



Brentham Garden Estate, Ealing

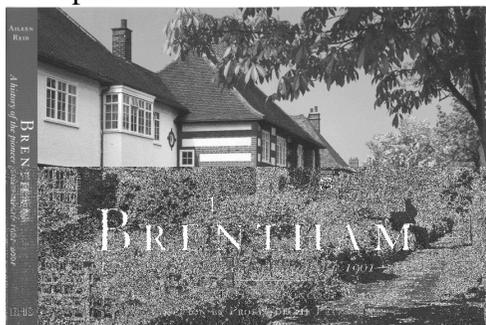
NEWS

This version of Brentham News has been adapted for the Brentham website.

Private telephone numbers and addresses and commercial ads have been deleted.

A Happy New Year to all our readers and welcome to this special edition of Brentham News at the start of our Centenary Year 2001.

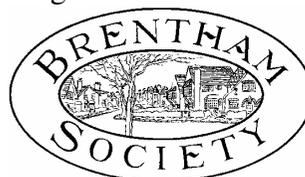
As we have so much to report, not least the success of the Brentham Book we have increased the size of the newsletter and are able for the first time to include some photographs. We are grateful to Grimshaw & Co. for supporting us with sponsorship without which we would not have been able to produce this special edition.



The Brentham Book launched in November

We have an exciting year ahead of us, with a new committee and celebrations to mark our centenary year. Outline plans are inside but

watch out for posters giving details on our notice boards displaying our familiar logo.



The launch of the Brentham Book in November was a great success, attended by many of you as shareholders. We thank you for all the support and encouragement you gave us during the project and look forward to your continued support during the coming year.

Also inside we report on the Council's decision on the planning applications at the Brentham Club, another book published by a Brentham resident and the AGM held in October. Enclosed are two inserts; a questionnaire to seek your views on a musical evening and a list of committee members and street representatives for your reference through the year.

We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter as much as you enjoyed the book!

Brentham Book Launched to Acclaim!

Over 300 people came to St Barnabas Millennium Hall on November 16th to celebrate the launch of *Brentham: a history of the pioneer garden suburb 1901-2001*. If you were one of them, we hope you enjoyed the event as much as we all did. It was a memorable evening with a great buzz and it was a privilege to be able to welcome descendants of the original Brentham pioneers, some of whom travelled some distance to be with us.

As well as distributing some 200 signed copies to Shareholders; we sold 63 copies on the night and raised over £200 from the raffle towards launch expenses.

Amazingly, work still continues on the Book project! Magazines and journalists are still being contacted; reviews are being sought in all kinds of popular and specialist publications: in the coming weeks look out for pieces in *The Guardian's* Space magazine, *The Architects' Journal* and *Country Life!* *BBC Homes & Antiques* magazine will be doing a 5-page colour feature on Brentham in their May 2001 issue.

On a valedictory note, this project has been about more than just producing a glossy book. We start Brentham's centenary year with a splendid record of our heritage but, more importantly, with a clearer sense of ourselves as a real community.

Sue Elliott



Ramsay Hughes discusses the book with author Aileen Reid while Launch Coordinator Rosanna Henderson and team wearing Brentham polo shirts look on.

Sales Rocket

Since the launch, sales of the book have exceeded all expectation. Pitshanger Bookshop has sold over 240 copies while the Society has sold a further 150 and stocks have had to be replenished from the warehouse. Books have been dispatched across England from Cumbria to Cornwall, and from Norfolk to North Yorkshire and further afield to Wales, Ireland, Germany, Canada, USA and Australia.

So popular is the book that over 120 shareholders have bought a second copy – it obviously made an ideal Christmas present!

Books are still available from Pitshanger Bookshop at £25, or you can buy one direct from the Society. Contact **Alan Henderson**

Read more about the Book and the Launch later in this newsletter (see pages 7-11).

Other news from 2000 The AGM

Some 50 members attended the AGM on 19th October last year in the St Barnabas Millennium Hall.

Guest Speaker

Adam Watrobski, LB Ealing's Conservation Officer gave a very interesting talk on the theory and practice of conservation.

