
"Our Zoo News"

(and Guide to Chester Zoo).

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CHESTER ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

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Photograph by Miss W. D. Lusk.

"Pam examines her first present—a bicycle".

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"Our Zoo News."

FUTURE EXTENSION OF CHESTER ZOO.

The North of England Zoological Society has recently purchased a further forty acres of land adjoining the Zoo, which will in due course be incorporated into the present Zoo. Until such time as the food situation warrants this, however, the additional land will be used for the production of food.

Situate on the northern side of the Zoo and extending west, this land will be excellent for future development. There are six natural ponds which will provide ideal accommodation for various Waterfowl, and when the whole is incorporated into the existing Chester Zoo the result will be one of the largest Zoo-Parks in the Country.

Torrential rain cold and very unsettled weather, did much to spoil the August holidays of 1946 but, nevertheless, Chester Zoo experienced a record month as regards the number of visitors.

To a large extent, the bad weather hampered work on the open-air enclosure for the Lions but, despite this, much progress has been made, and the completion of this long-undertaken project is not now very far distant.

The Aquarium continues to prove a very popular exhibit, and further purchases and breeding are adding to the stock. One of the most interesting additions

is some very fine Vipers which, in less than three weeks after being put into their case, have produced quite a number of young ones. Unlike the Ringed Snake which lays eggs, the Viper produces living young, and it was very interesting to watch the birth of these young ones. These venomous reptiles are exceedingly active and always on show to the public, which cannot be said about some of the other reptiles that seem to have a habit of secreting themselves beneath rocks and among grasses when visitors are about.

The Ringed Snakes have laid many eggs, but we have not as yet observed any young ones, these being difficult to locate in the large case which they occupy.

Perhaps the prettiest and most attractive of the recent arrivals are the Broad-Fronted Crocodiles from the Gold Coast. These are only small baby ones which we obtained, along with two young Mississippi Alligators, from the London Zoo in exchange for some Tropical Fish of which we had a surplus.

The Angel Fish are looking very fine and have grown considerably since they were first put into their tank; some of the specimens now exceed four inches across, having more than doubled their size during the past six weeks.

We would welcome offers to exchange any fish that are duplicated in our Aquarium for specimens of fish or reptiles not yet in our collection.

Now that the Lion enclosure is approaching a reality, we shall have to turn our attention towards

providing better accommodation for the Monkeys. The present Monkey-House is entirely unsatisfactory in every respect, but in the past we had to struggle to provide any accommodation we could that would give the animals shelter and warmth.

Three features will constitute the guiding principle in our planning—light, fresh-air, and warmth for the animals, but we shall also bear in mind the provision of comfortable accommodation for the public to watch the antics of the ever-popular Monkey.

With the gradual return to more normal conditions, we shall also endeavour to lay out the Gardens in a more decorative style than was possible during the war. Flowers and shrubs always appeal greatly to the public, and we are frequently asked what has become of all the herbaceous plants that used to so please the eyes of visitors in pre-war days.

During the war, when labour was scarce, weeds quickly took control and many plants that had given great pleasure went under to the commoner relations of our garden beauties.

DEATH OF MAJOR STANLEY FLOWER.

It was with deep regret that we received the sad news from Mrs. Flower of Old House, Park Road, Tring, Herts: that her husband Major Stanley Flower died on 3rd February last.

Major Flower was well-known in Zoological circles for his research work into the length of life of mammals and birds. For twenty-five years from 1898 to 1924 he was Director of the Zoological Gardens at Giza, Egypt, and from 1900 to 1912 Director of the Sudan Game Preservation Service.

Each year he visited Khartoum and brought back to Cairo large collections of animals to add to either his own stock or those of European and American

Zoos. He personally supervised the transport of these animals, travelling with them by river boats, rail, and steamer on journeys of 1500 miles or more and lasting six to eight weeks.

In 1902 his collection included 10 Lions, 4 Leopards, 7 Cheetahs, 4 Giraffes, 11 Antelopes, 1 Antbear, 18 smaller Mammals, 5 Secretary Birds, 3 Shoebills, 17 Storks, 1 Crocodile, etc. Imagine crossing Europe from Belgrade to Calais with such a collection, and one gets some idea of the work entailed in the feeding, watering, and controlling of these varied creatures. Giraffes alone need such great care, not only as regards their health but for their heads; bridges, telegraph wires, rocks, are all ready to decapitate them should watchmen fall asleep. Nevertheless, almost every year apart from the years of the first World War, the Nile carried safely on her waters this modern Noah with his collection of Arks.

