



**BRENTHAM
NEWS
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SEPTEMBER 2008**

(Distributed to residents and friends of Brentham)

*This version of Brentham News has been adapted for the Brentham website.
Private telephone numbers and addresses and commercial ads have been deleted.*

Brentham Society Chair's Notes

Why is August so unloved? Generally referred to as the "dog days", the Anglo-Saxons called it *Weod monath* (weed month). Flanders and Swann got it right, particularly for this year, in their "Song of the Weather":

August cold, and dank, and wet
Brings more rain than any yet

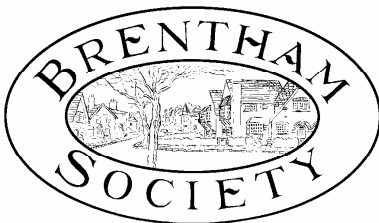
So people just want to get away from it all!

Administrators also take their well-earned break in the summer, and nothing happens in local as well as national government, as those who want to start invasions have noticed throughout history. Ealing is no exception. I had hoped in this issue to be able to bring news of developments on a number of battlefronts, such as the Pitshanger Lane "Streets for People" scheme and our campaign for retaining some of our antique cast iron lampposts. But nothing happens in August...

The same is true for the important changes that are planned for the town centre. Glenkerrin, the developers of the Arcadia site, have held their exhibition and gone away to consider a revised planning application, which is not expected until late September/early October. At about that time, too, Ealing's planning committee will be meeting to consider the Dickens Yard application by developers St. George.

Brentham will be affected by the outcome of both these plans, as well as the on-going work on the new Local Development Framework, the umbrella document which will govern planning of the Borough for the next 12 - 15 years. The Brentham Society, which is affiliated to both Ealing Civic Society and the Save Ealing's Centre alliance, should I believe be playing a full part in trying to ensure all these developments are in the best interests of Ealing as a whole. I hope to be able to report in more detail on them all at the AGM, the notice for which can be seen below.

Tony Miller



**AGM, Brentham Society & Brentham
Heritage Society,
Thursday 16th October 2008,
7.30 pm at the Brentham Club.
Guest speaker Christine Eborall,
Ealing LA21: "Why Front Gardens
Matter"**



Nominations to serve on the Committee of either the Brentham Society or the Brentham Heritage Society (seconded by two members of the appropriate society) should be submitted in writing by **2nd October** to Pippa Kelly for the **Brentham Society**, or to Eleanor Cowie for the **Brentham Heritage Society**.

Open Garden Day

Once again Brentham was lucky with the weather for this year's event, which drew people in from as far away as Hampstead and Sutton Garden Suburbs. Eight gardens were open to visitors, one of them for the first time. Even more programmes than last year were sold and £859.75 was raised for Ealing Samaritans. A big thank-you to all who opened their gardens and all others who helped to make the day a success.



Who Owns Brentham?

Significant parts of the estate are in fact still owned by the Grainger Property Trust, the company that took over the Bradford Property Trust (BPT) in 2000. When Grainger acquired BPT, which itself had bought the original Ealing Tenants Ltd. interests in Brentham in 1940, it wanted the cash flow which BPT's holdings of regulated tenancies produced, as these helped fund more speculative property development. However, by 2000 most Brentham properties had been sold off.

So what does Grainger still own? What was not sold to sitting tenants who wanted to purchase their freeholds were the communal lands, most obviously the green between Denison Road and Ludlow Road, but also the freeholds of garages behind Fowlers Walk. Though the Land Registry records are patchy at best Grainger probably also still holds most of the original allotment lands, but income from Brentham now represents only a very small part of the Grainger Trust's portfolio.

As residents who own garages on the Denison/Ludlow Green know, Grainger has recently been trying to extract capital sums for the extension of rights to cross over their property. Nevertheless Brentham must represent more of a nuisance than a useful investment, and the Brentham Society has now been approached to open discussions on whether the whole residual holding could be transferred to some other body.

Obviously large questions are raised here, and we are at a very early stage of discussions. We will keep everyone informed. Meanwhile, if any residents have experience of financing and managing common areas in the interest of the community, we would be very pleased to tap their knowledge.

