



# High Wycombe Society

Hon

SECRETARY: J SCRUTON 17 LONDON ROAD HIGH WYCOMBE BUCKS  
Telephone 25933

## HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER No. 25. SUMMER 1975

### Planning Group

Rosemary Close We supported the Rosemary Close Residents' Association and the Wycombe District Council at the Planning Inquiry held on 1st July into the application for residential development at the West Wycombe Road adjacent to the village of West Wycombe. We felt that the density suggested was far too great and that the layout would cause a considerable nuisance to existing residents. In addition we drew attention to other difficulties and dangers if the application received approval. These were traffic dangers on the West Wycombe Road, excessive demands on West Wycombe School, the effect on the most attractive National Trust area and the and the Conservation Area of West Wycombe, and the fact that it would effectively join High Wycombe and West Wycombe. We are sure that the meetings with the Rosemary Close Association prior to the Inquiry were of help to them and to us and that this kind of partnership is of the greatest importance to the Planning Group.

Demolition of Houses Recently the Planning Group has been worried about the demolition by local industrialists of houses in Nutfield Lane and Copyground Lane-houses which were in a reasonable state or which could easily have been brought up to the necessary standard. Although we protested we realised that the planning authority has no power to prevent demolition of unlisted buildings which lie outside the Conservation Area. This is a very serious weakness in our planning legislation and one about which the Dobry Commission has made strong recommendations. In one of the instances mentioned the owner of the nearby factory who demolished the houses is now seeking approval for change of use, and hopes to be given approval to use the cleared land for parking vehicles and for other industrial purposes. The Society feels very strongly that this kind of action must be resisted at all costs and that the Planning authority should not allow this 'fait accompli' situation to persuade them into giving planning permission. Our housing stock is precious. If houses are knocked down they should be replaced by other housing. Otherwise we could lose great stretches of houses at a time when there is an urgent need.

Hugh Osborn.

### South Bucks Amenity Societies

Representatives of a number of Amenity Societies in South Bucks meet twice a year to discuss common problems and exchange ideas. We have taken part and find the meetings useful. Ron Sims attended the one held on 18th June and included in his report was the following item which is of interest to High Wycombe and many of our members:

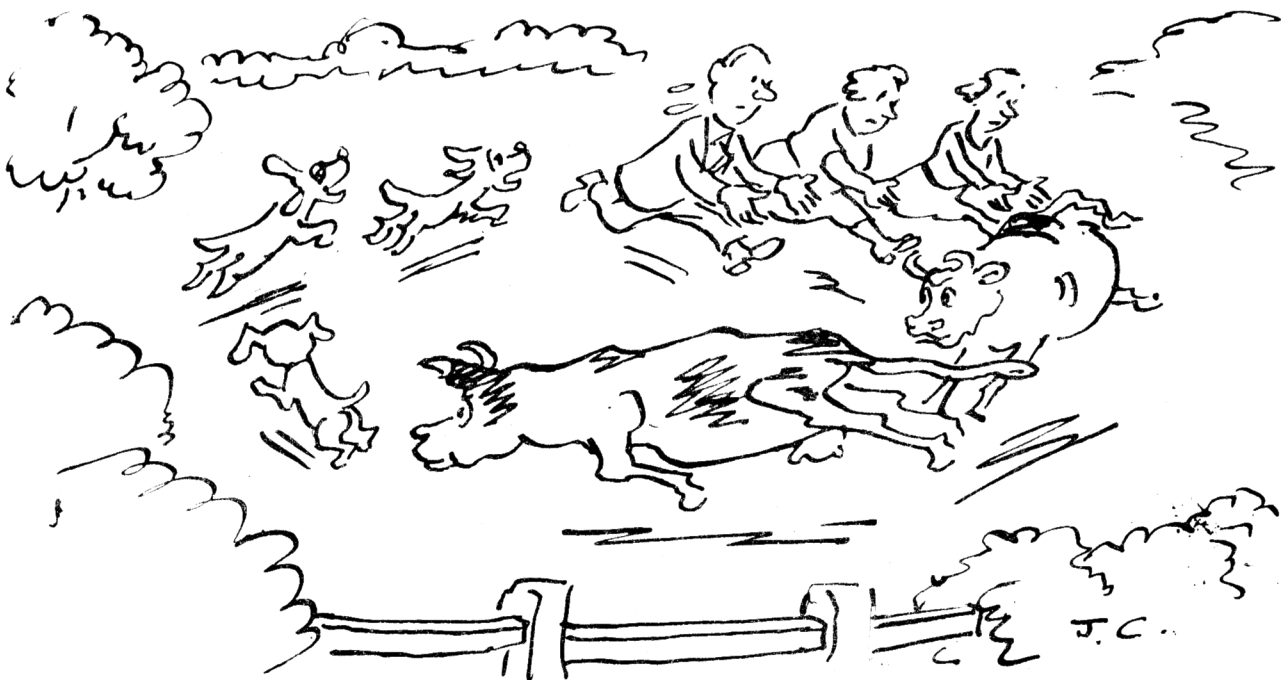
"A considerable amount of time was spent discussing water levels in the Chilterns now that so many lakes and ponds are filled and rivers flowing again which have been dry for some considerable time. Rumours are circulating that they will soon all be dry again as the result of additional pumping by the Thames Valley Water Authority. In order to find out what is being planned it was decided to increase the annual number of meetings from two to three for the specific purpose of inviting a member of the Thames Valley Water Authority to talk and then answer questions. This will be about the end of October or November".

