken and money made available Berkhamsted might get an adequate Pool and bring itself into line with other localities. Berkhamsted must insist that the plan is not delayed in fulfilment.

We are circulating a letter to various organisations within the town, informing them of the situation and the proposals. It is hoped this will lead to a general discussion and to the views of the majority of Berkhamsted people being heard and taken notice of in the Dacorum District Council.

Town Amenities - Civic Amenity Site - The sub-committee have sent a letter to the Director of Technical Services, Dacorum District Council, with regard to the civic amenity area in St. John's Well Lane car park. Briefly, it contains suggestions for two possible alternative sites. The first alternative put forward is the area of waste land owned by the Council to the south of Lower Kings Road car park. To support this proposition the committee has made a number of points;-

- a) use would be made of derelict land which apparently is unlikely to be of any use for a few years.
- b) the area being less exposed, would not be so susceptible to the scattering of rubbish.
- c) the area would not occupy valuable car parking space.
- d) it would relieve St. John's Well car park of a terrible eyesore and provide more car parking space.
- e) access would be easier than the St. John's Well car park which is direct on to the A41.
- f) the area is naturally screened by shrubs and trees although a wattle fence would still be necessary.
- g) the canal and watercress beds by St. John's Well Lane car park could be cleaned up and made to look more attractive.

The second alternative is for the skips to be located at Bullbeggars Lane near the old tip. The need for the skips to be emptied more frequently has been emphasised.

Conservation Area - A letter has been sent to the British Waterways Board informing them of the damage to the brick pillar at the end of the railing running from the bridge in Castle Street into Mill Street and also that the railings in that area require painting. In order that this conservation area of Berkhamsted may be made to look respectable it is hoped that the British Waterways Board will effect these repairs as soon as possible.

Greene Field Road - Dacorum District Council have told us that they looking at the road as a whole, with a view to seeking funds in next year's budget for the planting of replacement trees.

Overhanging bushes - Dacorum Council would be most grateful for any information about obstruction of footpaths / pavements by overhanging bushes or trees. This is where every Citizen's member can help. - Can you please contact Guy Moores (Tel. Berk. 6783) who will pass on the particulars to the Highway Department.

In the Country - "How are the walks going?" - Thus spake our Chairman in mid-holiday season, mid-nettle season and mid (we are told) the wettest summer for twenty years. Well, perhaps the kindest thing to say, is that we have started. (You may recall that we have set ourselves the task of producing a book of walks.)

There has been a retraining of Mr Percy Birtchnell's classic local routes with notebooks at the ready. Wind, limb and literary powers have been tested and found, not so much wanting, as out of practice. Hemel Hempstead has encroached a little, hedges have disappeared, but, by and large, the Chilterns have again proved all we could hope for and more besides.

There are lots of proposed additions to the original list of fifteen routes. One of the most enjoyable activities so far has been exploring all the surrounding district for attractive sections of path not included in the fifteen. This really brings home what a wonderful walking area we have around Berkhamsted and how extensive is the footpath network. Even those of us with many years of experience in the district have found excellent new routes we hadn't walked before.

It isn't long before the character of walkers and walks begin to interact. What a person sees in a scene (or route) depends as much on the observer as on the countryside. All a case of the 'seeing-eye' - Mr Percy Birtchnell certainly has it. Then there is a lot of debate as to what constitutes a reasonable walk. Some feel that three miles is a long way. Others point out that four year old children often complete the 'Berkhamsted Walk' (18 miles) held every May; and that consequently a few 20 mile walks might provide a welcome challenge. In the end we agree that long and short are both fine provided we have a larger book - our editor frowns!

You can see how things stand. The workers gather walks and the editor (we hope) gathers strength. Only 600 hours to go on his current book (he says) and then, off we go! Our manuscript pile grows. "How are the walks going?" The walks are going excellently thank you. "And the book?" Now, that's another question!

#### For Your Diary

Will you please note the change of date and venue for the talk by Mr. N.W. Lyell M.P.

Wed. 1 October 8 pm. Northchurch Social Centre - small hall  
'My First Year in Parliament' - Mr N.W. Lyell M.P.

Sun. 19 October 10.30am Autumn Ramble to Ashridge and Aldbury  
Meet at Berkhamsted Station; ending at approx. 4.30pm

Tues. 28 October 8 pm Civic Centre - 'Promulgation of a Rare Species'-  
The Woman Manager' - Miss Mary McLeannan

Thurs. 20 November 8 pm Civic Centre - 'Collectable Clocks of the  
19th Century' - Mr T. Cartmell'

Thurs. 18 December 8 pm Victoria School - Christmas Social Evening  
Carols and Sherry

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Thurs. 1 January 10.30 am New Year's Day Ramble  
Meet at Berkhamsted Station

Thurs. 22 January 8pm Civic Centre - 'The Work of the Fire Service' -  
Divl. Officer D.E. Kent

Thurs. 12 February 8 pm Civic Centre - AGM. and Presentation of Awards

Wed. 18 March 8 pm Civic Centre - 'Trekking in the Himalayas' -  
Mr D.E. Lockhart

Mon. 20 April 10.30 am Easter Monday Ramble  
Meet at Berkhamsted Station

Tues. 28 April 8 pm Civic Centre - 'Gardens to visit around Berkhamsted' -  
Mrs Peggy Cunningham

Annual Environment Award Scheme - Your committee has decided that, in order to stimulate interest in the local environment, an annual award should be made for the work which is considered to have contributed most to the enhancement of Berkhamsted or Northchurch. 'Work' can mean a new building, extension, renovation or landscaping: large or small, anything from a building complex to a garden. Owners or architects can apply, or members of the public make recommendations.

Judges will be the members of the Berkhamsted Citizens' Association Town Amenities sub-committee and any co-opted members necessary to provide professional advice. However the judges reserve the right not to make an

award, should none of the entries be considered worthy.

All entries are to be submitted by 1st December.

The award will be made at the AGM and publication of this will later be in the local press and to other organisations.

The award itself? This will take the form of a plaque for the winner(s) plus a special letter from the Chairman of the Berkhamsted Citizens' Association, commendations may also be made.

All publicity outlets will be used in order to draw the scheme to the attention of as many people as possible.

This is advance notice for Citizens' members, so keep your eyes open and be prepared to send in lots of suggestions.

Meetings-Publicity - An important source of new members is from those who come to our meetings having seen our publicity posters in the town. To enable this situation to continue however we require a volunteer to assist with the posting of such posters. A smaller and more convenient size of poster is being designed for the new season which will make the job easier. Anybody willing to give a little help should contact Norman Binks (Tel. Berk. 6300).

Membership and Subscriptions - We have now 403 members (families and individuals) - of which 67 are new since last December. On the whole subscriptions have come in well this year but there are still about 70 outstanding. Like everywhere else our costs are rising: hire of halls, paper for newsletters, postage and other correspondence costs. We do not yet need to increase our subscriptions, but we do need to get all of them in.

If you see a cross in the box below it means that we have no record of your having paid this year. Two crosses means not, unfortunately, in 1979 either and your membership is on the point of lapsing.



Payments of 50p per individual or £1 per family can be paid to Mr Roy Doe c/o Lloyds Bank, Berkhamsted or to your Newsletter deliverer:-

Name.....

Address.....

Finally - Of particular interest, we are sure, to those who attended the talk in March on the history of Berkhamsted School, Mr Garnons-Williams has written to inform us that his book on the subject has now been published. We understand that copies are available in local bookshops.