Having visited over eighty Zoological Gardens in Europe, Africa and Asia, Major Flower published Lists annually until 1914 of the Zoological Gardens of the World. In 1914 there were 166 spread over the five Continents; it would be interesting to know how many of these still exist.

Mrs. Flower says that for some years his activities had been curtailed due to heart trouble, but he was always extremely interested in Chester Zoo and has left almost a complete series of "Our Zoo News."

A very interesting addition to the Zoo is "Bambi" a young male Fallow Deer presented by E. Evans of Halton Post Office, Chirk, Wrexham, who found him in the Shropshire countryside, only a few hours old and apparently deserted by his mother.

He is being bottle-fed and, we are pleased to say, is thriving and proving very popular with visitors, who do not as a rule have the pleasure of seeing so young a fawn at close quarters.



Photograph by Miss W. D. Lusk.

"This is how Pam likes to be nursed whilst eating her apple".

OUR NEW BABY— CHIMPANZEE "PAMELA."

By G. S. Mottershead.

For only two periods in the history of Chester Zoo, nearly seventeen years, has the collection been without a Chimpanzee. In 1931 we had the misfortune to lose both John and Mary the First, and were then without any of these animals for a few months until Mary the Second arrived. As many readers will no doubt remember, she became quite famous and was perhaps the most popular animal ever at the Zoo. She was a most accomplished individual, well above the average Chimpanzee in intelligence, and visitors would often remark that watching her caused them to wonder if there is, after all, very much difference

between Man and the Chimpanzee. Unfortunately, in 1939 Mary contracted a disease from a visitor and died.

We had many more Chimpanzees at Chester Zoo, at one time as many as eight. The war and its effects hit us very hard and, unfortunately, all our Chimpanzees gradually died through lack of sunshine and suitable food. Then in 1941 Phyllis arrived from Dublin, and when she died in the summer of 1945 we were once again without a Chimpanzee at the Zoo.

We are happy to say that we have now been successful in purchasing another baby, and we are hopeful that she will grow up to be as popular as the famous Mary. This lively little youngster's name is Pamela (Pam to her friends), and she is being cared for in a room in the house until such time as



Photograph by H. F. Parker, Esq.

"Feeding time for Bambi".

more suitable accommodation can be prepared for her. She is a lovely little creature, with a will of her own, and already we have had one or two tussles with her.

Although it was not intended so, she quickly attached herself to my elder daughter who has just been demobilized from the Wrens and who, in pre-war years, was in charge of our Chimpanzees. Pam is quite determined in her decision as to who she'll allow to look after her.

When Pam's new quarters are completed, she will be the proud possessor of both an indoor and an outdoor cage, thus having an advantage over her predecessors, and we intend to take all possible precautions in the future for the protection of our Chimpanzees against infection frequently carried by the public.

"CHRISTY".

By G. S. Mottershead.

Christy continues to make splendid headway and is growing every day in both size and beauty; she

is undoubtedly a lovely animal. Perhaps it is the result of her babyhood having been spent in the domestic surroundings of a house and in every-day contact with human beings, but she does seem always to wear a much less ferocious expression than is generally depicted on the face of even a young Lioness; at times her expression is almost benign.

She is much more happy and contented in her cage now than she was when first put into it, and is as playful as ever. It is most amusing to watch her and Peter at play. They are still very good friends, although Christy is by now three or four times the size of Peter. Peter has a favourite game. He will hang on to the last piece of meat, which usually neither of them want having already eaten their fill. When Christy has settled down after her meal, he'll settle down too, facing her—with the piece of meat between them—and his eyes wander from the meat to Christy and back again. He is inviting her to make a move towards the bait, so that he can have some fun. Christy, however, just lies there resting, with a detached expression on her face, and Peter still hopes that one day she'll try to take that piece of meat.

Although Christy is so much younger than Peter, she seems often to regard him with a look of inner amusement; it is as though she considers him a rather grotesque little object, and she's highly amused by his, to her funny, little tail. Occasionally, she'll go behind him and look thoughtfully at it, as if considering what it really can be, then she'll tap it gently with her paw and, when she thinks he's been naughty, she'll smack him—in the right place too. That's the mother instinct in her. Peter sometimes shows signs of irritation over Christy's apparent amusement at his expense, and will turn and snarl at her, but it's all between friends and no harm is done.