The increased flow of water in the River Wye has made a tremendous difference during the past year. It is now much more attractive and far healthier and we must do all we can to see that the river is maintained in its present state.

Ted Kearney.

TREES GROUP At the time of writing we are enjoying glorious Summer Weather. Trees aren't. The dry conditions make trees extremely thirsty and those planted this Spring are in grave danger. Please water any you see wilting with a few gallons daily. The Trees Group are attending to a number on a green at Castlefield and to the High Wycombe Society's White Chestnut on the Rye.

Dutch Elm disease continues to ravage our elms. Efforts to combat it are being bravely made by the District Council, who have injected several elms on the Rye. You can see the evidence in the black patches round the base of the trunk. The Chiltern Society are also helping and have one set of equipment in use. They are hoping to acquire another set. The District Council charge approximately £15 per visit to private owners, varying according to the number of trees. The Chiltern Society charge £3 per visit to Chiltern Society members and £4 to non-members, plus 40p per foot of tree diameter at breast level. The season for injection is short and the necessity to save our elms urgent. If you need help please contact Mr. Bowen, Parks Manager, Wycombe District Council, or Mr. C. Wells, Easton House, 38 Lucas Road, High Wycombe, or us if you see elms needing attention. Mr. Wells would also like to hear from volunteers willing to help in the daytime in this good work. Telephone High Wycombe 35103.



The Trees Group has enjoyed several walks and visits this year, including a hair-raising half hour when members dogs were chased by stampeding cow round a field. Moral: don't take dogs through a cow field. The visit to Bulstrode Park kindly guided by Mr. Rowe was a great pleasure. We marvelled at the many rare trees and those of exceptional size and age, particularly the Hop Hornbeam, Sugar Maple, Turkey Oak and Davidia (Handkerchief, Dove or Ghost Tree). We also saw the Silver Lime, which causes drunken orgies among bees, and some superb Cedars. We hope to repeat this visit in the Autumn. Come with us and see what it's all about.

The Tree Council has suggested a National Tree Survey. This is an exciting project and as a start in Wycombe the Group are undertaking a survey of trees on the Rye. Already this is proving fascinating, discussion, differences of opinion and argument abound. Have you seen the Cockspur Thorn, and just how many varieties of Maple are there?

Our next walk: Saturday July 19th. Coombe Hill and Wendover Woods. Meet at Coombe Hill Monument at 2.30 pm.  
**Bring a picnic tea.**

Barbara Rippington.  
Tel: High Wycombe 26616.

#### HISTORIC BUILDINGS GROUP

The Old Chequers. Our efforts to find a suitable tenant have been unsuccessful so far. A meeting with the Chiltern Society is to be held soon when we shall explore every possibility of bringing about the restoration of this very important building. The District Council notified the Department of the Environment that they had rejected the purchase notice served on them by the Tisa Property Company. It now rests with the Department to decide the question of purchase.

Walter Kraft.

The Toll House. In our last Newsletter we reported that the Sports Club had applied for listed building consent to demolish the Toll House, and that our objection had been supported by the Georgian Group and the Chiltern Society.

After informal discussion with the District Council we wrote to the Sports Club suggesting that their Committee might wish to reconsider their application, taking account of recent changes of opinion brought about by European Architectural Heritage Year. Their reply has been disappointing. They have however promised to try to keep trespassers from the premises while the matter is under consideration by the District Council. In the meantime the E.A.H.Y. United Kingdom Council has asked us to supply photographs of the Toll House before and after the accident. The matter may be referred to in their next National Newsletter.