As we were approaching the beginning of our centenary year Adam began his talk by posing the question "what will Brentham look like in another 100 years?" He put conservation into a wider philosophical context by talking about 'public proprietorship', which means that although legally we may own our properties, we only do so for a while and have a responsibility to pass on to succeeding generations what has been entrusted to us. Conservation is about the interaction of the community, us, with the area in which we live, not just the buildings.

He showed slides to highlight examples of good and bad practice and stressed that seeking good professional advice is a prerequisite to undertaking building renovation.

Review of the last year

Thanks were extended to all those people around the estate who had given their time over the year. The main project had been the work on the Brentham Book and the establishment of the Brentham Heritage Society as a charitable offshoot of the Brentham Society. In addition a number of events had been held and well attended including a visit by residents from

Hampstead Garden Suburb following our trip to them in 1999.

The financial report was presented and accepted. Thanks were due to Anthony Ackerman of Meadvale Road for auditing the accounts.

🌸 Garden Awards 🌸

The annual awards were announced. Brian Vaughan, a previous winner of the Rose Bowl, judged the gardens this year.



Spring Award – 16 Brentham Way

"A strong structure of privet hedges, and a very floriferous pale lilac Wisteria set off by a white Syringer. A well-clipped hedge and a white flowering shrub frame the door. The path is bordered to the left with a deep bed of red roses and dark blue Ajuga."

Highly commended were 27 Brunner Road, 38 Fowlers Walk, and 33 Ludlow Road.

Summer Award – 78 Brentham Way

"In this garden the view through the gate is onto a large bed full of colourful herbaceous perennials. Crocosmia Lucifer provided the high note and looked absolutely beautiful. A very well tended and interesting garden"

Highly commended were 50 Meadvale Road, 64 Brentham Way, and 27 Woodfield Avenue.

Autumn Award – 85 Fowlers Walk

“A large front garden put to full use by a mass of varied mainly herbaceous planting both colourful and interesting.”

Highly commended are 63 Meadvale Road, 12 Meadvale Road and 10 Denison Road



Rose Bowl - 23 Neville Road

“ A large planter full of healthy looking pansies provided the winter colour for this well planted garden. Two varieties of clipped pittosporum set behind a golden privet hedge provided the background to a display of summer geraniums followed by white Japanese anemones for the Autumn. A varied range of shrubs were well maintained throughout the year”

Winner of the Rose Bowl, Mrs Jean Johnson, said the secret of her success was in delegating privet hedge maintenance and watering to her husband!

Congratulations to all the winners and to those highly commended.

Now's the time to start planning and planting for this year, so good luck.

Carol Singing

Towards the end of the year, both carol singing evenings were well supported by singers and collectors and the weather was kind to us too. We raised over £220 in total for St David's Home and the Retinoblastoma Society. Our thanks to all those involved, to Ellen Jackson for organising the event and leading the singing, to the singers and collectors, to the providers of mulled wine and mince pies and to all of you who gave so generously.

Plans for 2001 our Centenary

We have a Centenary Book; and a Centenary Mug, and now your new Committee, elected at the AGM, (see insert) is planning events for the Centenary Year.

- 🏠 6th March – founding of Ealing Tenants at Haven Arms in Haven Lane. We are planning an event, note the date and watch for the posters in February.
- 🏠 March/April – refurbishment of the Green opposite the Club. People power needed to renew posts, remove shrub etc. We would like to replace/repair seats; if you would like to donate a seat in memory of a loved one or make a donation towards a seat or offer help on the day, please contact Krys Mackersie
- 🏠 20th April – cutting the first sod, again note the date, watch for posters.
- 🏠 23rd/24th June – Centenary Weekend. On Saturday an Edwardian style fête, stalls and sideshows with an Edwardian flavour run by residents, ideally with each street running a stall. See your street representative if

you would like to help. Or have any ideas.

On Sunday the Open Garden Day and the Strawberry Tea.

 September, date to be finalised – musical evening – depending on your response to the enclosed questionnaire.

