

SUMMER 1991



Chester  
**ZOO**  
**Life**

# Chez Nous



Mrs Bea Jones.

## New Council Chairman

Andrew Thomson is stepping down from the Chairmanship of Council feeling that a five year stint is quite long enough and Mrs Bea Jones has been elected to be Chairman of Council.

Andrew Thomson has guided the policy of the Society over five busy and exciting years. During his period, we have built the chimpanzee house and the railway, and a host of other improvements. The re-alignment of the zoo's access from Caughall Road to the A41 has been negotiated. In this five year period, the Society has generated just over £2 million in excess of its day to day needs, and reinvested this in the improvements and backlog maintenance that has been going on. Meanwhile, over 4.25 million visitors came to the zoo, including 370,000 children in educational parties. To round off the statistics of Andrew Thomson's term of office, 2,775 mammals, birds and reptiles were bred, culminating in the birth of

the baby Black Rhinoceros, Emma. (If we add the amphibians who bred, the number would swell to over four thousand. We have to stop there as the numbers of fish and invertebrates which have been bred would swamp the figures!)

I want to add my personal gratitude for the leadership and advice I have received from Andrew, and I know that I am voicing the feelings of the whole membership when I say thank you, Andrew, for a job very well done.

## Bea Jones

Mrs Bea Jones has been a member since 1971, and a council member since 1986. She has been Chairman of the Education and Membership Committee, and, with the Education Division, organised the highly successful symposia on the Mersey Barrage and the Irish Sea, and a special evening meeting on oil pollution.

Mrs Jones takes over the Chairmanship of Council at a very interesting time, for not only has Chester Zoo taken a brave step forward with the introduction of the railway (paving the way for the movement of the main gate to the West side of the zoo) but the country at large is racked in debate surrounding the decision to close London Zoo as we know it.

I am delighted that Bea Jones has taken up the helm of Council.



Andrew Thomson.

## London Zoo

The affairs of London Zoo make very sad reading to all zoo people, and especially to those of us who learned our trade there. Contrary to much that has been said, London Zoo has done a great deal to break out of the "menagerie" image, and most of its new enclosures are very good. It is, however, shackled by its past and by its position in a royal park.

Its legacy of architecturally interesting, but zoologically outdated buildings has proved too much, and clearly it pinned too much hope on deficit financing by government and not on surplus generation within its trading income.

Zoos must for ever be improving themselves, questioning themselves and adapting to the conservational and educational needs of the time. They have to do this aware of the time lag imposed on them by good management of species whose significance has passed, and they have to do this within their income.

Anywhere else in the world, the income of the "national zoo" would be of

the order of 25% - 50% from "trading" with the visitors, and the rest as a central grant. It is ironic that because London Zoo might just have been able to make ends meet on its £4.25 million turnover, but did not, it is being forced to close; whilst the nation's botanical equivalent, Kew Gardens, which could not conceivably make ends meet from its visitors, gets £13 million a year from government. Methinks there's some real bad thinking being applied to Britain's role in international animal species conservation, and that most of that bad thinking seems to be taking place in and around Whitehall. The lesson for Chester is that we must only do what we can support out of our own efforts, and lament the impending - but hopefully still to be avoided - closure of a great sister zoo.

Michael Brambell Director

## New Council Members

At the AGM on 11 May, two new members were elected onto the Zoo Council.

As Mr Brian Livingstone resigned from the Council, after serving for five years, his wife, Elizabeth was elected to take his place. Elizabeth Livingstone has been a very active and valued supporter of the Junior Members Club for many years, accompanying the youngsters on most of the trips and field studies, and helping to arrange the programme. She is a Senior Nursing Sister, and has a life-long interest in wild-life.

Mr Rennie Barnes, the second new member, is the Finance Director of Bibby

Line Group Limited, and his appointment will strengthen the financial expertise already present on the Council. Mr Barnes has lived in Kenya for many years, where he developed a keen interest in African wildlife.



