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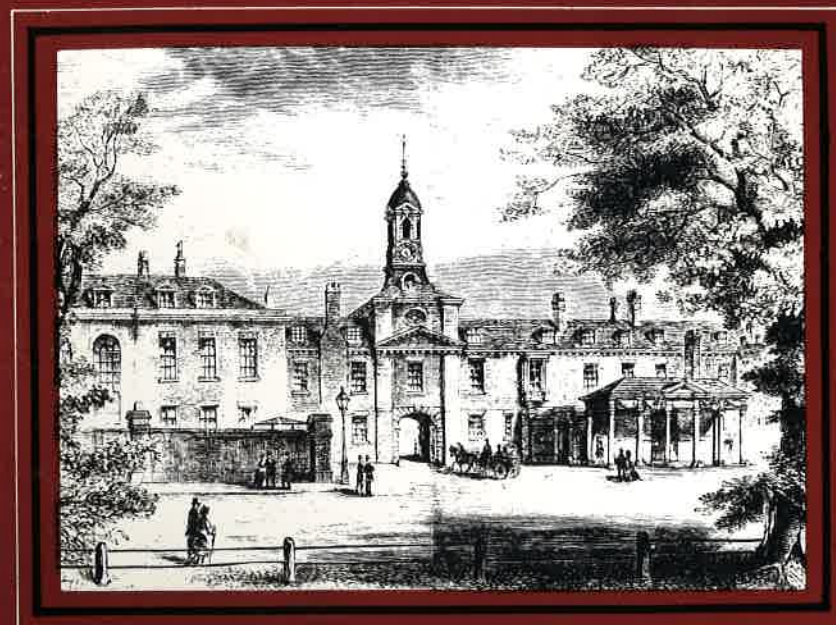
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Annual Report

1982-83



THE
Kensington
Society

THE
Kensington
Society

The objects of The Kensington Society are to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington by stimulating interest in its history and records, by protecting its buildings of beauty and historic interest, by preserving its open spaces from disfigurement and encroachment, and by encouraging good architecture in its future development.

Annual Report
1982-83

FRONT COVER

Clock Tower, Kensington Palace, c. 1860

By kind permission of Kensington Public Library



c. 1839 T. C. Turner artist J. H. Engleheart engraver

The Kensington Society

PATRON

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, G.C.V.O.

PRESIDENT

ALEC CLIFTON-TAYLOR, O.B.E., F.S.A., Hon. F.R.I.B.A.

VICE-PRESIDENTS

THE DOWAGER MARCHIONESS OF CHOLMONDELEY

THE RT. REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF KENSINGTON

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: IAN GRANT, Esq., F.R.I.B.A.

VICE-CHAIRMAN: R. T. D. WILMOT, Esq.

Barnabus Brunner, Esq.	Keon Hughes, Esq.
Michael Bach, Esq.	George Pole, Esq.
Mrs. G. Christiansen	A. Jabez-Smith, Esq.
T. Dunn, Esq.	Dennis Marlow, Esq.
Philip English, Esq.	P. W. E. Taylor, Esq.
Ian Grant, Esq., F.R.I.B.A.	R. T. D. Wilmot, Esq.

HON. TREASURER: Keon Hughes, Esq.

HON. SECRETARY AND EDITOR OF REPORT: Mrs. G. Christiansen, 18 Kensington Square, W.8

AUDITORS: Messrs. Croft, May and Co.

Foreword

I am, I feel sure, expressing the feelings of the entire membership in thanking our new Patron for the interest he shows in this Society. Last year His Royal Highness not only addressed us but stayed for the entire two-hour meeting, to the pleasure of us all. I myself am especially happy that in the person of our Patron we now also have a qualified architect.

Yet another embassy has now settled in our Borough: the Maltese Embassy in Kensington Square. This prompts some general thoughts on the siting of embassies in London. The large majority are either in Westminster or in Kensington; Westminster has about forty, while ours number a few more than that. Some, the Soviet Embassy in particular, spread themselves over several buildings.

There was, I suppose, a time when it was regarded as socially rather desirable to have an embassy next door or opposite, even though the embassies must always have been islands of social aloofness, not 'knowing their neighbours', nor showing much interest in the Borough as such. But *autres temps, autres mœurs*. Violence has unhappily increased in many parts of the world, and 'incidents' outside (and occasionally even inside) embassies can be unnerving for those living nearby. There are also far more independent States now than there used to be, each with an ambassador or minister at the apex of his own pyramid of officials. From time to time all of them hold receptions or give parties, which can be the cause of considerable traffic congestion.

Moreover, the staffs of some (I do not say all) embassies and legations are liable to leave their cars parked on yellow lines and in places where parked cars cause obstruction, and then, when the traffic wardens rightly rebuke them, to claim diplomatic immunity. This is anti-social behaviour which naturally does not pass unnoticed by the rest of us.

We do not want foreign representatives accredited to the Court of St James's to feel unwelcome if they choose to reside in our Borough. But as Kensington residents we do feel that we are entitled to ask them to see that their staffs play the game fairly, like everyone else.

We also feel justified in saying to the Foreign Office: 'Enough is enough'. This Borough already has as many embassies as it can decently contain; some would say, already too many. The time has surely arrived when wider dispersal would be in the best interests of everybody.

Alec Clifton-Taylor.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Assembly Hall, 23 Kensington Square, W.8, on June 23rd, 1982.

Mr. Alec Clifton-Taylor, President of the Society, was in the Chair.

He welcomed the Patron of the Society H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester, and said the Society was greatly honoured by the presence of His Royal Highness.

The Agenda was changed, and Mr. Ashley Barker gave his lecture before the business of the Annual General Meeting. The lecture traced the styles of the Kensington House from 1700 to the present day, this was received with much interest and Mr. Barker was thanked by the Chairman.

The lecture was followed by a speech by H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester.

His Royal Highness spoke of two important roles of the Society: he said it was the duty of a society to create a sense of enthusiasm and excitement in the area, to show people that it was not just a coincidence that the buildings appeared in their area, but that they represented the living form of the community. Secondly, he said a society must battle with those who wish to remove buildings of merit; it was a sad phenomenon that people who controlled these matters often lived some distance away. The Duke said he was pleased and proud to have been asked to follow his great-aunt H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, as Patron. The Chairman thanked His Royal Highness for his stimulating talk.

The Annual General Meeting then proceeded.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, previously approved by the Committee and circulated in the Annual Report, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman. Mr. Alec Clifton-Taylor, in opening the Meeting, said he and the Society deplored the mutilation of the truly monumental, Natural History Museum designed by Alfred Waterhouse, he said he considered it to be Kensington's finest building.

Mr. Ian Grant, Chairman of the Executive Committee, in moving the adoption of the Report, gave a review of the work of the Society throughout the year. He paid tribute to the Honorary Secretary's continued work for the Society. He said the Society continued to be concerned about the deterioration of local shopping amenities.

Two matters which had been of considerable concern to the Society during the year, were the Old Town Hall and the Natural History Museum. The Society strongly opposed the proposed demolition of the Museum's galleries and greatly deplored the manner in which the

Old Town Hall had been partly demolished.

Mr. Keon Hughes, Treasurer of the Society, presented the audited accounts for the year ending December 31st, 1981. He reported that advertising in the Report had more than half paid for the cost of producing the Report. He again urged members to pay their subscriptions on January 1st and so obviate repeated reminders.

Mrs. Marlow seconded the adoption of the Report and the Audited Accounts.

Election of the Officers and Executive Committee. Mr. George Pole had been nominated to fill the vacancy on the Committee caused by the resignation of Mr. John Maclay. Mrs. Christie proposed, and Mrs Stedham seconded, the re-election of the Officers and Executive Committee.

Any other business. Considerable concern was shown about the method in which the Old Town Hall had been demolished.

Mr. Ashley Barker, Surveyor of Historic Buildings, Greater London Council, denied that the G.L.C.'s decision to include 78-96a Kensington High Street, the Old Town Hall, Bank Melli and St. Mary Abbots Church of England School, in the Kensington Village Conservation area was a political, rather than an aesthetic decision, as had been claimed by the Borough Council.

The Rev. Ian Robson, Vicar of St. Mary Abbots Church and Chairman of the St. Mary Abbots Church of England School, left early to attend another meeting. Mr. Jabez-Smith was asked by the Vicar to put forward a motion deploring the demolition of the Old Town Hall. After some discussion it was agreed to send the following resolution to the Secretary of State for the Environment:

That this Society deplores the manner in which the Royal Borough Council is demolishing Kensington Old Town Hall without prior consultation or satisfactory alternative proposal:

- (a) to express the Society's acute displeasure to the Council and to the Secretary of State;
- (b) to request the Council to revise the Planning Brief for the site so as to secure an acceptable scheme.

Mr. Ashley Barker then gave a detailed picture of the Greater London Council's opposition to the scheme for demolishing the original top-lit galleries at the Natural History Museum, he pointed out that the Kensington Borough Council, Kensington Society and the Victorian Society had also objected to the proposed redevelopment.

The President, Alec Clifton-Taylor, closed the Meeting thanking His Royal Highness and members for attending.

Obituary

It is with sadness that we report the death of Dennis Marlow. He was an active member of the Executive Committee from 1975 until his death in January 1983. He was a weekly visitor with the Honorary

Secretary to the Town Hall planning department to examine the lists of applications before the Council. He attended and represented the Society at Public Inquiries. His devotion and energy to any matter affecting Kensington will be greatly missed by the Society. He was Chairman of the Edwardes Square and Scarsdale Association from 1974 to 1978. Notice on page 11.

Co-option of Members to the Executive Committee

We welcome Mrs. Hugh Leggatt as a co-opted member of the Committee. Mrs. Leggatt was born and has lived in Kensington all her life; her local knowledge will be of value to the Society and we hope that she will enjoy her work for the Society.

Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden was planted on the forecourt of the Town Hall in November. His Royal Highness, The Duke of Gloucester, Patron of the Society, has consented to unveil the Memorial Tablet on May 4th. The Annual General Meeting has been arranged to take place before the unveiling at 5.45 p.m. A Reception will be held after the unveiling, in the Foyer of the Large Town Hall. Tickets are not required for the Annual General Meeting or the unveiling of the Tablet, but are required for the Reception, price £1. Please apply for tickets before May 4th.