Walter Davies.

Victorian Buildings. There are very few Victorian Buildings on the list of protected buildings. In view of the increasing interest in Victorian Architecture we feel that more buildings of the period ought to be placed on the Statutory List. The Victorian Society share this view and are willing to help us. We are carrying out a survey of Victorian buildings and when this is complete the Victorian Society architect will inspect them and make recommendations. We would welcome any suggestions about Victorian and Edwardian buildings which are worthy of consideration. Please send details to Mrs. L. Cassidy, No. 1 Hampden Road, High Wycombe. Tel: High Wycombe 24232

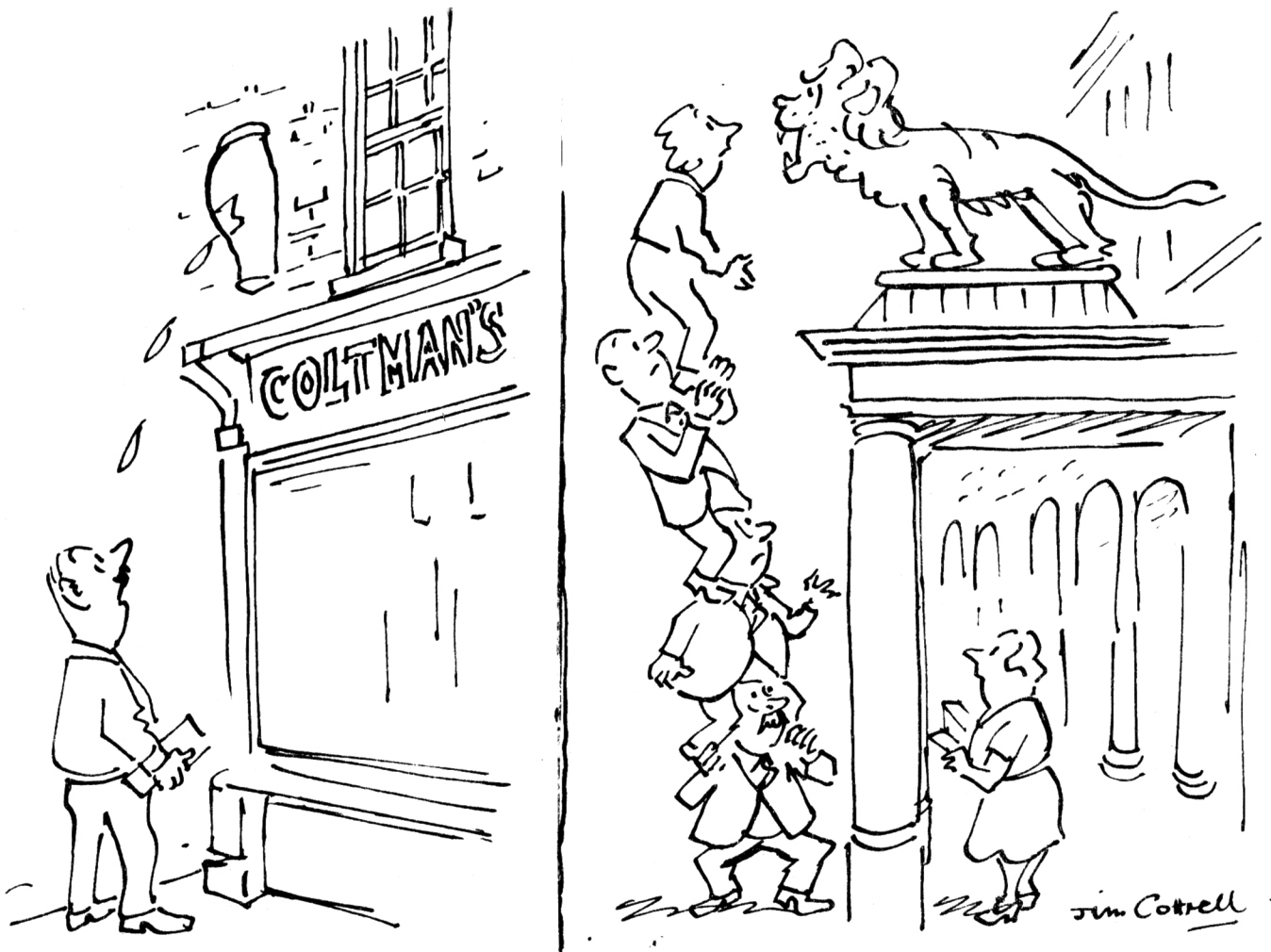
Lorna Cassidy.