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## NOTICE BOARD

### Library Facilities

The zoo's library is now located by the side of Oakfield House, by the otter enclosure. All members are welcome to use the library for reference, between 12 noon - 2 pm Monday to Friday, when Librarian Lynn Wilkinson is working. It may be possible to consult the library at other times by prior appointment with the Librarian.

If any members have any old, unwanted Chester Zoo guides, postcards or other Chester Zoo memorabilia which they would like to donate to the library archives, this would be much appreciated and fully acknowledged.

Lynn is hoping to compile a list of people willing to translate the occasional article from foreign publications. If there are any linguistically gifted members who could spare the time to help occasionally, please drop a line to Lynn, giving your name, address, phone number and language skill.

### Members Barbecue

Thursday, 6 July at 6.30pm;  
Russell Allen Lecture Theatre.

Illustrated talk on lion tailed macaques, by Dr. David Chivers, of Cambridge University. Dr. Chivers has a specific interest in these monkeys and his talk should be particularly informative.

Following the talk, there will be an Indian Barbecue at the Jubilee Cafeteria. Tickets should be booked in advance from Maureen Allsopp in the Membership Office. Price is £10.50, including the barbecue, and transport on the monorail. All proceeds to the Lion Tailed Macaque Appeal.



Photograph taken in the Project Tiger Reserve.

## PASSAGE TO INDIA

### Bales Tours, Wildlife and Photographic Tour of India.

Zoo Council Member Allan Guy has arranged with Bales Tours, to take a party on an exciting Indian tour next Spring. The trip will be from Tuesday 3 March to Saturday 21 March 1992, and will be personally escorted by Allan and Dinesh Durrani, a distinguished Indian naturalist, photographer and experienced tour guide.

India is justly proud of its rich wildlife, and now boasts 15 national parks, 152 wildlife sanctuaries and nine bird sanctuaries.

The 19 day tour provides a glimpse of the abundant variety of fauna to be found in North and Central India. Visits will be made to the Project Tiger Reserve at Ranthambhor; the world famous Keoladeo Bird Sanctuary at Bharatpur; the beautiful forested Bandhavgarh National Park, and India's first National Park - Corbett. Also included are visits to some of the great historical sites of the region, including the Taj Mahal at Agra.

The anticipated cost of this trip-of-a-lifetime is £1,886.00 per person, sharing a twin room. The final, confirmed rates, available in July, will not vary much, if at all, from this figure.

For further information and full itinerary, contact Mr Allan Guy, Mere View Cottage, Fish Lane, Martin Mere, Lancs L40 0RL. Telephone: 0704 895157. Maureen Allsopp, in the Membership Office at the zoo, also has details.

### Concessionary Tickets

Due to the current economic climate, it was necessary to make a small increase in the entry charge to the zoo from Sunday, 12 May. This means that members' concessionary tickets - the 20 half-price tickets that all adult members may purchase - have also been increased. If you are ordering these by post, please note that the price is now £2.50 each, and they may be bought in blocks of five - i.e. £12.50 for five tickets.

Concessionary tickets must be purchased in advance of the visit, and can only be obtained from the Membership Office - they are not on sale at the gate. Please enclose cheque, made payable to Chester Zoo, together with a stamped addressed envelope. The concessionary tickets are not available to Junior Members.

### Chester's Elephants

Elephant Keeper, Philip Whalley, is compiling a history of the elephants to be called "Half a Century of Elephants at Chester Zoo."

He has unearthed a lot of information and photographs from zoo files, but hopes that some members may be able to help with filling a few gaps. He is particularly in need of information and photographs for the period from 1941 up to 1965 - especially any photographs of baby African elephants from the year 1964.

If you have any information about Chester's elephants during this period, Phil would be delighted to hear from you. Any information, photographs or press cuttings will be carefully copied, and the originals returned.



## The Little Deers!

Two very attractive new arrivals at the zoo are a pair of pudus. The pudu is the smallest form of deer, and there are two species - the Northern and the Southern, or Chilean pudu. Chester's pair are of the Chilean species and came here in April, on breeding loan. The female is from London Zoo, and the male from Edinburgh.

