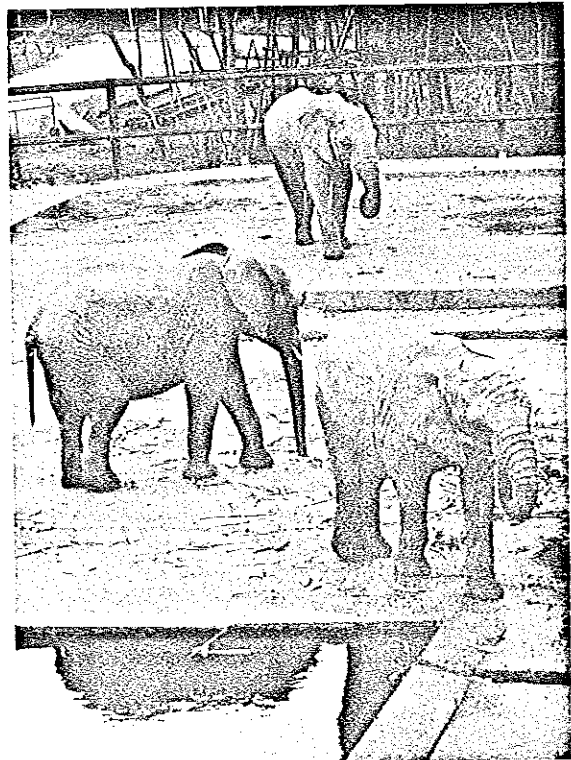


Help Newsletter 2: 38, 1979

New Enclosures at Howletts and Port Lympne



Masa Belah and Bwana in New Yard

1) Howletts

The African elephant house and yard at Howletts has been doubled in size and now includes a mud wallow, a twenty foot high tree stump and a dust bath as well as the old pool.

The dwelling has been raised three feet in height and its length has been extended by twelve feet. The group of 2.2 sub-adults seem to appreciate their new surroundings and their condition has improved noticeably. The two young bulls, Toto and Bwana, have been fighting so we intend to build an outside bull pen to separate them when necessary.

The cost of the above extensions was approximately £10,000 and the work was done by our own staff. On site labour: — Head Keeper — George Jacobs and assistant keeper — Malcolm Bennett, helped occasionally by Damian Aspinall and Jim Cronin. The welding of the new fence, which was made from railway lines and the gate work was done by Dave Jefferies, the woodwork by estate carpenter — Mick Woods.

Hard-standing yards were laid down for the tapir and gaur paddock and enclosed by heavy duty post and rail fencing. Enclosures were completed in the 'refreshment' paddock for the leopard cats and Diana monkeys.

A fine new enclosure was made for the breeding pair of snow leopards behind the garden pavilion. A seven foot chainlink fence with an 18" overhang was used and has so far proved effective in keeping these animals in. There is no other example in the world, to our knowledge, of an unroofed enclosure being used to house snow or indeed any other species of leopards.

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Dr. Leif Blomqvist from Helsinki Zoo was astonished at this innovation and predicted that the cats would escape. So far, after a year, he has been proved wrong.

The old clouded leopard enclosures behind the walled gardens have been renovated and the tiger yard behind the squash court has been converted to house the pair of snow leopards born at Howletts on 1st July 1977.

2) Port Lympne

A huge new Siberian tiger run has been built near the Hydrangea Walk. The enclosure is 80 yards long by 30 yards wide and boasts a large swimming-pool and a ramp. The project took six months to complete and cost over £10,000. Next to it a new double-den enclosure has just been completed for the only pair of fishers *Martes penanti* at present in the United Kingdom.

The pair of emus has been moved from the old tennis courts to a spacious run next to the wolves. The tennis courts will be grassed down to make a picnic area for the public.

A pair of the exceptionally handsome Black-necked storks from India *Ciconia nigra* has been introduced to a new enclosure below the African buffalo paddock. This swampy area should prove ideal for the species.

A large new wild boar run has been erected by Bill Curteis, estate fencer and woodman. This enclosure extends to over two acres and is situated directly south of the garden in the woodland.

John Aspinall

*Information compiled by Robert Boutwood
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