The Garden plan was drawn up by Mr. Fred Nutbeam, who was Gardener at Buckingham Palace until his retirement in 1978; care was taken to choose plants likely to survive under the prevailing conditions. An automatic irrigation system has been installed. The Society would like to maintain the Garden, anyway until it is established. We are still urgently in need of funds for the maintenance and replacement of any plants that die or disappear; as was stated in a recent letter to members, the greater part of the money, so far, has come from sources other than Kensington residents. Do please be generous so that this Garden is a fitting memorial to a great lady, H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, who served this Society and indeed the Borough well.

We would like to record our appreciation for the help given by the Town Clerk, Mr. R. S. Webber and by the Borough Surveyor Mr. M. Searle. Our thanks are also due to Mr. C. B. Eames for supervising the installation of the irrigation scheme, this scheme was introduced to this country from New Zealand by Mr. Eames.

Chelsea Physic Gardens

A visit was arranged for members to the Chelsea Physic Gardens in April; the Society was asked to give members the following information on page 10.

Membership

It is sad to relate that 42 members have resigned since April, 1982, many of them having been members since the Society was founded; they have been forced to leave the Borough, some due to leases coming to an end and finding alternative accommodation at a comparable cost impossible, but generally, leaving the Borough has been brought about by the high increase of rates, and these are people who cared about Kensington.

To be effective the Society must command wide support, will you please encourage your friends and all who care about the amenity and beauty of the Royal Borough to become members.

The annual subscription is £5 and it was due on January 1st. We still have some members, in spite of reminders, paying £1.05, £2.10 and £3 by Banker's Order; if you are one of these please will you turn to page 51 and fill in a new Banker's Order, not forgetting to cancel the old one.

The Society receives a list of planning applications from the Borough weekly, it thus bears a moral obligation to make observations upon individual cases. We find that a number slip through the net, and at times the declared policy of the Borough is not observed. The Society must depend on the vigilance of members informing it of threats in their areas to buildings and open spaces. The late Viscount Esher when President of the Society in the late '50s said: 'avert your eyes for a moment and someone will cut down a tree that has taken a century to grow or pull down a building which creates the character of a street, or put up a lamp standard of monumental vulgarity and then use the convenient word planning'.

There has of course been much improvement since the '50s, in the planning authority, and, in public awareness of our heritage, mainly due to the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act, but as one has seen by the demolition of the Old Town Hall in the early hours of a Saturday morning without reference to residents or their supporters, vigilance is indeed required.

Mercury Theatre

We have been approached by Mr. Jeffrey Wickham and Mrs. Felicity Gray about the future of the Mercury Theatre.

Mr. Ashley Dukes who died in 1958 was a member of the Council of the Society, he had been active in the theatre for half a century, in his capacity as playwright, producer, dramatic critic and theatrical manager. The most popular of his plays was *The Man with a Load of Mischief*; it was the success of this and others that enabled him to build his own theatre from a church hall in Ladbrooke Road, and, as the husband of Marie Rambert, the theatre became the home of the Ballet Rambert.

It was in this theatre that the public first saw T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*.

Campfield Press

Campfield Press has printed our Annual Report for many years and has taken a great deal of trouble in producing, I hope members will agree, a pleasing production. They have been invited to give a short account of their history. See page 38.

A selection of cases dealt with

Natural History Museum

It will be remembered from the 1982-83 Annual Report the concern felt not only by this Society but by the G.L.C., the Borough Council and the Victorian Society about the proposal of the infill project for the Alfred Waterhouse building. It involved the demolition of the eastern galleries, replacing them with a six-storey block which would have destroyed the architectural integrity of this Grade I listed building.

It is a matter for some rejoicing that lack of money has caused the project to be shelved. The Secretary of State for Education and Science, Sir Keith Joseph, has 'with great reluctance on financial rather than aesthetic grounds' had to drop the project! Sir Keith was acting on the recommendation of the Advisory Board for the Research Council, which had supported the east infill until the project estimated cost had risen to £25m.

P.S. Today as we go to press the Secretary was invited to attend a meeting with personnel from the Museum including the Architect. The Victorian Society was also in attendance. We were shown a new and much more modest scheme which does not involve the demolition of any part of the Waterhouse building. The Architect said the priority was to restore the Eastern Galleries to their original state and to get them back into use as soon as possible. A planning application is likely to be made in the near future. The Society would still like to see the replacement of some of the dreary temporary buildings in Queens Gate by a suitable Museum building.

Kensington Town Hall

If the shelving of the Natural History Museum project was the good thing to happen in 1982, quite the worst thing was the manner and time in which the Old Town Hall was demolished. For this to have happened on the instructions of the Leader of the Council and one or two Councillors is deplorable. For such tactics to have been used by an elected Council whose actions should be open and fully debated is quite shocking. Councillor Freeman claimed in his letter to *The*

Times that the G.L.C.'s proposal to include the Old Town Hall in the Kensington Village Conservation Area 'was a politically motivated attempt to embarrass the Royal Borough . . . contrived by the Labour majority at County Hall'.

The Society knows this to be quite untrue. As stated by Mr. Ashley Barker, Surveyor of Historic Buildings, Greater London Council, at our Annual General Meeting last year, his department as early as 1969 took the view that the Kensington Village Conservation Area should be extended south, to include the Kensington High Street buildings from the old library (now the Melli bank) to the church. In January 1982 the Kensington Society, and likewise other local groups and residents, were pressing for the Kensington Village Conservation Area to cover the Old Town Hall. Indeed there was a strong move by the Victorian Society to have the building listed.

Councillor Freeman contends that the building was not worth preserving, although he claims that he is quite fond of Victorian buildings. One is reminded of earlier days, in 1958 the Society requested the London County Council to consider group preservation orders, and, in 1960 the L.C.C. was opposed by the Borough Council in making a group preservation order on 6, 8, 9, 12, 15 and 17 Melbury Road, and Leighton House in Holland Park Road, this objection resulted in a public inquiry. The Society was represented by Sir Albert Richardson, P.R.A., Mr. Ernle Money and Mr. Timothy Phillips, the artist and pupil of Annigoni and Salvador Dali. The Borough Council was represented by the architect Mr. Maxwell Fry and Councillor Mrs. Diana Paul. Mr. Fry considered Leighton House 'architecturally extremely disjointed with painful and unpleasant marks of the owner and the times'. Councillor Mrs. Diana Paul declared Leighton House 'unworthy of a preservation order which would be completely unjustified'. I wonder who on the Council would dare to make such remarks now, 20 years on—in another 20 years the Council may be completely condemned for the demolition of the Old Town Hall, and not by just a few.

If the Council had sold the Old Town Hall in early 1979 for a realistic price, say £3m., the proposed development would have been more modest and acceptable. The ratepayers would also have had nearly £2m. in interest by now. The Council will be lucky if they realise £4m. from the present proposed scheme and there is no guarantee that we will get an acceptable development. The demolition of the façade is thus a double loss, we will have lost a familiar landmark and over £2m. in interest. This is not our idea of good stewardship.

The Society was represented at the Public Inquiry on February 25th by Mr Jabez Smith and Mr. George Pole, supporting the Borough Council's refusal for planning consent for County and District Properties Limited third planning application for the Old Town Hall site development.

Kensington Barrack site

This site has an area of 1.70 acres, the buildings were formally used as Kensington Palace Barracks. In 1979 a planning brief was approved for the site. The brief suggested development to provide shopping, office and residential accommodation, with an element of planning gain for sports facilities.

The application before the Council proposed the erection of a five-storey and basement shop and office block facing Kensington Church Street, a seven-storey penthouse and part basement residential building, a community sports centre, servicing and car parking space. The scheme was opposed by the Society and the West London Architectural Society; both Societies expressing the view that the Church Street elevation was not appropriate for such an important site.

The Council agreed to go back to the architects who were prepared to submit revised plans. We examined the amended drawings and although the plan showed an alignment with other buildings on Church Street and a reduction in the areas of glazing, it was still considered to be a poor and dull design for such an important site. We are glad to learn that the Council has refused planning consent for the scheme.

Ismali Centre, 1-7 Cromwell Road

An application was before the Council for change of use of the space within the Ismali Centre development which was allocated for an exhibition space, originally intended to be occupied by the Gallery of Crafts. The scheme at the time of planning consent was only acceptable because a separate exhibition gallery of crafts was included in the development. The Society opposed the change of use.

Land off Scarsdale Place, W.8

The application for Phase III of Pontings site was to provide a health centre and recreational facilities, the site is at the end of the Pontings site east of College House and north of the Tara Hotel. The Society considered the proposed scheme satisfactory and it was not opposed.

123 Old Brompton Road and 5 and 6 Roland House

Outline planning permission for this site was given in 1978 and the details were approved by the Council in 1981. The scheme provided 5,000 sq. ft. of offices; 5,000 sq. ft. for clinic and 28,430 sq. ft. residential. The new planning application is for a reduction of clinic space and an increase of office development; this was opposed by the Society. The Council has refused planning permission.

Prince of Wales Hotel, 16-32 De Vere Gardens and 7-21 Victoria Road

Planning permission was refused in April, 1982, for the conversion and extension of the hotel to provide 96 self-contained flats, 1,550 sq.

metres of offices, a leisure centre and ancillary facilities. A revised application was submitted which differed from the previous scheme by increasing the number of residential units to 114 and by providing 659 sq. metres less of offices. The Society considered that the revised scheme would still present the same problems as the previous plan, and the Society opposed the introduction of offices in a conservation area, the increased density, the erection of additional storeys on Victoria Road and De Vere Gardens with no off-street car parking. The leisure centre was also opposed.

An appeal against the Borough Council's refusal of planning consent has been made, the Society has supported the Council's refusal.

Land at the side of 1 Arundel Gardens, W.11

A planning application for building on land at the side of 1 Arundel Gardens was opposed by the Society, the Council refused planning permission, the revised scheme was also opposed. It was considered that there was no precedent for any intrusion on to the open ends of the 'Ladbroke and Arundel Gardens' resulting in the loss of views of open spaces. This has been the Society's frequently stated policy and the Council's stated policy in the District Plan. Mr. Grant represented the Society at the Appeal Inquiry supporting the Council's refusal.