 During the summer – date to be finalised, Photomap of Brentham. Each household provides a photograph of themselves outside the front or back of their home and these would be placed on a very large (15 foot square) street map of the estate for all to see. Logistics are a problem but not insurmountable. Photos would become part of the Brentham Archive (to aid researcher in writing History of Brentham 2001-2101!) For further details contact:

Rosanna Henderson

AND we might have the honour of a visit from HRH the Prince of Wales. We received the following reply to our invitation.

'His Royal Highness was very grateful for your kind invitation to him to visit Brentham during its centenary next year, and I would like, if I may, to keep the invitation on file so that it may be considered should an opportunity arise for such a visit. In the meantime, His Royal Highness sends his very best wishes to you and all the members of the Society.'

Mark Bolland (Deputy Private Secretary to HRH Prince of Wales).

.... so you never know !!!

Lastly are you thinking, “why don't they plan ...” or “I wish they would arrange ...”. Well pick up the phone and let us

know. Other ideas and offers of help are always welcome. Contact:

Heather Moore

Brentham - An Exhibition

We are very excited that Gunnersbury Park Museum has agreed to hold an exhibition in October to mark Brentham's centenary. The exhibition will provide an opportunity for the public to see at close hand some of the wonderful treasures from the Brentham Archive. Among the exhibits will be a selection of the marvellous photographs and architectural plans that are reproduced in *Brentham: a history of the pioneer garden suburb 1901–2001* – what the book can't convey is just what the original illustrations are like – how big they are (some of the photos measure as much as 10 x 14 inches) – or what the coloured shading on the large architectural plans really looks like.

At the same time, we are hoping to have a display cabinet containing Arts-and-Crafts-style objects made in Brentham between 1901 and 1915 – and this is where we need your help. So far we know of just one item to put on display! Some of the objects we have in mind will have been made in the Arts and Crafts classes that started in Brentham in July 1909. Among the most popular were the carpentry classes where residents made 'garden-suburb-style' furniture (a photograph in the book on page 107 shows women competing in a woodworking competition in 1910). Residents also produced some fine metalwork – door-knockers, door knobs set on a floral-style plate, brass plaques, ornate lock plates, metal house names, fire irons, Challenge shields, metal letterboxes (there are some lovely Art Nouveau examples in Woodfield Road).

One resident in Ludlow Road has offered to lend her doorknocker. Brenthamites also produced various kinds of Arts-and-Crafts-style needlework, both practical and decorative.

Do you have anything you think might be suitable? Do you know someone else who might have something? For more information please contact:

Wendy Sender

Planning Issues

The London Borough of Ealing on December 6th last year rejected the applications from The Girls Day School Trust on behalf of Notting Hill and Ealing Girls High School and the Brentham Club to develop the playing fields, bowls pavilion and main building of the Brentham Club.

The overall reason for the decision was that the applications would be harmful to the conservation area and listed building. Each part of the proposal presented different problems. Flood risk, inappropriate design and a change to the character of the conservation area, were among the factors the planning department considered important when they made their recommendation. The Council consulted widely with all relevant conservation and environment agencies as well as residents, and the response was overwhelmingly against the development of the playing fields. However it is clear that there would be no objection to an extension to the club building if the design was improved.

A recent letter in both the *Ealing Gazette* and *The Green* warned Brentham residents who had objected, that unless the Club were allowed to develop the area as they wish, it may go into decline

and that the Council could take it over for 'social housing' or as a permanent 'site for travellers'.

We can assure any concerned residents that the Club grounds are unsuitable for these uses as they are part of the Brent River flood plain. This is one of the main reasons the recent applications were rejected, and any subsequent use by the Council for these purposes could be legally challenged. The Council refused permission for an Astroturf hockey pitch on Club grounds because it would be aesthetically inappropriate in a conservation area; for the same reason a caravan park would be considered inappropriate.

Similar scare tactics were used to stifle opposition to planning applications when conservation was first introduced on the estate with opponents prophesying falling property values if they were not allowed to install modern picture windows. Thirty years of conservation has proved these fears to be completely unfounded.

The Environment Agency Floodline

For information about the Brent call: 0845-988-1188 (local call charge), select option 1 for pre-recorded information then 'quick dial' code 0112122.