Needless to say, Christy was forgiven her escapade about which I wrote last month, and continues to enjoy her evening walks.



The famous "Mary, the Second", as a baby.

THE PASSING OF "COCKY."

Our Parrot Aviaries seem strangely quiet these days. One voice, the most persistent of them all, is silent and it is only in imagination that we now hear the resounding invitation "Come 'ere—scratch Cocky", for Cocky, the famous Slender-Billed Cockatoo, has passed on to a place where "Come 'ere" may not be responded to at will.

He was game to the last, this cockiest little bird in the Parrot Aviaries, and nothing less than the weight of his years could ever have defeated him.

Cocky chattered, laughed, and sang his way through life, to the perpetual delight and shaming of care-laden humanity. His favourite song, by the way, was "Rose-o'Day", which he rend(er)ed with the technique of a Prima Donna.

He will be remembered for his outstanding success as a broadcasting star in the "Roundabout" Programme of the B.B.C. last November.

"Good-bye, Cocky, we're very sorry you had to leave us, and we miss your cheerful chatter more than we can say."

News from other Zoos.

MAIDSTONE ZOO PARK.

By Sir Garrard Tyrwhitt Drake.

Despite cold and showery weather, August has been a very busy month and attendances at the end of the twenty-first week of this Season are 18,000 up on the same period of last year.

Although a year has passed since Peace was declared, the feeding of stock seems to be more difficult than ever.

Four young Coypus have been born and as, at the time of writing, these are over a fortnight old it looks as if they are going to thrive.

Guide to Chester Zoo.

Entering the Zoo at the main gate, visitors are advised to proceed along South Drive. In the past, this roadway was a public highway but was closed about sixty years ago on the construction of the road now known as Oakfield Drive.

Passing along South Drive, we come to the Elephant loading platform from which Molly the Elephant gives rides daily, except Fridays and wet days, during the summer months. Molly is a native of Ceylon, about twenty years of age, and has travelled considerably, having visited most of the European Countries at one time or another. She has, however, been in this Country for the past eight or nine years, and her Mahout has been with her since she was quite a youngster. Elephants, as a rule, live to a great age and continue to grow until they reach the age of about twenty-five years; Molly has grown considerably since she arrived at the Zoo in 1941.

Leaving the Elephant stand and continuing to the left, we notice the Raccoon enclosure, at present unoccupied. On our right we find the Malayan Bear enclosure, in which are at present Sally and Teeny, two female Malayan Bears. Sally has been in this enclosure for about ten years and Teeny (distinguishable by the white marking on her chest) for about eight years. The Malayan Bear is about the smallest of the true Bears and is often referred to as the Sun Bear. Its native home is Borneo and the Malay Peninsula, and it has many peculiar characteristics. Its food in the wilds consists mainly of honey and nectar, which its long tongue is particularly adapted to extract. The fur of the Malayan Bear is much shorter than that of other Bears and is black tending to brown on the face. Its eyes are small, as also are its ears, and very few of these Bears are without the white patch (varying to cream) on the chest, this patch more often than not being shaped like a letter "V". These little Bears have a very peculiar walk, turning their front toes right in, and they are capable of doing considerable damage with their claws. Sally and Teeny used their claws to such good effect in their enclosure that we had last year to have it reconstructed.

Walking clockwise round the Malayan Bear enclosure, we come to several newly reconstructed enclosures in which are domestic goats, etc., and, a

little further on, a yard occupied by Half-Bred Wild Swine. These are bred from a Wild Boar ex a large Black Pig on the one side and a Wild Boar ex a Tamworth Pig on the other side. When born, these Pigs are striped, but the stripes soon disappear.

Turning left at this point, we proceed along Elephant Walk to Central Drive which runs at right angles to the Cafes and main buildings. Facing the Cafe entrance is a Tea Garden and Buffet, where visitors can make their own choice of a meal or light refreshments at reasonable prices. Beyond the Tea Garden, work is now proceeding rapidly on the open-air enclosure for the Lions.

The Aquarium is on the right of the Tea Garden and runs underneath the Cafes. This exhibit is again open to the public, but we have found it necessary to now make an extra charge for admission to it.