Tony Miller



Summer in Brentham

The sun rewarded the efforts of Barbara and her team by shining on the Strawberry Tea, and it stayed dry also for 20 Brentham cyclists who set off to Osterley.



Having Your Say at the Ward Forum

A new way has been introduced for residents to interact with our Council through local councillors. The old Area Committees have been abolished; instead, each electoral ward will have its own committee or "Forum". They can discuss local issues such as traffic, improvements to the street scene and local parks, and community safety, and will have up to £40,000 a year to spend on schemes requested by us local residents.

They will meet probably three times a year and anyone can attend the meetings, which are NOT restricted to residents in the ward concerned. This is important for our area as it overlaps two wards - Cleveland and Hanger Hill - and issues like traffic management affect both. We may have to argue for a single solution partly funded by two different Forums, though there is no process yet to deal with cross-boundary issues.

Each Forum is controlled by the councillors for that ward, although Hanger Hill may ask an independent person to chair the meetings. A Neighbourhood Project Officer (a Town Hall clerk) will assist, but formal

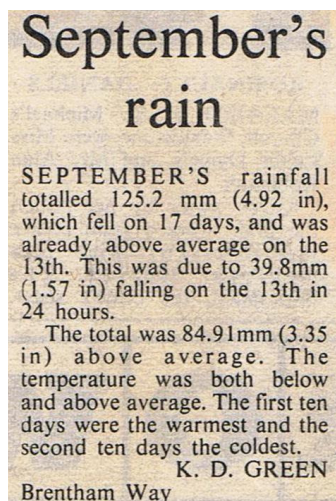
minutes will only be taken at the December meeting, when spending priorities for the following year are decided. These decisions will remain in the hands of the councillors and subject to approval by the Council's Cabinet. Otherwise the process is meant to be informal. The councillors can refuse discussion of anything they consider not to concern their ward. No formal agendas have been issued for the first meetings, and generally residents are encouraged to raise issues under "other business". However if you go to a Forum for a ward of which you are not a resident, you could be asked to give advance notice and the councillors may stop you speaking.

The first Cleveland ward Forum is on 18th September, and that for Hanger Hill on 13th October. More details will be given in local Newsletters, as well as in *Around Ealing*.
Tony Miller

Weather Station Brentham

Since the late 1970's Brentham's weather has been meticulously recorded each day by a Brentham Way family. It is most unusual to have a set of data recorded over such a long period, and this one fascinatingly illuminates Brentham's microclimate.

It all came about after Valerie Green's son Keith was encouraged by his science master to record rudimentary weather data, using a minimum and maximum garden thermometer and a jam jar to collect rainfall. Later a family member with knowledge of meteorology suggested installing a rain gauge with a 5" diameter copper funnel and a brass rim, complete with a glass bottle and separate millimetre measure. The rain gauge was installed right in the middle of the Greens' lawn to enable accurate samples of rain to be collected.



The next step was to acquire a Meteorological Office specification wind vane, and fix it to the front gable of 6 Brentham Way, the highest point on the estate, with unobstructed wind flow. With the addition of a bellows-type vacuum chamber barograph it became possible to record atmospheric pressure, so permitting detailed documentation, as in Keith's report (*left*) printed in the *Ealing Gazette* on 10 October 1975.

Subsequently Keith bought a Stevenson Screen in kit form, assembling it himself to house two horizontal thermometers. Maximum and minimum readings were taken daily at 9 a.m. The louvred enclosure (*see photograph*) shields the thermometers from solar radiation while allowing the air from outside to pass freely and so gives a true air temperature. Finally, on the lawn in the best freestanding position, was installed a grass minimum thermometer balanced on two arms and protected from birds by mesh netting.

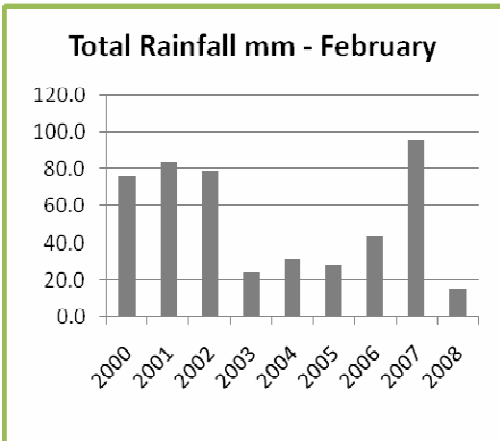
After Keith eventually moved away, Valerie continued daily recordings of rainfall, barometric pressure, air and ground temperature, wind direction, and the extent of visibility across the Brent Valley towards Harrow-on-the-Hill Church. She also summarised each day's weather and Meteorological Office reports.