2-3 Kensington Square, land at rear of 1-6 Kensington Square and rear Garden and Boundary Walls of 7 Kensington Square

An application for planning and listed building consent has been submitted to the Council. It is proposed to demolish the existing archway leading into John Barker's building yard and the industrial and office premises. The development would provide 1,465m² purpose-built offices, four new houses with integral garages and the replacement of the three existing flats in 3 Kensington Square with a single family house. A new roadway to be formed internally.

The Society has strongly opposed this application.

The scheme involves the loss of an open space and a garden area, and the loss of a builder's yard and light industry employment, which is contrary to the Council's declared policy.

It introduces offices in a conservation area in no way related to the locality. We hope that planning permission will be refused.

Other cases which have been of concern and where the Society has taken some action include

29-31 Onslow Gardens; 129 Earls Court Road (amusement arcade). Supported the Boltons Association against development 16 Tregunter Road; supported the Onslow Neighbourhood Association against the

proposed development for offices of St. Paul's Church, Onslow Square; opposed a pebble-dash finish on the front elevation of 16 Kensington Square; 47 Kensington Court; supported the Campden Street Preservation Society development 64 Campden Street; 48 Victoria Road roof extension, 20 Launceston Place; 2-24 Queens Gate; 1 Gore Street, 29-31 Elvaston Mews; 22 Eldon Road; road surface of Ladbroke Grove; 28 Kensington Court, requested compulsory purchase order owing to the condition and length of time the buildings had been empty; the same applied to 48-52 Queens Gate, the former is being constructed and the latter has applied for planning permission—the plan appears to be satisfactory; 239-251 Kensington High Street and 7-19 Earls Court Road; Allen House, Allen Street; 15 South End; supported the Edwardes Square and Scarsdale Association with regard to conservation boundary changes, also office development in Earls Court Road and Pembroke Mews; 5-7 Young Street; 49-53 Kensington High Street; Restaurant at the rear of Woolworth's building, Kensington High Street; the Society has also appealed for the upgrading from supplementary to statutory listing of buildings in Victoria Grove, Launceston Place and Canning Place; 6 Horbury Mews; 104 Lansdowne Road, 43-44 Ladbroke Square; 8 Vicarage Gate; 12 Gilston Road; Garden Sheds like allotment sheds in Ladbroke Square; inspected and commented on the Kensington Patent Lighting lanterns; requested the Secretary of State for the Environment to list the Victorian lamp standards; 57 Campden Street and rear of 70 Bedford Gardens, opposing the erection of house in garden; supported the Kensington Borough Council's refusal of planning permission 1-3 Stanley Gardens at Appeal; 150-152 Brompton Road and 21-25 Cheval Place.

West London Traffic Reform

West London Traffic Reform is an umbrella group for over 50 amenity and residents' associations along the western and southern boundaries of Kensington and Chelsea, who have a common concern about the large amount of long-distance traffic that is directed through Inner London which uses the Earls Court One-Way System.

Our main objective has been to seek lasting relief for residents by achieving an overall reduction in the level of traffic, and, in particular, to seek a ban on all those heavy lorries which have no business in London.

The Royal Borough has mistakenly placed all its faith in the construction of a 'relief road', to the exclusion of any other solution. Apart from the cost, which has proved to be prohibitive, the building of the road would be highly undesirable, as it would encourage yet more heavy through traffic, particularly heavy lorries, to come through Central London. The relief that such a road might provide for Earl's Court would be short-lived and the prospect of all this traffic disgorging on to the Chelsea Embankment is horrific.

We were extremely pleased that the West London Relief Road scheme, which was deferred by the last Greater London Council, has now been formally abandoned. What is needed now is some positive thought, by the Royal Borough Council and the Greater London Council, to be given to ways of reducing the traffic, banning the heavy lorries and changing the One-Way System back to two-way roads again.

MICHAEL BACH.

Chelsea Physic Gardens

There has been concern about its future since we heard there was to be a change in its administration. However, the news is reassuring. The City Parochial Foundation (Trustees of the London Parochial Charities) is now transferring the garden to a new body of Trustees. Chairman will be Dr. David Jamison and the 10 others, all with names prominent in the horticultural world, will include Lady Salisbury, Lord Gibson, Sir Giles Loder and Lord Hollenden. Mr. Philip Briant has been appointed Administrator, and the position of Curator will be filled by a Committee of four, chaired by Sir Giles Loder and including Professor J. P. M. Brennan, retired Director of Kew, Dr. Max Walters, Director of the Botanical Garden of Cambridge, and Mr. C. D. Brickell, Director of Wisley. A change in educational syllabuses has somewhat altered the Garden's functions but the Natural History Museum's laboratory and greenhouse, under Dr. M. Gibby, will be retained, and other research projects are envisaged. An Appeal for funds and for friends will shortly be launched and meanwhile volunteers for practical and clerical work will be welcome. Mr. Briant's telephone number is 352 5646 and he will be delighted to answer enquiries.

Obituary

Dennis Marlow

It is with deep regret that we record the death, peacefully in hospital on January 5th, 1983, of Dennis Marlow, a member of the Executive Committee since 1975.

Born in Wimbledon, Dennis Herbert Marlow was educated at Haileybury before entering upon his chosen career in sound engineering. (One of his assignments was the installation of the sound system in the Dome of St. Paul's Cathedral.) Later he was also concerned with computers. He and his wife Kathleen moved into Stratford Studios in the mid-thirties: both became devoted to Kensington, and to the preservation of all they felt to be best in its environment.

Dennis Marlow was a founder member, and later chairman, of the Edwardes Square and Scarsdale Association, and helped to form the Kensington High Street Study Group. He chaired the meeting at the Central Library on November 13th, 1972, when for the first time property developers in the High Street came together with the representatives of local amenity groups to discuss future developments. He was a member of the working party set up to co-ordinate local opposition to the many applications for hotels and offices on the Rank site, and of the group that sought to achieve an acceptable design for the redevelopment of the Pontings site.

When he joined the Executive Committee of the Society, Dennis Marlow gave unstintingly of his time and his energy. He undertook the monitoring of planning applications—a task involving the detailed study of plans, visiting sites and talking to developers and their architects and the Council's planning officers. He represented the Society at the long-drawn-out Public Inquiry in 1975 into the Council's refusal to grant planning permission for an office and residential development on the important Emperor's Gate site. The Society, which had supported the Council's refusal of the original scheme, felt that new proposals put forward by the developers were the best solution to the problem—an opinion shared by the Inspector in his Report.

In the absence of the President, he took the chair at the Society's Annual General Meeting in June, 1978. In September of that year H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, planted a tree at a ceremony in Kensington Square to commemorate the Honorary Secretary's 25 years of work for the Society. Special thanks were expressed to Dennis Marlow 'for the immense trouble he took over the arrangements'.

Kathleen Marlow, too, has been a good friend to the Society. To her we extend our deepest sympathy.

R. NEWCOMBE.

Other Activities and Future Arrangements

Other Activities

Visits were made to the Prudential Assurance Company's Museum, Holborn; The Geological Society, Burlington House; The Mormon Church, Exhibition Road; Mentmore Towers, Buckinghamshire; Southhill Park, Bedfordshire; Audley End, Essex; Penshurst Place, Tunbridge Wells; Local Historical Treasures, Public Library, W.8; Illustrated Talk by John Mallet at the Victoria and Albert Museum; Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors; Department of the Environment Sculpture Studio; Chelsea Physic Gardens.

Future Arrangements

May 4th, 5.45 p.m. The *Annual General Meeting* will take place in the foyer of the Large Town Hall, Hornton Street. It will be followed at 6.30 p.m. by H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester unveiling the tablet of the Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, Memorial Garden. A reception will be held after the unveiling. Tickets £1. Please note—tickets are only required for the reception.

June 14th, 1 p.m. A visit has been arranged to *Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire*. Reported by the National Trust to be one of the greatest 18th-century English aristocratic country houses with spectacular 18th- and 19th-century state rooms and many notable rooms designed by James Gibbs, and a chapel painted by Thornhill. The coach leaves Kensington Square at 1 o'clock. Tickets £6 which includes cost of coach and entrance fee. Tea will be available.

June 21st, 3-7 p.m. *Tea or wine in the garden, 18 Kensington Square*. Tickets £1—proceeds towards the Maintenance Fund of the Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, Memorial Garden.

July 19th, 1 p.m. A visit to *Petworth House, West Sussex*. Magnificent late 17th-century house, built by the 6th Duke of Somerset. Exceptionally fine collection of paintings including important works by Turner and Van Dyck. Carvings by Grinling Gibbons and 14th-century chapel. This visit has been arranged on the Connoisseur's day when extra rooms are open. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1 o'clock. Tickets £6.50 which includes cost of coach and entrance fee. Tea will be available.

September 23rd, 1 p.m. A visit to *Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, celebrated Jacobean house and Tudor Palace—childhood home of Queen Elizabeth I. House built by Robert Cecil first Earl of Salisbury in 1611. Fine portraits, furniture and relics of Queen Elizabeth I. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1 o'clock. Tickets £6 including cost of coach and entrance fee. Tea will be available.

October 26th, 3 p.m. Mrs. Jill Lever has kindly arranged for members to visit an Exhibition: *Historical Survey of Colour in Architecture of 18th-Century Interiors* at the British Architectural Library, Royal Institute of British Architects, 21 Portman Square, W.1. Tickets required.

Will you please enclose a stamped envelope when applying for tickets. A charge of 50p is made for non-coach visits to cover the cost of postage, printing and stationery. Coach tickets may be passed to non-members—money cannot be refunded. Tickets are not required for the A.G.M. or for the unveiling ceremony. £1 should be sent before May 4th if attending the reception.

Kensington Square

A reprint from *The Sunday Times*, April 17th, 1938

AN UNTOUCHED RELIC OF A PEACEFUL PAST

By Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede

The distinguishing feature of Kensington Square, the subject of Mr. Hanslip Fletcher's drawing on this page today, is that unlike the few squares in London of older date it still retains twenty-seven private houses, most of which embody structure and decoration of seventeenth or eighteenth-century origin. It may therefore be said to be unique.

Thomas Young, one of Sir Christopher Wren's workmen, began in the reign of Charles II to build houses in fields on the south side of the high road. In 1681 'King's Square' is mentioned in the records. Earlier, in 1672, a yeoman with the pleasant name of Francis Gotobed held two tenements in the manor, and is mentioned later as living in the square.