Back to the Book Launch If you weren't there...

Heather Moore, Chair of the Brentham Society, welcomed everyone "on this momentous occasion in the history of Brentham Garden Suburb, on the eve of our centenary" and later spoke of this "Amazing achievement that a book of this quality and substance has been

published privately... more than I could have envisaged - well researched, well written and illustrated and so well produced." She then read out a message from HRH Prince of Wales who had written a foreword for the book.



ST. JAMES'S PALACE

Greeting message from HRH The Prince of Wales

"When I was asked to write a foreword for this new book I was intrigued. Like so many others, I was unaware of the Brentham garden suburb, but as I learned more about this remarkable and pioneering community, I began to see why it is so important to make a proper record of its history. I therefore offer my warmest congratulations to Aileen Reid, and all those who have worked so tirelessly, and indeed, so imaginatively, to produce this beautiful and comprehensive account of a small piece of English town planning that can be more widely appreciated.

I have no doubt that the practical idealism of the pioneers in the Brentham estate, a hundred years ago, still holds many lessons for modern town planning and architecture. Their preoccupation with careful site layout; the provision of amenities; and elegance and interest in architecture and design, all stand the test of time so much better than almost all house building that has come since. I am sure too, that their original dream of building a place where the value created by such an enlightened approach could be shared by the whole community, deserves careful study.

I hope your inspiration in producing this account will, in some small way, serve to influence others to emulate this inspired

approach to community planning and architecture.

I am only sorry that I cannot be with you in person this evening, but I wish you every success with the launch of the book, and my very best wishes too, for the second century of the Brentham Garden Suburb"

Sir Peter Hall, remembering that expression 'one amazing day', said 'this has been one amazing evening... audacity in the Brentham Society [in] setting out on this enterprise which must have seemed nearly impossible... the result is even more magnificent than any of us could ever have imagined... far more lavish'.



Sir Peter Hall

provided the book's introduction. He picked up on two of HRH's phrases: 'practical idealism' and 'social entrepreneurs'...'Brentham's founders had a vision and knew how to achieve it...the book will provide inspiration to other societies to rediscover their own history...make a contribution to the entire understanding of the garden city movement which was a movement of very ordinary men and women working to improve their own environment... incredible inspirational lesson... the Brentham Society and its charitable offshoot the Brentham Heritage Society

have proved an absolutely extraordinary example of social entrepreneurship, in doing something rather wonderful for the world simply because they wanted to do it.

The book will be received not only up in Pitshanger Lane, not only in a few bookshops around London but will be very widely read around the world... if you do find busloads of dedicated tourists by your front door you will know the reason why'

Wendy Sender welcomed descendants of some of the Brentham pioneers and architects, and some of Brentham's oldest residents (90-year old Mrs Ramsay Hughes and 88-year-old Frank Turner.

She then recalled that we started planning this project in the autumn of 1998. Two years later:

- We have raised more than £40,000 most of it from local people and local businesses.
- We've created a new charity, The Brentham Heritage Society, that will take the educational work started by the book forward, in new projects
- And we've involved hundreds of local people who may not have participated in this way in their community before.



Barbara Norrice
Pioneer Henry Vivien's daughter
at the Launch

Most importantly - and the reason for tonight's celebration:

- We have produced a book that we can all be proud of that will get next year's centenary of Brentham Garden Suburb off to a flying start and will be around for the next hundred years for people in Brentham, Britain and beyond to enjoy and learn from.

You'll need to read the book to learn the full story of how it came about, and for the long roll call of everyone who has helped us. I'm just a little bit biased, but I think Aileen has produced an exceptional piece of work, and done us a great service by researching and documenting Brentham's history and its important place in the wider scheme of things. We always knew Brentham was special and Aileen explains why in this book. I hope it will help to foster that strong community spirit that was here when Brentham was founded and that, 100 years later, has made it possible to produce this book to commemorate Brentham's centenary.

And from someone who was there ...

A little while ago my friend Wendy Sender told me about the Brentham book project and how ‘shares’ were being ‘sold’ to raise funds. My husband Dave was also very enthusiastic, so we decided to take part in this history in the making.