All these continuous records from 1974 have now been deposited with the Ealing Borough Local Archives to assist local and national research into weather patterns. Some interesting extremes of weather, such as the Great Storm of 1987, are recorded in the Greens' data. Periods of exceptionally heavy rainfall were made especially memorable for the family whenever the rain gauge overflowed. A recent example of exceptional weather was last Easter Sunday's snowfall which produced a covering of about $\frac{3}{4}$ " after the temperature fell to minus 2°C overnight. Pressure fell to just under 1000 millibars, and visibility to about 100 yards. As often occurs with spring snow, it soon melted as temperatures rose above zero.

The oldest piece of local weather lore Valerie knows (and quite reliable, in her experience) came years ago from Mr Bloxham who owned the penny subscription library in Pitshanger Lane and had an allotment off Brunswick Road. "Remember, Mrs Green, Horsenden Hill breaks up the wet weather before it gets to us."

Brentham News is grateful to Valerie Green for the above account, and to Brentham Society archivist Alan Henderson who has started to analyse this vast local information source. So far, data from 1st January 2000 to the present has been plotted. Despite the overall poor weather this year, February stands out as exceptionally dry, while the maximum temperature so far this year, 29.5°C, recorded on 28th July, is below the norm for the summer months of previous years. The hottest day so far this century was 10th August 2003, when a temperature of 36.5°C was reached.

If anyone else has a weather-related story, Brentham News will be glad to hear from you.



Brentham Garden Groups

New members are always welcome. The afternoon group meets on the third Wednesday of each month, 2-4 pm. Contact Eleanor Cowie

The evening group meets first Tuesday of the month, 7.30-9.00 pm. Contact Em Cunningham

Dates for your Diary

20 & 21 September. Open House weekend walks
10.30 am. Brentham Club
26 September Wine tasting, Brentham
Club, 7.30 pm
28 September Carvery, Brentham Club, 1-5
Thurs. 16 October Brentham AGMs (see page 1)
December, date TBA Carol Singing

Garden History

A talk on the history of garden design, ancient to modern, will be given by Neill Ludmon, lecturer at Capel Manor College, on Tuesday 7 October 2008. 7.30 pm in the Brentham Club coffee lounge.

All welcome, admission £2.50 at the door.

Autumn Events at the Brentham Club

Yoga Classes, Mondays and Wednesdays from 15 September

Art Classes, Tuesdays from 23 September

Bridge Classes: Beginners, Mondays 2.30-4.30 from 15 Sept. Improvers, Mondays 7.30- 9.30 pm or Fridays 10 - noon, from 8th/12th September. Free taster lessons

Coffee lounge open to all daily. Roasts every Sunday, & special £5 lunches on Mondays and Thursdays.

Contact the Club for more details, ☎ 020 8997 2624 or email secretary@brenthamclub.co.uk

If you are thinking of making alterations to your home or need guidance on any aspect of planning and conservation, contact Heather Moore for an informal discussion, or contact Ealing Planning Department, ☎ 8825 6600

Curry Night at the Brentham Club

Friday 12 September, 6.30 to 8.30 pm

£10 for 2-course meal, coffee & mints

Advance booking needed:

☎ 020 8997 2624 or email

secretary@brenthamclub.co.uk

Ealing Art Group's 93rd Annual Exhibition and Sale

PM Gallery, Pitzhanger Manor, Mattock Lane, 5-9 November. Admission free. Opening times: Weds. 5th and Thurs. 6th November, 1pm - 4.30 pm; Fri. 7th, 1 pm - 8.30 pm; Sat. 8th, 11 am - 4.30 pm; Sun. 9th, 1 pm - 4 pm

Are there other local events or activities you know of which might interest other Brentham residents? If so, you are very welcome to submit them for inclusion, if space permits and at the Editor's discretion, in a future Brentham News, the next full edition of which will appear early in 2009.