They are very delicate little creatures, weighing only about 7 kg. They are very rare, and it is hoped that they will breed at Chester. A pudu at birth is only 15 cms high, but it reaches full adult height - all of 35 cms! - by the age of three months.

Visitors will find the pudus in the paddock behind the monkey house.

A warning to the gardening staff; according to Grzimek's Animal Encyclopedia, the pudu's favourite food is fuchsias!

## Speakers Needed

The Membership committee are always looking for interesting speakers for Members' Meetings. If you have any suggestions, please contact Maureen Allsopp.



## Star Spangled Dinner!

The next theme evening in the Oakfield Restaurant is on 4th July - American Independence Day. The menu will include traditional dishes from the U.S.A.

On 20 September, the theme is Across the Continents on the Orient Express. Halloween is celebrated with a magical menu on 31 October, and our traditional Beaujolais Nouveau evening will be on 15 November. Party Office are already taking bookings for Christmas meals during December!

To book a table at any of these special evenings, ring Debbie or Lyn in the Party Sales Office at the zoo.

## Another Boris Makes the News!

**(This time, not the chimpanzee!)**

Anna, our new Przewalski foal, was born on 10 April to Zuleika - one of the females who arrived from Whipsnade Park in July last year. Zuleika came with Helga and the male Janhold, from Marwell Zoo, to strengthen our group of these rare horses.

The timing meant that Zuleika could not have been mated with Janhold, as the gestation period is approximately eleven months. Therefore, a little detective work had to be done, to determine the new foal's father.

We were pleasantly surprised when a telephone call to Whipsnade confirmed that the sire was a horse called Boris! This particular Boris was born in Chester Zoo in 1979. Boris left Chester on a breeding loan to Woburn in 1982. From there he moved on to Whipsnade, where he is proving his worth as a sire - and also proving the value of joint management of rare species between zoos!

Our photograph, taken by Mike Coupe, shows Anna at just two days old with Mother, Zuleika.



## Everything in the Garden is Lovely

The zoo's gardens are lovely whatever the season. But for many visitors and staff, Springtime is the most glorious season of all, when all the thousands of bedding plants turn into their kaleidoscope of colour. When this issue of Zoo Life is published in early June, it is usually the "in-between" time, when the Spring colour is over, and the Summer blooming is yet to reach perfection. So - just to remind you of the glories of Spring, Zoo Information Officer, Michael Coupe took this picture in April, in one of the prettiest corners of the zoo - Mrs Mottershead's memorial garden.





Photography by Keith Freeborn

◆ The Director and the Duchess go walkabout.

Well, it didn't exactly go according to plan, and the Director has threatened instant dismissal to anyone who ever again says "It'll be all right on the night," but the Duchess of Kent was very gracious!

The day for the Royal opening of the monorail didn't start well. Early rain had everyone muttering about "typical Chester Zoo royal visit weather." But, echoing our last Royal visit two years ago, when the Princess of Wales came, the rain stopped just as the Royal car arrived. Her Royal Highness looked elegant, slim and very pretty, in a silk brocade suit, printed in delicate pastel shades. As luck would have it, in light of later developments, she was wearing low-heeled shoes.

and invited guests waved as the train went through the station on its first circuit. They knew that in about ten minutes, it would return to the station for the formal unveiling of the commemorative plaque. After 15 minutes, with no sign of the train, there was a slight concern, and the press photographers and television crews waiting on the platform were beginning to ask questions! Almost half an hour after she was expected, the Duchess, along with the other 23

## THE BEST LAID PLANS . . .

The Duchess was greeted by Mrs Bea Jones, making her first formal engagement as the new Chairman of the Zoo Council. Then, with her husband, Wynne, Dr and Mrs Brambell, Mr Hamilton Howatt (Vice Chairman) and Mrs Howatt, Bea escorted Her Royal Highness to the Jubilee Square Station, where she met Alan Hawes, Managing Director of C.P.M. Ltd, the contractors responsible for the monorail. They boarded the train, and it left the station without incident.