Family Shareholder certificate

Although looking forward to the publication of the book, which I expected to be a glossy paperback book of maybe fifty or so pages, I was really more excited that the project was a boost to our local community. It would endorse the already strong community spirit around Pitshanger Village of which Brentham Garden Suburb is a part. Included in the price of the book's shareholding was an invitation to the launch and a voucher for a special copy of the book signed by the author.

I would often ask Wendy how the book was progressing. Although I always got positive feedback it did not prepare me for the magnificent end result, the launch of which I had the pleasure of attending with Dave on 16th November 2000.

When we walked into St Barnabas Millennium Hall that Thursday night we did not know quite what to expect. The Hall was packed with people and the atmosphere “buzzing” and very happy. I'm not surprised. When I saw the book my jaw dropped – it looked fantastic; far better than I ever expected it to be, and that's not because I thought it would be unprofessional, I knew it would be well-researched and accurate, filled with lots of original archive photographs, but the presentation really was second to none. I felt really proud that my family and I were part of it. Judging by the smiles and exclamations from various members of the 300-strong crowd I was not the only one thinking this. The wine was flowing, everyone was talking and chatting excitedly, meeting up with friends and bumping into old acquaintances, when we were all hushed up.



Anne Barnes preparing one of the beautiful flower arrangements for the Launch

The speakers were all so interesting due to the roles they played in the making of the book and spoke so well that they were a pleasure to listen to. I really did not hear one groan or grunt in the crowd, well, apart from the reaction to one of

MP Steve Pound's jokes! Nothing could dampen the enthusiasm.

I left that evening carrying, firmly under my arm, a most treasured prize: Aileen Reid's *Brentham*. Thank you Wendy and the Brentham community, for the opportunity to become a part of it.

Sally Taylor



Now see the video!

Local resident Paul Fodrio captured the whole event on video. Lasting some 30 minutes it provides a truly atmospheric account of a great evening. If you were there you'll be on it, if you weren't you'll want to see what you missed! The Society has an early un-edited copy for hire. Contact:

Alan Henderson

What others have said about the book ...

From **Stefan Muthesius of the University of East Anglia** (in the bibliography and eminent in his field): *'A model of a book on such a topic. Congratulations. Most of all, perhaps, for the way you managed to revive the original spirit of generating finance'*

From **Margaret Tims** (former resident and author of the 1966 history) *'Congratulations to all who were involved ... It is a most prestigious publication, and beautifully presented.'*

From **Ann Saunders on behalf of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Archive Trust:** *'On behalf of the HGS Trust, may I congratulate all those concerned with the production of 'Brentham'? I think it is a magnificent and triumphant*

publication, exceptionally well researched and written, and handsomely produced. Dr Reid's scholarship has been backed up by the elegance of the production.'

From **Terry Gray, Executive Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation** *'a fascinating and extremely well-produced book... makes riveting reading'*

And generally ...

'This is the first time in 10 years of marriage that I have ever seen my husband read a book!'

'When I got my copy, I sat down and read through every page and every caption till I got to the end'.

From **Paul Gumm** (BAS Printers who printed the book) *"We are delighted to announce that we were winners in the Print Week Awards 2000 which took place on Monday 23rd October. We were outright winners in both Fine Art Printer of The Year AND Book Printer of The Year. In both categories the judges awarded a perfect 10, the highest grade ever to be awarded. The aim of the awards is to recognise and reward the very best of British print, the focus of this being on production excellence.*

Everyone at BAS Printers would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support which has enabled us to achieve this incredible double"

However one sad note:

In the early days of the book project I received a phone call from Mrs Gillian Howell about her 94-year-old mother, Doris, who had been born and brought up in Brentham. Since moving to Worthing, Doris had kept in touch by reading the Brentham newsletter and knew all about our plans for the book and she wanted to share her memories of life in Brentham in the early days.