Passing the Aquarium, we find on our left the old Court-Yard in which have been situate for many years the Lion-House, the Monkey-House, the Elephant-House, the Leopard-House, etc. Many alterations and improvements are in course of being carried out in this area of the Zoo, and the Court-Yard is about to be closed to the public. New accommodation, in more congenial surroundings, will be found for the animals.

The Lion-House contains some exceptionally fine specimens of the King of Beasts, Chester Zoo being renowned for its Lions. Here are usually to be found a family of cubs, nearly seventy having been bred since the commencement of the war.

Molly the Elephant can be seen in the Elephant-House, when she is not out giving rides or taking exercise.

Our stock of Monkeys is just now very low, but plans are in hand to build a new Monkey-House which will be stocked with all varieties including Chimpanzees.

The Court-Yard also contains an Aviary in which are the Griffon Vultures, one of which was hatched and reared in this Aviary (the only recorded instance of a Griffon Vulture being bred and reared in captivity).

We must not leave the Court-Yard without first taking a look at little Christy (the orphan Lioness cub whose mother Cassandra died when she was born last Christmas Day). She is being accommodated temporarily in the Quarantine House, pending completion of the open-air enclosure for the Lions,

and has now the company of Peter the dog for several hours daily.

Just outside the Court-Yard, on the left, are the Parrot Aviaries. We have here one or two very amusing specimens including "Rob-Rob" the Red and Blue Macaw, who has been at the Zoo since 1931 and is very popular.

Our route now turns left and up Bison Walk, on the left of which are the American Bison. One of these is an exceptionally fine bull "Ferdinand", with a magnificent head and shoulders, the largest American Bison we have ever seen. Some years ago, these animals became almost extinct, although at the beginning of the nineteenth century they ranged the North American Continent in hundreds of thousands.

The enclosure on our right, opposite the American Bison, (in the far corner of which is a well-sheltered pond) contains several varieties of Geese, including the Blue Snow Geese, Egyptian Geese, Chinese Geese, Ashy-Headed Geese, and the Magellan Geese.

Proceeding about a hundred yards or so up Bison Walk, past the roadway leading to the pond, we find on our right a smaller enclosure with a hillock in the centre. Here, with some goats, are the Mouflon (Wild Sheep of Corsica and Sardinia) now almost extinct.

Next, and still on our right, the two new Bear enclosures. In the first is "Trotsky" the Russian Bear with "Paddy" and "Won-Lung" the Himalayan Bears. Trotsky came to Chester Zoo as a small cub and, although he does not object to sharing his home with a lady like Won-Lung, he seems to strongly resent Paddy who was the last arrival in this enclosure. We suspect Trotsky of having grown up with the idea that he owns the Zoo!

Adjoining the Russian and Himalayan Bear enclosure is the Polar Bear enclosure. Unfortunately, our Polar Bear "Punch" died recently of old age, and we are now endeavouring to obtain another companion for Judy in this pleasant enclosure. Judy, who is about ten years of age, came to Chester Zoo from Skegness in the early days of the war. She loves to swim and frolic in her pool

which is one of the largest for Bears in this Country; the water is constantly changing, the inlet supply being at the bottom.

On our left, opposite the Polar Bear enclosure, are the Fallow Deer. These lovely creatures are, like all Deer, very timid, and care should be taken to avoid alarming them. They are natives of Northern Africa and Southern Europe, introduced to Central Europe and the British Isles some centuries ago, and now common in some of our large Parks.

Also in this enclosure are the Spanish Spotted Sheep, the Black St. Kilda Sheep, and the Soay Sheep.

Plans are in hand for a large Sea-Lion Pool and a Penguin enclosure, for which we propose to utilise part of the Fallow Deer enclosure adjoining Bison Walk.

The Wooded Dell at the end of Bison Walk is the home of Water Deer and several varieties of birds. Visitors are advised to proceed clockwise round this dell to the Fountain-Garden, where the filtered water from the Bear enclosures cascades in a water-fall and sprays from a fountain on its return journey to the Bears' swimming-pool.

The garden path leads straight on to the pond in the enclosure containing the sheep and geese. Walking clockwise round this pond we arrive at East Avenue on the left of which is the Orchard. Towards the end of East Avenue, on the left, are the Indian Spotted Deer. Turning sharp left and proceeding along a new roadway, on both sides of which are Aviaries containing birds of many varieties, we eventually come out onto the Lawns, where Peacocks, Cranes, Guinea-Fowl, and other birds, have complete freedom.

Now to the Cafe for a cup of tea.