Over at the monkey house station, several hundred local school children

◆ "Are those flowers for me?" The Duchess delighted this young admirer by removing one flower from the bouquet, and giving it back to her.

passengers from the train, was spotted walking at a brisk pace over the bridge!

The train had come to a stop close to the Jubilee Square Station. After about 12 minutes, Steve Hutchinson, of C.P.M., was able to locate the problem and take the train into the station. The Duchess was happy to continue by rail, but - just in case! - the decision was taken to complete the journey on foot.

The Duchess arrived after her quarter-mile walk with a broad smile and happily unveiled the plaque on the platform. Then she was introduced to Emma, the 10 week old Black Rhino, who had been entertaining the waiting crowd. After this, despite the fact that her schedule was now running rather late, the Duchess went "walkabout", chatting to all the children, particularly the youngsters from Dorin Park Special School, and the adults from Dorin Court.

Office Assistant Nell Burgess had the task of caring for the Duchess's gift - not the usual bouquet, but a large cuddly tiger, presented by the Director, for the children at Helen House - a hospice with which the Duchess is closely associated.

Thank you, Ma'am, for your sense of humour, your graciousness - and the friendly way you banished the embarrassment of your hosts!

Our thanks too, to the Band of 1st Battalion, the 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment, with Bandmaster John Huggins, fresh back from the gulf, who entertained the waiting crowd with their music.

◆ Bandmaster John Huggins (right), conducts the Band of the 1st Battalion the 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment.





◆ Baby Emma is unimpressed by the Zoofari Overhead Railway, carrying the Duchess of Kent, as it "flies" overhead.



◆ The Duchess pulls the ribbon, and formally declares the railway open.



◆ The children from Dorin Park School (left), had waited a long time - and the Duchess didn't disappoint them.



◆ Is nibbling the long arm of the law an offence? Emma clearly is attracted by men in uniform!



# Give us a kiss!



Young Emma's birth on 28 February is probably the most important, in conservation terms that the zoo has had for a number of years. Until her arrival, there were only 16 Black Rhinos in the U.K., in just three zoos - the others are London and Port Lympne. Her parents, Esther and Parky, were also zoo bred

and their youngster is the first second-generation Black Rhino to be born in a British collection.

Because Esther was not producing enough nourishment, Emma is being hand-reared. Senior Keeper Julian Buffery, seen in our picture, is clearly a man who enjoys his job!



care. Any of the animals or birds that needed special attention was brought into the house. In fact, one large upstairs room in the Oakfield was used for this purpose until after the war. It was a happy day for my sister when Shavington Zoo closed down in December 1932 and she was reunited with Babs the chimpanzee who came to live at Chester. My sister had a special relationship with chimps, and after the war she cared for the young ones, including Meg, who formed the nucleus of the present day colony.

My 75 year old grandfather took over the gardens. In the kitchen garden he grew vegetables and fruit for use in the cafe and as food for the animals. Vegetables together with apples and pears from the large orchard were all carefully stored for winter use.

The three sectioned conservatory was my grandfather's pride. The vinery was made into a walk-through aviary for Australian finches. In its central section, a pond was built to house large toads and lizards. Banks of flowers in which green tree frogs lived, bordered the path around the pool. Grandad would feed the amphibians in the evenings with the worms he had collected during his day's work. The



third section of the conservatory housed orchids and a few snakes in glass cases. (This conservatory suffered such severe damage during the war from the nearby ack-ack battery that it had to be pulled down).

The main gardens consisted of rose beds in front of the house and herbaceous flower beds at the rear. The rest of the gardens were made up of lawns, Victorian shrubberies with clipped holly and yew trees. Amongst

these, my father had built pens and enclosures. He also put up a wooden pay-box near to the black and white lodge where my grandparents lived. It was my grandmother's job to collect the entrance fee of one shilling (5p) adults and six (old) pence children!

Visitors were asked to pull a string that rang a bell in the lodge. Granny would then go and collect the much needed entrance money. Later on, I got the job of sitting in the pay box and waiting for the few and far between visitors to arrive.