### Historic Buildings Group Meetings

Since our last Newsletter we have had two more successful meetings of the Group. On Friday 25th April, Doug Hodson conducted a large number of Members over Nos. 19 and 20 Easton Street. This was most enjoyable and informative. To see and hear at first hand how these once derelict buildings had been restored so delightfully made this a fascinating experience. Doug's humour and enthusiasm were highly infectious.

On 22nd June a group of members walked the Conservation Area Trail devised by Jim Cottrell. The slow amble on a very pleasant afternoon enabled us to have a much closer look at some of our heritage and perhaps appreciate that there is still a fair amount which is pleasing.

Jim was away on holiday but he has done these sketches of what he thinks might have happened.



On Friday 1st August at 8 pm Mr. and Mrs. Britain have very kindly agreed to open their house - The Dower House at West Wycombe - to members of the Group. A number of members have already indicated that they would like to be there and we would like to hear from other members of the Group who are interested. Obviously we must restrict the numbers, so it is a case of "first come first served". Please phone Lorna Cassidy at High Wycombe 24232 if you would like to be included. The Dower House is a gem, especially now that Ross Britain has completed its restoration.

We are hoping to arrange a visit to the Old Hall and the Manor at Hughenden on Saturday, 13th September, at 2.30 pm. and a tea may be arranged in the Old Hall after the visits. If you would like to take part please write to Lorna Cassidy at No. 1 Hampden Road, High Wycombe or telephone High Wycombe 24232.

Lorna Cassidy.

WALTER DAVIES - a TRIBUTE Soon we shall lose the invaluable help of Walter Davies, when he and his charming wife Pamela move to Great Comberton, near Pershore. Instead of sinking into the quiet coma of retirement, Walter has spent long hours in voluntary work for the Society. He has not only kept impeccable Minutes for the Historic Buildings Group and written many letters arising from them, but he has also acted as a most vigilant watchdog of the Conservation Area, which has meant many visits to the Planning Office to look at plans, consulting expert opinion about the "tricky" applications, and writing letters about all of them. Walter, a real glutton for work, also undertook the carrying out of the Toll House restoration campaign, and he has maintained his enthusiasm for this despite many disappointments. If the building is eventually restored it will be a tribute to his wonderful perseverance and enthusiasm. Not content with all this, Walter has played a leading part in the work connected with European Architectural Heritage Year. After swallowing the reports from various members, he regurgitated these in a masterly and convincing fashion. His extensive summary formed the basis for discussion by the members of the Joint District Council and Society Committee. He has been a very active member of this Committee and has earned the admiration of its members. Any improvements to our town centre will be due in no small measure to his work and the help received from Pamela. We shall miss him and Pamela a very great deal, and we wish them every happiness in their new home.

Janet Tully of the Group, despite many commitments, has very kindly agreed to take over the role of Minuting Secretary and also to act as the Watchdog for the Conservation Area.

Jack Scruton.

#### EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE YEAR

This Joint Committee continues to meet regularly and their hard work is beginning to have some effect as you will notice if you take a careful look at the High Street and Easton Street. A number of buildings have been cleaned and painted and a number of eyesores have been removed. A regular flow of correspondence is maintained and the response from owners and tenants has been encouraging. We are hoping that the fine efforts made by some will infect others to do likewise.

The Committee is hoping to stage an Exhibition at the Wycombe Show to illustrate the need to protect our heritage not only in High Wycombe, but in many other places administered by the District Council.

Festival Exhibition As part of the Joint E.A.H.Y. Exhibition held for the Wycombe Festival there was a Children's Competition. The panel of judges have now decided on the best entries as follows:

|                  |                                                                  |                               |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Joint 1st</u> | Dawn Reilly (10 yrs)<br>82 Booker Lane, Castlefield.             | Castlefield Middle<br>School. |
|                  | Louise Alexander (10 yrs)<br>3 Mayhew Crescent,<br>High Wycombe. | Terriers Middle School        |

|            |                                                                    |                                 |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <u>2nd</u> | Nicholas Pelling (10 yrs)<br>6 Ayloffs Walk,<br>Hornchurch, Essex. | Brentwood Preparatory<br>School |
| <u>3rd</u> | Phillip Alexander (8 yrs)<br>3 Mayhew Crescent,<br>High Wycombe.   | Terriers Middle School          |

Arrangements for presenting the prizes will be made soon.