Kensington's Palace

The unexpected arrival of the Sovereign in the village transformed Thomas Young's enclosure into a place of importance. William III, disliking Whitehall and St. James's, purchased, in 1690, 'the very sweet villa' of Nottingham House from the Earl of Nottingham, son of Lord Chancellor Finch, and, with the aid of Christopher Wren, converted it into Kensington Palace. Consequently the square emerged into prominence. Faulkner, the historian of Kensington, writes:

Most of the houses were inhabited by persons of quality, ambassadors, gentry, and clergy; and at one time upwards of forty carriages were kept in and about the neighbourhood. In the time of George II the demand for lodgings was so great that an ambassador, a bishop, and a physician have been known to occupy apartments in the same house.

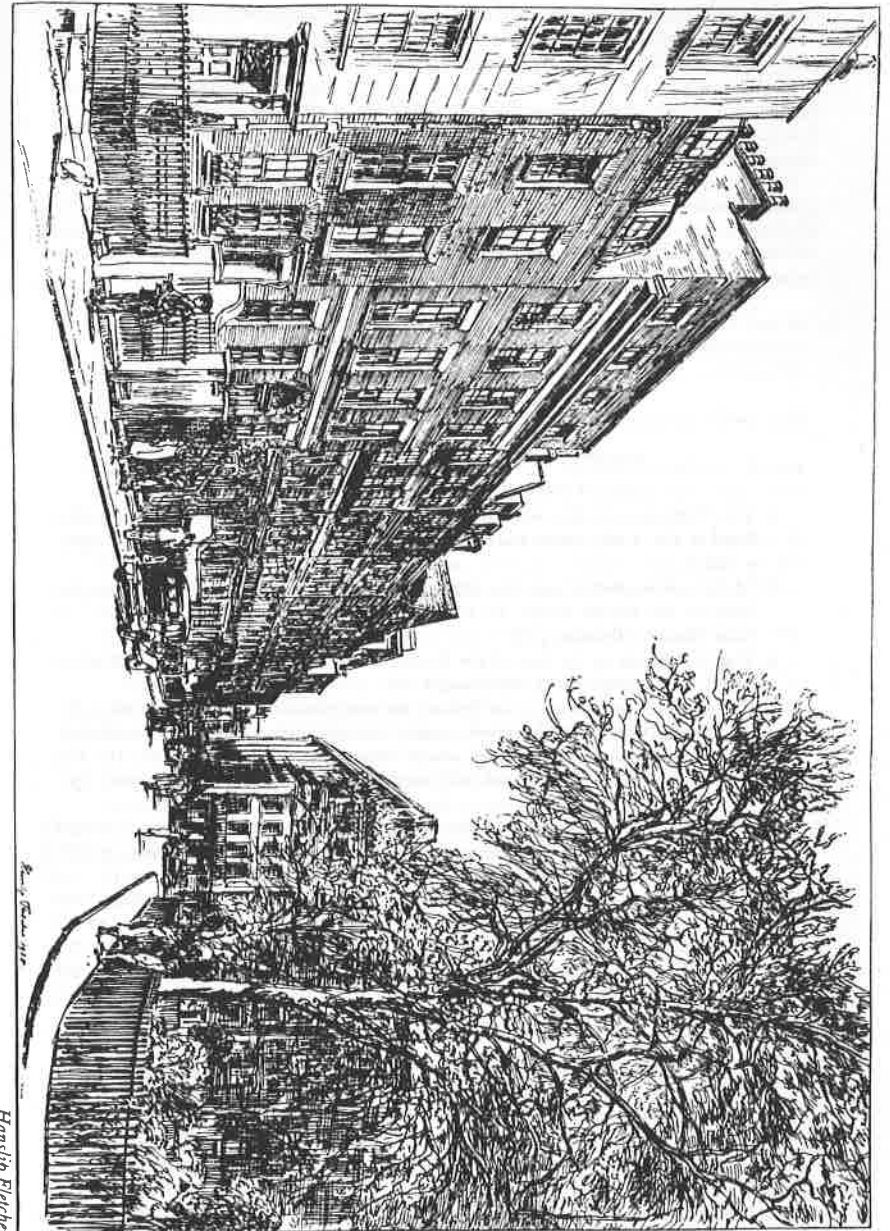
The incomplete records of these times give no full list of the occupants of the houses. But we hear of Thomas Lamplugh (son of the Archbishop of York), Claudine de Bragelongne (in attendance on the Duchess of Mazarin), George Pitt (Grandfather of the first Lord Rivers), the Earl of Gainsborough, the unreliable Duke of Shrewsbury (whom William III called 'the King of Hearts'), John Hough, Bishop of Worcester (who stood up to James II, and was offered but refused the Primaey), Sir Richard Blackmore (physician to the King and a voluminous writer), Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, the Marquess of Montgomery, Thomas Herring, Archbishop of Canterbury, and a series of Dutch Ambassadors.

Notable Residents

The Palace was deserted on George III's accession. Except for Mathias Mawson, Bishop of Ely, George Byng, son of Viscount Torrington, the diarist, and Talleyrand, whose character is referred to as being 'marked by urbanity of manners and strict punctuality to his payments,' the names of residents are mostly of unknown people. When Princess Victoria and her mother, the Duchess of Kent, came to Kensington Palace, the fortunes of the Square began to revive. Later in the nineteenth century, its beauty attracted well-known men from the literary, artistic and musical world, such as John Stuart Mill, Burne Jones, John Richard Green, Hubert Parry and many others.

Saved for the future

It is not, however, the names of occupants in the past on which the Square prides itself, but on its architectural charm and beauty, unsurpassed by any other Square in London. In Regency days the restorations and reconstructions were well done. About



West Side of Kensington Square 1938

Hanslip Fletcher

thirty years ago a few houses were badly rebuilt, yet the old-world aspect of the Square with its lovely central garden remains.

Few passers-by can know the historic and decorative features the houses contain: staircases, panelling, closets, ceilings, fireplaces, doorways, some dating back to the earliest times and telling the story of the vicissitudes in the Square history.

In old days objections were made to smoking, playing games, and introducing dogs into the garden, to horses being exercised 'to show off their paces to purchasers', and to the nuisance of a soap and candle factory nearby. Today the pressure of commerce has been a danger threatening the very existence of the Square. But the residents banded themselves together in 1923 to defend their houses by covenant, and in 1931 the garden was protected by the London Squares Preservation Act.

So that now, except for the existence of an unnecessary and objectionable parking-ground for cars, this little oasis in the midst of the growing turmoil of London traffic and the vast extravagances of modern architecture, still remains—and, let us hope, will be preserved—as a reminder of a more peaceful past and as a haven of rest and beauty for days to come.

Kensington Square

NOTABLE PAST RESIDENTS OF 'NUMBERED' HOUSES

A research by the late C. G. Boxall

- 1 The 'GREYHOUND' INN—mentioned in 'Esmond'. It belongs to Watney Combe Reid & Co. Ltd., the brewers, and its title-deeds reach back to 1686. *Loftie, p. 120.*
- 3 M. SOYER resided for one year (1857). Here he held conferences concerning the food for the British Army. In 1851 he had a 'Symposium of all Nations', at Gore House. *Merriman, p. 22.*
- 4 The first break in the line of the houses in the Square was about 1838 when MR. LEAKE rebuilt No. 4. *Merriman, p. 22*
- 7 Residence of the MARQUIS OF POWIS, the companion of James II, in his exile. In 'Henry Esmond' Thackeray makes this the home of Lady Castlewood, Beatrice, and Colonel Esmond, where they sheltered the Pretender. In 'The Virginians' Lord Castlewood still lived in this home of his ancestors. *Cunningham, p. 379.*
The Marquis of Powis, also known as the Marquis of Montgomery, is said by Sanders and also by Ridgway to have lived at No. 45. *Sanders, p. 260; Ridgway, p. 26.*
JAMES NATHANIEL MERRIMAN, M.D., who, with his father and brother, was medical attendant on the Royal Family and Apothecary Extraordinary to the Queen, lived here. *Merriman, p. 32.*
In 1876 General Sir Thomas Gore Brown, K.C.M.G., C.B., lived here. Sir Thomas was the son of the then Bishop of Winchester. He was afterwards successively Governor of St. Helena, New Zealand, Tasmania, and Bermuda. *Merriman, p. 22.*
John Sheppard, the well-known Registrar of the Diocese of London resided in this house till 1847. *Merriman, p. 23.*
- 10 Henry Hall Dixon 'The Druid'.
- 10-11 These houses were reserved for the Maids of Honour who could not find accommodation in Kensington Palace when the Court was there. *Cunningham, pp. 379-80.*
- 11-12 DUCHESS OF MAZARIN (1692). *Loftie, p. 117.*
The Duchess might have been Queen of England for, during King Charles's exile, he was desirous of marrying her. Her uncle, the Cardinal, opposed the match and she married the Duke of Mazarin, and then ran away from him to England. She entertained largely and gambled to excess and finally died, in

spite of a large allowance from Charles II, in very poor circumstances in Chelsea.

The parish books show that she was living in the Square in 1692, six years before Young finished his building operations. *Sanders.*

Beresford Chancellor in his 'Squares of London' says 'which house she actually occupied is unknown but as Nos. 11 and 12 in the south-east corner, originally one house, are said to be the oldest in the Square it is not improbable that she resided here.'

The L.C.C. Schedule of Buildings notes Nos. 11 and 12 as built c. 1700. Good ironwork.

Nos. 11 and 12 originally one house, but in other respects little changed since 1685.

- 14 J. R. GREEN, the historian, lived here from 1879 to 1883. Here the four-volume edition of the 'History of England', was completed, as well as 'The making of England'. Mrs. Green herself, so well known for her share in her husband's great work, and for her contribution to history, continued to live in Kensington Square till 1903.

HARRISON GORDON CODD resided at No. 14 and then for many years at No. 16 where he died 22nd March, 1840. Mr. Codd was Chairman of the Kensington Bench of Local Magistrates, a Deputy-Lieutenant of this County and Equerry to H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex. *Merriman, p. 20.*

- 15 No. 15 was refaced in brick about 1880. Contains an interesting ceiling and panels.