The animals, birds and reptiles were all part of our family, and I remember them with great joy. But the constant struggle to keep the zoo going during those early days is something I should prefer to forget.

During the next few years, we went from one crisis to another. It was not until the North of England Zoological Society took over in June 1934 that things started to improve. Although it continued to be an uphill battle every year to keep the zoo open, circumstances did get better. Then came the war.

More land had been bought during the 1930's, but it was not until 1946 that the zoo made its first profit.



These photographs are taken from Mrs Williams' family album. Opposite page: A very young June shares playtime with a kinkajou. Above, Grandad Mottershead, brings his market garden skills to the zoo; Below, the Mottershead sisters, Muriel and June, didn't need a rocking horse - they had a tapir!



# JUN NEWS



## Making Tracks

Going into the lion's den to take prints in plaster, is always a popular members' activity. Proudly displaying their

trophies are Victoria Hewitt, Stephanie Attwood, Charlotte Hillier and Amy Lingard.



## Matthew's Model Moving Megalosaurus!

**T**he Junior Members Dinosaur Day was great fun, and guest speaker, Dr Beverley Halstead shared his enthusiasm for his favourite creatures with a lot of humour!

The "make or paint a dinosaur" competition revealed what a talented and imaginative lot our Juniors are! There were some wonderful models and pictures, and Dr Halstead found choosing the winners was a very difficult job.

The first prize went to eight year old Matthew Scaife, of Oxtan, Birkenhead,

shown here with his model of a megalosaurus which was fitted with batteries to make it move and light up!



## Junior Members' Field Trips and Meetings

### THE CHESTNUT CENTRE

22nd June 1991 This time we will be heading off to Derbyshire to visit this charming nature reserve, where you will be able to see a few native animals such as foxes and otters, and have an opportunity to learn about some of the nature of our own country. We will leave the staff car park at 10.00 am, returning at 5.00pm. You will need a picnic lunch. Over eights will be welcome.

### DAY HELPING A KEEPER

20th July 1991 One of the events so many of you look forward to, when you are invited to spend the day working alongside one of the keepers. As the work involved is quite strenuous, we have to limit this event to the over twelves only. You will need a packed lunch, and you must wear wellies or strong, old shoes. We will meet outside the Oakfield at 10.30 am, and the day will finish for the Juniors at 4.00 pm.

### PLEASE NOTE

Bookings are needed for all Junior events. Please ring Penny at the zoo not more than two weeks before any event you would like to attend. Places are allocated on a first come first served basis, and may be limited. For those trips which involve either a bus trip or the provision of food or materials, a charge will be made to cover the basic costs, but we always try to keep this as low as possible. The list is provisional, and in exceptional circumstances we may have to alter the dates and times of some of the trips. We can't inform all members individually of such changes, so please keep an eye on the junior pages in Chester Zoo Life each quarter, so that you are always up-to-date with Junior Members' news.



## Penny's Little Foxes

Junior Member's Club Leader, Penny Rudd, is also the zoo's Personnel Officer, and her busiest time of the year is early Spring, engaging all the seasonal staff needed around the zoo. All the applicants for interview this year must have been very surprised to find two little fox cubs sharing the office! The cubs were found abandoned near the zoo, and Penny has adopted them. They go home with her at night, and come back to the zoo each working day. When they are old and strong enough, she will release them back into the countryside. However, their place will undoubtedly be filled by some other small creature in need of loving tender care. Penny's office has never been occupied solely by humans!

## Junior Members Barbecue and Moth Trapping Evening

Saturday 24th August 1991

Juniors of eight and upwards are invited along to the Zoo's Jubilee lawn to our Annual Barbecue. We hope our 'entomologist extraordinaire' friend Jon Delf, will be along to help us identify some of the wide variety of moths the Zoo's gardens produce, before we let them go at the end of the evening. Juniors should arrive at the Staff entrance at 7.00 p.m. and collection time will be around 9.45 p.m.

## Pennington Flash Country Park & Nature Reserve

Saturday 21st September 1991

More details in the next Issue.