Our congratulations to Doug Hodson who saved and restored Nos. 19 and 20 Easton Street in such a wonderful way. He has just been notified by the Civic Trust that his work has received a Commendation under the Heritage Year Awards Scheme. The Assessors awarded Commendations if the projects submitted made a valuable contribution to the aims of Heritage Year and were in one way or another of exceptional merit. They were certainly right about Doug's effort.

Jack Scruton.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING This was held in the Guildhall on Friday, 2nd May and was our most successful meeting so far. Christopher Hall, the Director of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, spoke brilliantly on the theme "Wycombe - Space or Sprawl". He showed convincingly the urgent need to prevent the town from sprawling into the Chiltern countryside and the wisdom in encouraging growth to take place in those areas for which it was planned. The very large audience enjoyed this opportunity of hearing such a key figure in the amenity world. We could do with a Christopher Hall in every town in the Country.

Quarterly Meetings The last Quarterly Meeting was held at 7.45 p.m. on Friday 11th July in the Lecture Theatre of the College of Technology and Art, when there was a programme of films in celebration of European Architectural Heritage Year.

The Autumn Quarterly Meeting will be held in the Guildhall on Friday 19th September beginning at 7.30 p.m. Our speaker will be John Ligertwood, well known for his superb slides and anecdotes about Country Homes in Buckinghamshire. Please make a note of this in your diary and come along. You'll regret it if you don't.

SOCIAL EVENING - Friday 4th July

OH WHAT A NIGHT IT WAS - IT REALLY WAS - SUCH A NIGHT

For once your Editor is stumped for words to describe the Social Evening. His limited vocabulary does not appear to contain the appropriate words.

On behalf of all those present, a great "Thank you" to the members who so willingly assisted, but most of all to Tony, Christine, and her "little sister" Judy without whom the Social Evening could not have been held. We are all eagerly awaiting details of the next "get together".

Footpath Walk Ron Sims has arranged an attractive footpath walk for Sunday, September 7th, beginning at the Turnpike Public House, Booker, at 10.a.m. The route will be Turnpike - Holmer's Farm - Oldhouse Farm - Booker Airport - Bluey's Farm - Chisbridge Cross - Frieth - Fingest - Lane End - Booker Common - Turnpike. Ron would be pleased to hear from members who are interested. He lives at 19, Wordsworth Road, High Wycombe.

News from other Societies

18 Plus Club We have been asked by the Hon. Secretary of the 18 Plus Club to publish some details of their aims and activities. Here they are:

"Eighteen Plus is a national movement which began about 40 years ago in the north of England. Although there were only a few enthusiastic people, gradually

more groups were formed all over the country - today there are nearly 200 groups and plans to bring Eighteen Plus to Wales, Yorkshire and Scotland are in hand.

The Eighteen Plus movement is non-political and non-religious with the aims as follows:-

- (a) Understand and appreciate life.
- (b) Develop a personal philosophy.
- (c) Acquire experience in public affairs.
- (d) Act in co-operation for the benefit for the community.
- (e) Provide opportunity for cultural, social and recreational activities.

To join Eighteen Plus, there is a membership fee of £2.00 plus V.A.T. with an additional charge weekly towards the group's expenses, i.e. the cost of the room. By tradition, High Wycombe Eighteen Plus Group meets in a room in a local public house at the White Horse Inn, West Wycombe Road, High Wycombe every Tuesday at about 8.30 p.m. The Group's activities are very varied - from discos to barbecues, camping, talks from local firms and local personalities, visits to shows in London, B.B.C. programmes, etc.

Other events arranged are the Easter Holiday weekend, an Annual conference and a camping weekend at the August Bank Holiday.

For any further information, please contact Mrs. Lynne A. Pearce, Brilyn Cottage, Booker Common, Booker, High Wycombe, Bucks.

#### INTIMATE THEATRE - FROGMORE

Over the page we have included Lorna Cassidy's sketch of the disused Theatre at Frogmore.

Anyone having ideas on suitable uses to which this building could be put should contact:-

Mrs. L. Cassidy,  
1, Hampden Road,  
High Wycombe.  
Tel. HW. 24232.



L. Cassidy

The  
INTIMATE  
THEATRE

Frogmore  
High Wycombe  
July 75