

## THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday, 3 March 1982 at 8.00 p.m. in the Small Public Hall.

The President, His Honour Judge Dow, took the chair.

1. APOLOGIES: Mrs. S. Bush.
2. MINUTES: The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 9 March 1981 were read by Mr. Ted Ward in the absence of the Society's Secretary, Mrs. Beryl Stuart.
3. MATTERS ARISING: None.
4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

The Chairman reported that it had again been a very busy and active year.

On the 6 May at the Wine and Cheese Party members had been entertained with a performance by members of the Harpenden Light Operatic Society and enjoyed a very pleasant evening.

For the first time, on the 6 June, the Society manned an exhibition stand at the Harpenden Round Table Fete held in Rothamsted Park, and ran a Treasure Hunt which, although not very remunerative, was most successful. The stand attracted interest resulting in new membership - a worthwhile exercise.

The following day, 7 June, there was an informal walk along the Nicky Line as British Rail on being notified that the purpose was to promote interest in conversion to a public pathway responded that the site was private property. However, there was a good attendance for an enjoyable afternoon.

The autumn programme commenced on 23 September with a visit from the Director of Chiltern Radio, Colin Mason, with some of his staff. Members heard a very professional presentation and believe they could have confidence in the proposed programme relay.

On the same evening, Mr. K. Knight, the new Clerk of Harpenden Town Council was introduced to members. The Society look forward to continuing their happy association with the Town Council.

The 9 October meeting to discuss the proposals of the District Council for Southdown proved to be embarrassingly successful. The meeting took place in St. John's Church Hall and there was a very satisfactory attendance of about 150 people. Two senior planning officers of the District Council attended, together with several members of the Council. The Society's role was to act as watchdog and it was hoped that this would lead to a cooperative venture for South Harpenden; a number of useful ideas were put forward and the basis of a good relationship with the Council was established.

20 October was the date when the Hertfordshire County Council presented the slide on Stanstead Airport. The exercise was very well done.

9 December the Curator from Luton Hoo gave a talk on the collection in his care. The weather was quite appalling and it was pleasing so many people attended. Those unable to attend missed an informative evening and this should be repeated at a future date.

On the 3 February Mr. Hyne talked about his experiences with the Civic Trust on Windsor's "face lift". If there was a similar power watching over St. Albans and to a lesser extent Harpenden, much more could be achieved.

On 14 October the Area Manager of British Rail met the Committee to present the plan for Harpenden Station as British Rail wanted to take account of local interest and opinion. The Committee were appalled at the proposal to demolish the existing Station and erect a small temporary building, at a cost of £90,000. Much work was carried out by the Plans Group, led by Mrs. Lorna Wang with advice from Roger Evans, and the Group presented British Rail with alternative detailed proposals for renovating the Station and providing accommodation facilities. These had been forwarded to British Rail since the Society wishes to be as constructive as possible. The District Council are also concerned about the possible demolition of the Station. To date no response had been received.

The Upper Lea Valley Group have continued their hard work throughout the year working to improve the environment of the district.

Referring to the "Post Card Project" the Chairman reported this had been looked into most carefully including coloured photographs which might be more saleable. The Society's aim in promoting postcards for sale, with Town Council cooperation, was because of the poor quality photographs available in the shops. There is a difficulty in that the number which could be ordered with any confidence would be small resulting in a cost of 15p per card (coloured), 6/7p for black and white - not a very attractive buy. Shops presently retail at 8p. Commercial firms may introduce new photographs during the coming year, when the Society will reconsider.

The Transport Group pursued various activities, in particular that of heavy lorries and the need for new cycle ways.

The hanging baskets in the High Street had been a great success. Perhaps next year this facility could be extended in the Southdown area. *They already were.*

The hardworking Plans Group under Lorna Wang has been very active. Roger Evans successfully presented the Society's case at the Inquiry on the Croudace development in Cross Lane.

The Society has made its submissions and objections to the proposed District Plan. Important issues raised are to be the subject of a Public Inquiry beginning 5 May; in particular the proposal of the National Children's Home for an alteration to the Green Belt boundary to exclude 100 acres, largely farmland, to the north of Harpenden; in effect granting development permission. This land forms a very pleasant aspect on the approach from Luton into Harpenden, and on this issue in particular it is hoped that the Society could be professionally represented. Objections concerning the Conservation Area will also be made at the Inquiry.

On 25/27 March the Society will again exhibit at the Spotlight on Leisure Exhibition. Offers of assistance for 2 hour periods from members would be welcome.

Two nominations had been received for the Society's Award. One for the new Wine Bar in Thompson's Close (opened as "Rumours" now known as "Murphys") and the shop conversion in Leyton Road. A Committee will meet to consider these two nominations. An Award, if made, would be presented at the Cheese and Wine Party on 5 May.

The Chairman stressed that efforts were needed to increase membership in order that the Society's voice would command the utmost respect and attention.

In conclusion the Chairman thanked the members of his Committee, particularly Jack Bush, for the enormous amount of hard work undertaken.

He recorded his appreciation to the Society's President, His Honour Judge Dow for chairing this Annual General Meeting.

His Honour Judge Dow thanked the Chairman for his detailed and careful report on the Society's activities during the year.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT:

A copy of the audited accounts had been distributed to members. At year ending 31 December 1981 the Society had funds of £1,183. Although this was a reduction of £606 compared with 1980, over £1,100 had been expended for trees in the Lower High Street.

1981 subscriptions amounted to £988, being an increase of 40%, but this figure included some subscriptions at the 1982 higher rate.

Bank interest received unfortunately fell as a result of the lower balance held following expenditure on the trees.

Assuming maintained membership, the resulting income improvement on the higher 1982 subscriptions should support a high level of activity.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Mrs. Jean Elliott, seconded by Mr. Ernest Truslove.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The following were nominated, proposed and seconded:-

Chairman - Norman Powlesland  
Secretary - Mrs. Beryl Stuart  
Treasurer - Ian McNicoll

7. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Miss Margaret Pratt resigned from the Committee.

The following were nominated, proposed and seconded:-

Mrs. Peggy Morwood and Miss Mary Turner.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

A member queried whether the Society would be "allowed" representation at the District Plan Inquiry on 5 May. The Chairman was assuming this would be in order at any rate in a role supporting the District Council.

On request, Mr. Ted Ward gave a brief description of the layout for improvements to the Green and adjacent area at Southdown. In passing, he noted that St. John's Church had recorded appreciation of proposals to provide a footpath fronting the Church.



The question of future responsibility for maintenance of the Nicky Line as a footpath was raised by Miss Washington Gray. Until negotiations between Hemelite and British Rail were complete this matter would be in abeyance, but ultimately the Hertfordshire County Council would be the authority concerned.

9. DATE OF NEXT A.G.M.:

Tuesday, 1 March 1983 at 8.00 p.m.

R. Graham Dow  
1/3/83 - \