- 16 MRS. THACKERAY RITCHIE, who published, with Memorial Preface, 'Poems and Music of Anne Evans', who died 'in a pleasant, rambling old house', No. 16 in Kensington Square, on 19th February, 1870. *Merriman, p. 23.*

- 17 RICHARD CLARKE came to No. 17 about 1831 and made it his home for 24 years. He was a well-known Madras Civilian, Tamil Translator to the Government there, and Senior Member of the Board of Revenue. Lord Ponsonby (1931). *Merriman, p. 20.*

SIR CHARLES HUBERT PARRY, the distinguished musician, lived here from 1886 to 1918. *Chancellor, p. 315.*

Among the list of occupiers, the earliest recorded is George Pitt, who was in possession before 1693. Staircase is the largest in the Square.

- 18 JOHN STUART MILL lived here with his mother and sister. *Cunningham, p. 310.*

In No. 18 the manuscript of the first volume of Carlyle's 'French Revolution' was burnt by a careless servant in March, 1835, and Mill came at night 'pale as Hector's ghost', to break the news to Carlyle in Cheyne Row.

- 23, 24 Convent of the Assumption. Built 1894; George Goldie, architect. The Convent of the Assumption is on the ground where the Bishops (Mawson, &

- 24A Herring and Hough) resided, Miss Burnett kept a ladies' boarding school in the former residence of Bishops Hough and Mawson, on the site of which the Convent now stands.

- 26-27 Kensington Foundation Grammar School. Opened 1831 at 31 Kensington Square, adjoining houses Nos. 26, 27, 28, 25, 29 added between 1833-1877. School closed 1896.

- 29 No. 29 on the west side, has been little altered except by the addition of an extra storey. *Tipping, p. 9.*

The brothers SAMUEL AND RICHARD REDGRAVE resided at 29 from 1838 to 1841. Samuel Redgrave, of the Home Office, was a writer of Art. 'Century of Painting of the British School' (jointly with his brother) and 'Dictionary of Artists of the English School' are well known.

Richard Redgrave, R.A., C.B., the younger brother, was first brought into notice while living at No. 29 by two paintings, 'Quentin Matsys' and 'Paraclesus'. He held for many years the appointment of Surveyor of Crown Pictures and at South Kensington Museum was Inspector-General for Art.

This house has been well restored and preserved. Its earliest recorded owner or tenant was Sir Edward Wiseman, before 1705. The door frame was added in the late eighteenth century.

- 30 Double-headed eagles appear in the decoration of No. 30, the house of Mr. ARTHUR ROBERTS, which may have referred to some foreign diplomatist. *Loftie*, p. 119.
This is of Regency date, both in its exterior and interior.
- 31 MILE. ALBANI, the celebrated singer, resided at No. 31 till her marriage in 1879. *Merriman*, p. 23.
Rt. Hon. Lord Ronald Gorell, 1934.
- 32 NASSAU SENIOR, the economist and recorder of 'Conversations' with De Tocqueville and others, settled in the fine seventeenth-century house now numbered 26, after his marriage in 1821. He was Master in Chancery. *Sanders*, p. 262; *Merriman*, p. 20.
- 33 DR. JAMES VEITCH resided at No. 33 on the west side of Kensington Square from 1841 to 1847. He is remembered by his profession as the first who employed the fine round silk ligature in tying arteries. *Merriman*, p. 21.
Dr. Veitch first introduced vaccine inoculation in the Navy in 1800, under the auspices of the Earl of St. Vincent. *Chancellor*, p. 311.
MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL, the great actress, lived here. *Chancellor*, p. 315.
- 36 VERNON LUSHINGTON, Esq., K.C., the well-known lawyer, lived here. *Chancellor*, p. 315.
- 36-37 TALLEYRAND lived here after his escape from Paris in 1792. *Cunningham*, p. 380.
He escaped from Paris with a passport from Danton five days after the September massacres. He lodged, it would appear, at the house which has since been converted into two, and numbered 36 and 37.
- 40 In 1863 the residence of JOHN SIMON, C.B., F.R.S., Medical Officer to the Privy Council. A benefactor of the human race by his able advancement of sanitary knowledge.
Note. The line of houses was again broken in 1874 by Baron Grant's stables on the east side and the Roman Catholic Chapel on the south; several houses were rebuilt in the Queen Anne style. *Merriman*, p. 22.
- 41 SIR EDWARD BURNE-JONES lived here from 1865 to 1868. *Cunningham*, p. 379.
No. 41 exhibits Regency taste in reconstruction, both on the exterior and interior.
- 42 J. C. MERRIMAN: Surgeon. *Merriman*, p. 40.
No. 42 has a good wrought-iron gateway.
- 43-44 Were originally one house.
- 44 REV. WILLIAM BELOE. He died at No. 44 in 1817. His translations from the classics are obsolete; his laxity as Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum, which opened the way to wholesale thefts by a subordinate called Dighton, is forgotten. But his 'Sexagenarian' is sometimes explored for anecdotes of Dr. Parr, his headmaster, or Porson, his friend. *Sanders*, p. 261.
Faraday lived at No. 44.
- 45 JOHN MERRIMAN: Surgeon. *Merriman*, p. 17.
MARQUIS OF MONTGOMERY. He was one of the two noblemen who followed King James into exile. *Sanders*, p. 260.
The house being described as 'Situate and standing and being in the north side of King's Square, Kensington'. *Chancellor*, p. 310.

Kensington New Town

People who live in the Victoria Road district of Kensington, of which ¹Turner's shop at 15 Victoria Grove might be called the focus, may be interested in knowing something of its history.

Until the 1830s all the land now covered by Victoria Road and Grove and by Launceston Place was open country, and Kensington was still a separate town from London. Nottingham House had been bought by William III and as Kensington Palace it had remained the chief London Royal Palace until the death of George II in 1760. Queen Victoria was, of course, born and bred there but by that time it was no longer used by the Court, and the days of Kensington as a great social centre were over.

There was a series of large houses with considerable grounds behind them along the south side of the road from Knightsbridge to Kensington; Kensington House, for example, stood on the site of Prince of Wales Terrace, and Kensington Court, and Noel House on what is now de Vere Gardens.

Behind these houses was open country leading to the small villages of Brompton and Earls Court and on to the little town of Chelsea. Much of this land was devoted to nursery and market gardens. When Faulkner wrote his *History of Kensington* in 1820, the parish of St. Mary Abbots, within the same boundaries as those of the present Royal Borough, was still primarily agricultural and the total population was only 10,886.

A little country road called Love Lane ran from Kensington Road between Noel House and Kensington House down the line of Victoria Road and along the footpath which now runs through to ¹Turner's shop. This is the origin of this rather curious footpath. The lane then continued down Victoria Grove to join Gloucester Road. Gloucester Road itself (named after the Duchess of Gloucester, wife of a younger brother of George III) was called Hogmore Lane until the early years of the 19th century, and was an old right of way leading from the Kensington Road to the village of Brompton.

Another old country road in the district was on the route of St. Alban's Grove and led from Love Lane to Kensington Square after a turn or two on the way. The remaining streets were laid out with the development of the area.

A further interesting fact known about our area in its rural days before Victoria came to the throne is that the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV, in 1804 inspected the Kensington Volunteers in a field behind where the ²College of Estate Management now

¹ now Frog Hollow

² now Richmond College

stands. They were the Home Guard of that Napoleonic time. Their colours were worked by the Duchess of Gloucester and her daughter Princess Sophia Matilda. They were presented to the Corps in 1799, and are now in the parish church. Before the present house was built in 1885 as the High School for Girls, a building on this site in St. Alban's Grove had housed Richard Ansdell, R.A., an animal painter who rivalled Landseer in popularity, and apparently kept quite a zoo of animal models. (Presumably Ansdell Terrace was called after him.)

Our 'Village' was developed between 1837 and 1855 and was a suburb of Kensington rather than of London because the developments to the South and East of it came some years later.

It was called Kensington New Town and was one of several such towns dating from this time, of which Camden Town and Somers Town are two other examples. These towns were planned as entities with churches and shopping centres. The new fashion of semi-detached houses, first tried out some years before in St. John's Wood, was again much used. The boundaries of the New Town are not anywhere defined but we can take them to have been as follows: Victoria Road and the turnings off it, Victoria Grove, Canning Place, Launceston Place and Kensington Gate. The shopping centre was on the west side of Gloucester Road between Canning Place and Kynance Place. The shopping block to the south of Victoria Grove has unfortunately been mostly rebuilt but the existing northern block is a dignified range of buildings.

Christ Church, Victoria Road, was consecrated in 1851 and with its garden and decently proportioned interior is one of the more successful of the Victorian churches in London. It was designed by Benjamin Ferrey.

Much of the land on which the New Town was built appears to have belonged to the Vallotten family who lived in Rutland Lodge, Addison Road.

A valuation survives of 'a Freehold Estate designated as Kensington New Town' made for a certain Mr. Inderwick, who was presumably developing the Vallotten Estate, on December 14th, 1842. (The Inderwick family were tobacconists and snuff merchants. They still have an interest in the shop of that name at 45 Carnaby Street, W.1. Nearly the whole estate as shown in this valuation is still in his family though part is now in the ownership of the Tachell family, one of whom married a Miss Inderwick.) This valuation shows in 1842 the following houses built or building, although the numbers may not still be the same:

Canning Place, Nos. 1 to 10.

Victoria Grove, Nos. 1 to 23.

(Note the Bust of Prince Albert forming the keystone to the arch to the Mews.)

Launceston Place, Nos. 1 to 31.

(Then called Sussex Place.)

Gloucester Terrace, Nos. 1 to 17.

(West side of Gloucester Road between Canning Place and Victoria Grove.)

It would seem from this that the houses in Launceston Place were just being built because some were noted as still unoccupied. Nos. 11, 12, 19, 20 are shown as 'unfinished' and 23 and 24 are still 'vacant ground'.

St. George's Terrace (west side of Gloucester Road between Victoria Grove and Kynance Place) was also under construction.

The Launceston Place and Gloucester Terrace houses appear to have been let at rack rents of £50 per annum when first built, those in Canning Place at £40 per annum and in Victoria Grove at £35 per annum. Several houses had, however, already been let on longer leases at small ground rents. The whole estate at this stage of development was valued at £40,000 which must be a very small part of its present worth.