Aileen went to see Doris, armed with a tape recorder and a collection of old photographs. Aileen had bought a special magnifying glass to make it easier for Doris to study the photos, and she also took along a gift – a framed copy of an early photograph showing the house in which Doris had grown up (with the dust road and the chain-link fencing in evidence). Doris was delighted to see Aileen, and the memories poured out, such as the exceptionally hot day in 1911 when the Duke of Connaught opened the Brentham Institute and 4-year-old Doris was wrapped up in several layers of winter petticoats.

A few weeks later I sent Aileen the first set of proofs for the book. We also had a call from Gillian saying that her mother was very ill and in hospital. In spite of many other urgent tasks Aileen found time to post Doris a set of proofs. To make it easy for Doris as she lay in bed, Aileen had had the proofs spiral bound across the top. News soon reached us that the book had captivated Doris, and that Gillian had been reading aloud large chunks of the book on her daily visits to her mother. Amazingly Doris rallied round and her health improved for several weeks.

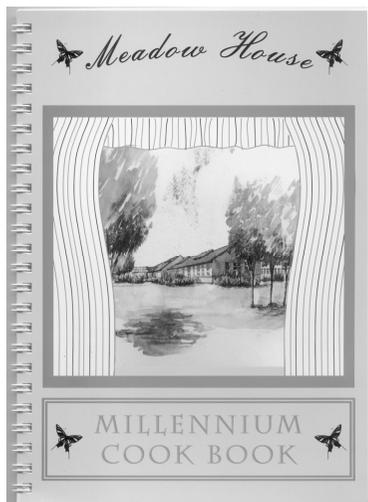
As the day for delivering the books approached, a group of us talked about the many arrangements we would have to make in preparation for the launch – and we also spoke about sending a copy to Doris as soon as it arrived. Late on Friday 10 November the printer's van arrived with the first 500 copies. A labour force of Brenthamites humped them down the garden path and stacked them carefully around Alan and Rosanna Henderson's home. We drank a toast to the book and to Doris and buried ourselves quietly in the book for a little while. Then Aileen sat down to the marathon task of signing 375 copies for shareholders – and she began by inscribing one for Doris. At 11 pm that night Rosanna packaged up one copy of the book and addressed it: it was to Doris, to whom the book had been jointly dedicated.

When Sue and I arrived at the house at 9.30 the next morning to post Doris's copy and a number of review copies, Rosanna broke the news to us. At 8.15 am she had received a phone call from Gillian to say that Doris had died just after 11 pm the night before – the time Rosanna had parcelled up her copy. I felt mixed emotions of shock, sadness that we hadn't been able to get the book to Doris in time, joy that Doris had been able to keep going long enough to see the proofs and derive great pleasure in seeing the history of Brentham recorded in this way. Gillian insisted she would still be coming to the launch – 'mother would have wanted me to'. We felt too wobbly to talk about Doris in our speeches at the launch, but for those of us who knew Doris's story, she was very much a presence for us on 16th November.

Wendy Sender

Another book !

Brentham resident Sue Shepherd has compiled a cookery book with all proceeds going to Meadow House Hospice. The aim was to publish a collection of easy-to-make recipes, containing readily available and interesting ingredients. The book contains over 70 tried and tasted recipes from everyone connected with Meadow House; staff, volunteers, patients and patient's relatives thereby making it very personal to the Hospice. There is also a contribution from Naked Chef Jamie Oliver.



To raise funds for a very worthy cause, Meadow House Millennium Cook Book is on sale for £5 and is available locally from Pitshanger Bookshop or direct from **Sue Shepherd**

Brentham Polo shirts

A lot of compliments were received at the launch for our distinctive green polo shirts. We are looking at offering something similar for sale at the March Craft Fair.

Brentham Mugs

The Society still has a number of centenary bone china mugs for sale.



There are two designs with images taken from the original 1911 Pioneer Co-partnership Suburb book. The mugs are priced at £4-50 each or £8-00 a pair and are available from **Sue van Raat**

Brentham Society membership

If you've enjoyed reading this newsletter and want to continue supporting the Society watch out for the membership envelope, which will be coming through your door soon. Membership is still excellent value at only £2 per household. Extra donations this year are especially welcome to fund our centenary activities.