Without examining the title deed of all the houses in the area or going through the rating records of the Borough Council, it is difficult to arrive at exact dates when individual houses were built. This above valuation, however, gives us a good deal of information when it is compared with two maps of 1837 and 1852. Except where the houses have obviously been built subsequently, we can assign the following dates to buildings in their respective streets:

1837-42 Canning Place, Victoria Grove, Gloucester Terrace.

1842 Launceston Place, St. George's Terrace.

1842-52 Victoria Road, Albert Place, Cambridge Place.

1853 St. Albans Grove, Cottesmore Gardens north side.

1855 Cottesmore Gardens south side, Eldon Road, Stanford (about) Road.

The whole area is, therefore, early Victorian and householders indulge in flights of fancy when they say, as they sometimes do, that their houses are 'Regency' or even built for hangers-on to a Court which left Kensington Palace in 1760.

Kensington New Town is thus described in Leigh Hunt's *The Old Court Suburb* published in 1855:

'From this point to the town of Kensington we pass houses both old and new, some in rows, and some by themselves, enclosed in gardens. They are all more or less good; and the turnings out of them lead into a considerable district, which has lately been converted from nursery and garden-ground into more streets, and is called Kensington New Town. It is all very clean and neat, and astonishes visitors who a few years ago beheld scarcely a house on the spot. A pleasant hedge-lane paved in the middle, and looking towards the wooded grounds of Gloucester Lodge, where Canning lived, leads out of it into "Old Brompton". One street, which has no thoroughfare, is quite of a stately character, though deformed at the corner with one of those unmeaning rounded towers, whose

tops look like pepper-boxes, or "Trifles from Margate". (This certainly refers to Kensington Gate.) The smaller streets also partake of those improvements, both external and internal, which have succeeded to the unambitious, barrack-like streets of a former generation; nor in acquiring solidity, have they, for the most part, been rendered heavy and dumpy; the common fault of new buildings in the suburbs.

'This Kensington New Town lies chiefly between Gloucester and Victoria Roads. Returning out of the latter into the high road, we pass the remainder of the buildings above noticed, and, just before entering Kensington itself, halt at an old mansion, remarkable for its shallowness compared with its width, and attracting the attention by the fresh look of its red and pointed brickwork. It is called Kensington House.'

In 1855 Victoria Road was the site of the first London Airport as the following contemporary report recalls:

'The Eagle, the first aerial ship, will sail from Victoria Road, Kensington, in August with government despatches and passengers for Paris. It will in future voyages sail for Vienna, Berlin, Petersburg and other cities on the Continent. It is expected to reach Paris in 6 hours. The ship will be 160 feet long, 50 feet high and 40 feet wide and is manned by a crew of seventeen experimental sailors. The ship lies in the dockyard of the Aeronautical Society in Victoria Road opposite Kensington Gardens. It is stupendous as a first rate man-of-war, contains 2,400 yards of oil silk; the hull or frame of the ship is 75 feet long and 7 feet high and has a cabin in the centre 6 feet wide which is secured to the inflated balloon by ropes. An immense rudder is attached to the ship and there are four "flappers" by which the ship will be impelled. The deck is secured by netting for the safety of the passengers who will be admitted to the pleasure of the voyage at a reasonable rate.'

The airship came to an untimely end without leaving the ground and comic verses were written about it. It was housed at the top of Victoria Road near the Kensington Gardens. Prints and advertisements of the airship can be seen at the exhibition of Old Kensington at Leighton House. They are the property of the Kensington Public Library.

Kensington New Town (the name might well be revived) has a considerable early Victorian charm, suitable to a district with a Victoria Road and Grove and an Albert Place, and has long been recognised as being a pleasant part of London to live in.

EDWARD NORMAN BUTLER.

Edward Norman Butler was the first Treasurer of the Kensington Society and remained so until his death in February 1963.

A Racecourse at Notting Hill

Few parts of London are as historically uninteresting as Notting Hill Gate. No sightseers flock to see its sights because there are none to see. Most people think of it as a dingy street of second-rate shops which causes an irritating bottleneck on the way to the Great West Road. Its history has been short and unimpressive. One hundred years ago what is now the High Street was bounded by gravel pits and a few houses. Although it had the reputation of being the healthiest part of London, few took advantage of this recommendation and the land to the north of that road was still open country.

Yet, while Notting Hill Gate has achieved no niche in the guide books during its short history, it has one claim on the attention of those who are interested in London's past. Beyond the High Street on the way to Shepherd's Bush the road dips downwards. On the left Campden Hill rises steeply and to the north Ladbroke Grove rises less abruptly over the hill on top of which stands the Victorian Gothic Church of St. John. Round this hill, now a pleasant region of Squares and Gardens, once ran The Hippodrome. This, London's last Racecourse, had a brief but hectic existence between 1837 and 1841. In 1836 a certain Mr. Whyte of Brace Cottage, Notting Hill, purchased 200 acres of farm land surrounding Notting Hill for the purpose of forming a Racecourse, and the first Meeting was held on June 3rd, 1837. A Sporting Magazine of 1837 contains an excellent account of it: 'Making the Cours Aristocratique of Routine (alias Rotten) Row, you pass out of Cumberland Gate and then trot on to Bayswater. Then you arrive at the Kensington gravel pits and, descending where on the left stands the terrace of Notting Hill, you find opposite the wooden gates of a recent structure.

'Entering these I was by no means prepared for what opened upon me. Here, without figure of speech, was the most perfect Racecourse that I had ever seen. Conceive, almost within two miles of mortality, an enclosure of some two and a half miles in circuit, commanding from its centre a view as spacious and enchanting as that from Richmond Hill, and where almost the only thing you cannot see is London. Around this, on the extreme circle next to the lofty fences by which it is protected . . . is constructed, or rather laid out, for the leaps are natural fences, the Steeplechase Course of two miles and one quarter. Within this, divided by a slight trench from the place appropriate to carriages and equestrians by strong and handsome posts all the way round, is the Racecourse. Then comes the enclosure for those who ride or train as aforesaid, and lastly the middle, occupied by a hill from which every yard of the running is commanded, besides

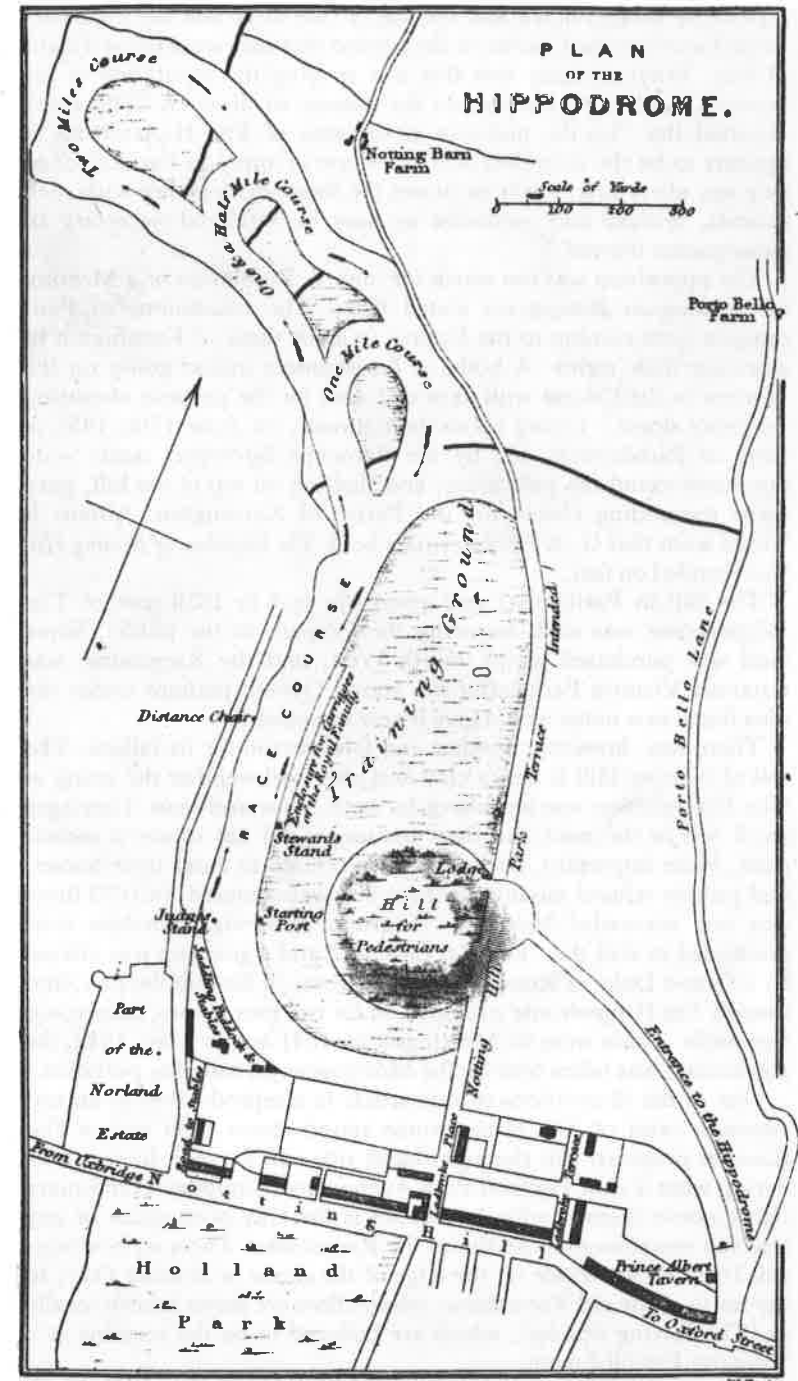
miles of country on every side beyond it, and exclusively reserved for foot people. I could hardly credit what I saw. Here was at our doors a Racing Emporium more extensive and attractive than Ascot or Epsom with ten times the accommodation of either, and where carriages are charged admission three-fourths less. This is an enterprise which must prosper . . . as a site of horse exercise can any riding house compare with it? For females it is without the danger or exposure of the Parks: as a Training Ground for the Turf or the Field it cannot be excelled, and its character cannot be better summed up than by describing it as a necessity of London life, of the absolute need of which we were not aware until the Possession of it taught us its permanent value.'

Another contemporary declared: 'The busy part of the community can assemble there with perfect ease in the afternoon and still have the satisfaction of having previously attended to the material interests of their respective avocations. The distance can be managed in an easy walk and when they repair to this resort they will have many amusements to occupy them and this, we opine, will be more conducive to the health of all classes than bustling one's way through the motley crowds compressed into a densely ambulating line in Hyde Park or sauntering listlessly through the gloomy walks of Kensington.'

In fact The Hippodrome had an excellent Press, and from all accounts at first it was fairly successful. On paper it might seem a good speculation on Mr. Whyte's part. Placed so near the centre of London, one would have expected the Racecourse to have been as successful as Dog Racing Tracks appear to be today. Also, as contemporaries pointed out, there were no competitors, and but for two circumstances Londoners might still be able to 'assemble there with perfect ease in the afternoon' after 'having previously attended to the material interests of their respective avocations'. The Earl of Chesterfield and Count d'Orsay were appointed Stewards and, though neither the stakes nor the standard of racing ever appear to have been high, one reads that 'splendid equipages occupied the circle allotted to them, while all their flaunting accompaniments covered the hill, filled with all the good things of life and iced champagne which can hardly be called a mortal beverage.'

Among those who are reported to have attended Meetings at the 'London Epsom' were The Duke of Beaufort, The Duc d'Ossuna, Lord George Bentinck, The Hon. G. Anson, The Hon. Charles Forester, C. Greville, J. Hunt, Colonel Copland, Count Daneskiold, Count Tolstoi, Count Batthiany, The Hon. A. Villiers, Baron Austen and The Hon. Gerald Upton.

But unfortunately for Mr. Whyte, the Proprietor, a footpath which ran over Notting Hill towards Paddington was closed by the formation of the Course. This met with immediate protests; public opinion appears to have been quite as strong on this point one hundred years ago it is today. The fence round the Course was



repeatedly broken down and crowds of 'the dirty and the dissolute' gained access to the Course on the pretext that they were using a right of way. Whyte, seeing that this was spoiling the reputation of his venture, applied to Parliament for powers to divert it. The Press reported that 'by the placards at the gate of The Hippodrome it appears to be the intention of Mr. Whyte to apply to Parliament to stop up, alter, sink, lower or divert the footpath, together with such tunnels, bridges and archways as may be rendered necessary in consequence thereof.'

The opposition was too much for him. A Resolution of a Meeting of Kensington Ratepayers stated that: 'The inhabitants of Paddington were coming to the Course to assist those of Kensington in asserting their rights. A body of Parishioners intend going on the morrow to the Course with axes and saws for the purpose of cutting the fence down.' Living up to their threats, on June 17th, 1837, a body of Parishioners, led by the Parochial Surveyor, made wide apertures round the palisading, and, halting on top of the hill, gave three resounding cheers for the Parish of Kensington. Almost it would seem that G. K. Chesterton's book *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* was founded on fact.

The Bill in Parliament was given up, and in 1839 part of The Hippodrome was sold, restoring the footpath to the public. Some land was purchased to the North West, and the Racecourse was renamed Victoria Park, after the young Queen, perhaps under the idea that a new name would give it new respectability.

There was, however, another and fatal reason for its failure. The soil of Notting Hill is heavy clay and after bad weather the going at The Hippodrome was too heavy for both horse and man. Carriages stuck fast in the mud and their occupants did not return a second time. More important, leading owners refused to enter their horses, and jockeys refused mounts on those that were entered. In 1839 there was one successful Meeting: 'A group of foreign notables condescended to visit the "London Epsom"' and a gold cup was offered by a Grand Duke of Russia. It was, however, a flash in the pan, and though The Hippodrome struggled on for two more years, failure was inevitable. There were no Meetings after 1841 and in May, 1842, the Racecourse was taken over by the Mortgagees for building purposes.

One of the illustrations to this article is a reproduction of an uncommon print of The Hippodrome round about 1839 with a Flat Race in progress. On the right-hand side can be seen houses bordering what is now Holland Park Avenue and Campden Hill Square rising above them. Ladbrooke Square is the only open space of any size still remaining on the site of the Racecourse. There is, however, still Hippodrome Place on the edge of the slums of Notting Dale, to the north of the old Racecourse, where there are mews known locally as 'The Racing Stables', which are believed to be the remains of a Training Establishment.

E. N. B.

Secretary of State, Robert Cecil, Lord Cranborne, the following note:

From your Library.

Sr, I have sent and bene all thys morning huntyng for players, Juglers & Such kinde of Creatures, but fynde them harde to fynde, wherefore Leavinge notes for them to seeke me, Burbage ys come, & Sayes ther ys newe playe that the quene hath not seene, but they have Revyved an olde one Cawled Loves Labore Lost, which for Wyt & mirthe he sayes will please her exceedingly. And thys is apointed to be played to Morowe night at my Lord of Sowthampton's, unless you send a wrytt to Remove the Corpus cum causa to your house in the Strande. Burbage is my messenger, Ready attendyng your pleasure.

Yours most humbly

Walter Cope

This letter was probably written from the library at Theobalds, Cecil's mansion near Waltham Cross. It is concerned with Cecil's urgent need to stage some entertainment after the New Year's banquet he was arranging at his fine new house in the Strand, in honour of James I's Queen, Anne of Denmark, and her younger brother, Ulrich, Duke of Holstein, who had arrived in England three months earlier. The phrase 'sending a writ' to ge the performance of the play transferred from the Earl of Southampton's house in Holborn to Cecil's house in the Strand is clearly an amusing remark between two friends who had both had their legal training at Gray's Inn.

Cecil's reply to Cope's letter is not known, but as Cecil and the Earl of Southampton were both Councillors to the Queen they would have been able to come to some friendly agreement. Whatever happened they all had a good time, for on January 15th Cope's cousin, Dudley Carleton, wrote his friend John Chamberlain to say that 'Last night's revels were kept at my Lord Cranborne's, where the Q. with the D. of Holst and a great part of the Court were feasted, and ye like two nights before at my Lord of Southampton's.'

STEPHEN PASMORE.

Reports from Local Societies

ABBOTSBURY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The ever-increasing volume, noise and, it would seem, speed of through traffic in Abbotsbury Road, and in particular the growing number of heavy vehicles, remain matters of serious concern to members. The Association is therefore anxiously awaiting the making of regulations under the Traffic Act 1981 which will open the way to the re-installation of traffic speed control humps by the highway authority.

The Association is also apprehensive about the possible repercussions of reversion to two-way traffic in Warwick and Holland Roads as proposed by the G.L.C. Past experience, when there have been road works in Holland and Addison Roads, suggests that more traffic may use Abbotsbury Road in an effort to avoid the queuing and congestion that seems likely to be caused in Holland Road if this proposal is implemented.

Support has been given to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Fair Rates Association in its campaign against unfair and unjust rates due, in large measure, to the exactions of the G.L.C. and I.L.E.A. The Association believes, however, that in the longer term only the total abolition of these entities in their present form will adequately protect the interests of members. Recent indications that Government thinking may be moving in that direction are therefore most welcome.

Forthcoming events include the Summer Party at The Orangery on June 7th, and the Annual General Meeting at Leighton House on November 10th.

Chairman: Professor R. J. L. Allen, O.B.E., 63 Abbotsbury Close, W.14.

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. P. Gillis-Legg, 26 Abbotsbury Road, W.14.

THE BOLTONS ASSOCIATION

This has been a year of both good news and bad for the Association. On the positive side, our membership has continued to increase; some 300 households out of the 900 in the Conservation Area now belong to the Association. We have had several enjoyable and lively functions during the year. We have continued to monitor all applications for development in our area, as we have in previous years, and we have spent a lot of time and effort in ensuring that the views of the Association are known to the Council.

On controversial applications for development in the area we have had some victories and some defeats. A proposal for a rear extension in Tregunter Road, which cuts into a 'critical gap' at the corner of the Little Boltons and the vista across the gardens to the Boltons itself, was finally approved by the Council, despite our strong opposition and the fact that it directly contravened several of the principles laid out in the Conservation Area Policy Document. (Some improvements to the original proposal had been achieved and the Council were influenced by the fact that an outright refusal, if upheld on appeal, would have provoked a claim for compensation.) This decision has caused many members to question how strongly the Council is prepared to stand behind the guidelines contained in the Policy Document. This year we have to record that our Planning Controller, Stanley Ivatts, has had to stand down from the duties that he has carried out so energetically and ably for the last few years. He will, however, remain on the Committee of the Association.

We have continued to provide our support to the Fair Rates Association during the year, although it is clear that it is going to be some time yet before any real progress is made in resolving the gross inequities in the present rating system.

Chairman: Mr. Philip English, 14 Milborne Grove, London S.W.10.

Secretary: Mr. John Griffith-Jones, 17 The Little Boltons, London S.W.10.

THE CAMPDEN STREET PRESERVATION SOCIETY

The Society has continued to attract the support of a significant number of residents of the street and a well-attended Annual General Meeting was held in April. The main activities of the Committee have been the monitoring of planning applications. These were in the main concerned with minor alterations to existing houses, although there has been one major application for the replacement of a single-storey studio on the south side of the street by a multi-storey house. The Society has consistently opposed the schemes put forward for this site since the mid-seventies, as they all involved a reduction of open

space and a change to the street panorama which many residents found unacceptable. In the event, planning permission was refused by the Council, a decision confirmed by the DoE on appeal. It is expected that further schemes will be proposed and the Society will continue to examine these, and actively oppose those which intrude on the limited remaining garden spaces and affect the character of the street. The construction of rear extensions has continued relentlessly and general opposition to these developments has met with almost no success. As a result, the tiny yards and patios behind the houses in Campden Street have become darker, dank and airless. Sadly, it seems only a matter of time before the space between the backs of the terrace houses in Campden Street and Peel Street is entirely filled in.

Hon. Secretary: Peter Lewis, 31 Campden Street, W.8.

EDWARDES SQUARE AND SCARSDALE ASSOCIATION

The Conservation Area Policy Statement for the ESSAA area was published at the end of 1982. As a result of the study the area was extended to include St. Sarkis Church and Iverna Gardens—now Grade 2 listed buildings—and Wynnstay Gardens, Ilchester and Allen Mansions flats as well as Kensington High Street (Nos. 197-213 odd).

Once again, the sites to the west and east of the north end of Earls Court Road have been a consideration. Work is now in progress on the west side next to the Chelsea Building Society which will consist of a mixed development. Plans have been approved for two buildings of different styles with four floors of offices in one building and three floors of flats with shops. The style of architecture is interesting and includes a large glass panel. The east side of the road has still to be developed and plans are awaited for this site.

The Association has taken part with other amenity societies in commenting on the continuing saga of the Old Town Hall.

The Association is worried about the tendency of developers to carry out alterations before planning permission is approved and constant vigilance is necessary. Planning applications are usually for rear extensions and use of roof space to create more rooms. We continue to oppose requests for office use in the residential part of the Earls Court Road as there is still a tendency for this to creep in from the High Street. We have also opposed office use in Pembroke Mews, designated by the Council as an area for small local industry, which is gradually being squeezed out of the area.

ESSAA decided, after complaints by members, to ask for modest changes in traffic signs in Edwardes Square to stop large lorries and through traffic, which the Council has agreed, as well as changes in Allen Street and adjacent streets. The question of traffic and parking is a constant problem.

Chairman: Mr. H. Sinclair, 107 Abingdon Road, W.8.

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. M. Bain, 6 Phillimore Terrace, Allen Street, W.8.

EARLS COURT VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Once again our main preoccupation during the year has been with the Golly's garage site on the corner of the Earls Court Road and the Cromwell Road. A set of proposals and plans was thrown out in the first half of the year, but a second set are still under consideration by the council although amendments have been asked for. The council have also taken note of the plans that the residents' association had drawn up and hopefully some of our ideas will be incorporated in the final development. One of the architects used for this work is one of our residents, Katie Johnson, who has been helpful in so many aspects of the work and lobbying undertaken in the last few months of 1982.

The executive committee members have been replaced by a new committee, led by our chairman, David Hurst, and many thanks are extended to the retiring members who have worked so hard for our small community and its preservation.

Chairman: David Hurst.

Vice-Chairman: Jean Gilbert.

Treasurer: Tim Hextall.

Secretary: Lucy Whistler, 5 Redfield Lane, S.W.5.

THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION

In January, members were invited by Mr. D. Mizen to a preview visit to the Barbican, and enjoyed an interesting evening.

The Spring Members' meeting was on March 8th. Mr. Angus Stirling, Deputy Director of the National Trust, gave a talk on 'The National Trust in the Eighties', which was much appreciated.

There was a Spring News Letter, and the A.G.M. was held in June. The Knights of St. Columba Club, venue of Ladbroke meetings for some years, has been sold, for conversion to flats, etc. The Autumn Members' meeting was held at 2 Lansdowne Road, but this was found to be a little too small for the numbers present. The Autumn meeting was addressed by Mr. Ashley Barker, Surveyor of Historic Buildings for the G.L.C., on 'The Kensington House and its Inhabitants', an interesting review of social changes during the last century.

Postcards of the Ladbroke Area of views dating to earlier this century are now available for sale.

A matter which has concerned the Association and residents most deeply has been the planning application to extend 1 Arundel Gardens by building over the adjoining garden, facing Kensington Park Road. This and a modified application have twice been refused by the Council, and the matter has gone to Appeal. The Association's Chairman and Vice-Chairman attended the Appeal. The result has not been published to date.

Hon. Secretary: Miss M. Cosh.

NORLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

The menace of increased traffic continues to be the most serious threat to our Area. It is the focus of much of the Committee's work and is likely to remain so. Judged by many other central London residential areas ours is, by and large, relatively quiet. The notable exception to this is Royal Crescent and St. Ann's Villas where the position is thoroughly unsatisfactory.

An arbitrary decision by London Transport to route airbuses through Royal Crescent has not helped at all and is being strongly opposed by this Society, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Royal Crescent Residents who are naturally most affected.

The long-term problem centres around the existence and development of the Freston Road Industrial Estate. A study by a joint working party of officers from the G.L.C., the Royal Borough and the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham is continuing. It is hoped that its conclusion will be that a slip-road connecting the Industrial Estate to and from the short section of the M41 Motorway is the only answer if the buildings and amenities in Royal Crescent and St. Ann's Villas are not to suffer.

Only the top half of one façade on the east side of Royal Crescent still remains to be painted to conform with the common colour scheme. To avoid slight variations in colour which result from the individual painting at different times the Royal Crescent Association is considering a block repainting scheme to ensure greater uniformity of appearance and some economy of effort and costs.

Norland Square where the painting is not controlled by an Article 4 Direction has nevertheless benefited as more façades have been uniformly painted and certain architectural features restored and repaired.

The conversion into three attractive shops of Nos. 6, 8 and 10 Addison Avenue, previously a light engineering works with rather a dull exterior, has been carried out with some imagination and charm though the Ionic columns are unusual in the area.

The Notting Hill Housing Trust Development in Norland Road is now partially occupied and the final hand-over by the Contractors is expected shortly, though the pedestrianisation of Norland Road is still to be completed, which must be dependent on full and free access through Royal Crescent Mews, which is still suffering from car repair workshops and their attendant litter.

Considerable improvement has been achieved at the South end of Portland Road. On the East side the former second-hand shop has been virtually rebuilt and excellently converted into a Veterinary Surgery and work is in progress on the derelict building which has long been an eyesore behind Kentucky Chicken. On the other side of the street the reconstruction and redecoration of Nos. 21 and 31 will also be an improvement.

Hon. Treasurer: P. L. G. Gurney, 1 St. Ann's Villas, W.11.

ONSLow NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

After two or three years of humdrum but most necessary routine, the Association has found itself heading two important local crusades, firstly the fate of St. Paul's Church, Onslow Square, and secondly the proposed closure of the post office at South Kensington.

With the church we believe we have 'won the first battle, but not yet the war'. The church has been closed for several years following the amalgamation of the parish with that of Holy Trinity, Brompton, and this spring the Diocese put the property up for sale by developer tender. When the selected scheme was announced, a project to convert the fabric into 10,000 square feet of offices with basement car park and studio flats above, we objected because of the intrusion of office space into this beautiful residential square. We held a most successful public meeting at which the overwhelming majority present voted against the proposals, especially when it was learned that the Parish wished to regain possession of the building for its own use following the great expansion of activity at Holy Trinity. We were ably supported by our Ward Councillors and the Borough Planning Department and because of this opposition the Diocese and the selected developer withdrew their planning application, and the parish were given the chance to prepare a scheme. At the time of writing we are waiting to hear whether they have had success with their efforts. The Association has offered to help in any way possible.

The closure of our local post office, surely one of the busiest in West London, would be a serious blow to South Kensington as a 'village' centre. The suggested alternative in Exhibition Road, beyond the Science Museum, would be most inconvenient to residents and local businesses, and indeed prove a hardship to the elderly and disabled. It is remote from public transport and can only be reached by crossing the Cromwell Road or traversing the museum tunnel and a long walk.

Our A.G.M. was as successful as usual and we are indebted to our guest speakers, Cllr. Jonathan Wheeler and Neville Conder, the latter for his most interesting talk on our new local landmark, The Ismaili Centre.

Chairman: Hugh Brady, 16 Selwood Terrace, SW7 3QG.

PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

The conversion of Sion Convent, now renamed Thornbury Court, into forty-five flats and the redevelopment of the former garden behind has once again been the chief concern of the Association. The Chairman, the Hon. Secretary and a member of the Committee attended the formal opening by Sir Brandon Rhys Williams, M.P., and the reconstruction, which provides two- to four-bedroom flats at prices from £60,000 upwards, met with general approval. Some are already occupied. Problems remain concerning the design of some of

the windows from which glazing bars are omitted, quite out of character with the neighbourhood. Building has not yet begun on the garden site behind, but agreement has been reached on the elevation of the new houses, and more important, of the new block on the Denbigh Road frontage, which is to have an elevation of somewhat neo-Georgian character with a triangular pediment. This is expected to provide an amusing contrast in a street with so many diverse elevations.

The fear that the occupier's action in allowing his front garden in Chepstow Villas to be used for trading as part of the Portobello Market might be followed by others, wishing to cash in on this source of income, proved to be justified in 1982. Fortunately his successors had more regard for the quality of the environment and did not permit the practice to continue and, with the help of the Planning Department of the Council, the practice now seems to have ceased.

The worst eyesores in the area have disappeared in the course of 1982, namely a house in Pembridge Crescent which had been gutted by fire, and a property in Chepstow Villas which had been allowed to become a slum. The former has been rebuilt, including all the detail of the stucco frontage, and the latter has been reconstructed to a design similar to its original elevation. Another welcome development has been the restoration of missing cornices on two properties in the area. There is much room for improvement of this kind, for a large percentage of the houses have been deprived of their cornices and other stucco enrichment in the course of the last half century.

It is hoped that some of the funds still available from the Brighten Up the Borough scheme might be employed in this Conservation Area. Its most important feature is undoubtedly Pembridge Square and projects have been discussed for the restoration of railings and piers in the front gardens of the south side of the square, or, if sufficient contributions can be secured from the landlord and users of the garden, the restoration of the Pembridge Square garden railings. These were removed during the Second World War and the chicken wire, which was substituted has reached the end of its useful life. The severe frost during the late winter of 1981/82 caused much damage to stucco enrichment, some of which had only recently been restored. Much of this has yet to be replaced.

The process of increasing the population by turning large flats into smaller ones, turning maisonettes into two flats and adding flats in roof spaces continues apace. A few houses remain in single-owner occupation but, as the rates increase annually, one fears that these houses also will be cut up and their well-proportioned rooms divided into two or three cubicles.

J. F. Hayward.

ROYAL CRESCENT ASSOCIATION

The restoration of Royal Crescent, initiated by the European Architectural Heritage Year 1975, continues to make slow, but noticeable,

progress, monitored and encouraged by this Association. A major achievement is that all houses (with the exception of the upper storeys of one) are now decorated in the standard colour scheme of magnolia and white.

Among the other matters of community concern to which this Association are giving their attention are the various types of traffic which use Royal Crescent as a major thoroughfare; in particular the A2 Airbus to and from Heathrow, which London Transport have routed through Royal Crescent since April 1982, to the detriment of the environment and contrary to the wishes of the Royal Borough. The Association, aided by numbers of residents of Royal Crescent, are keeping up pressure on London Transport in support of the Royal Borough's efforts to get this imposition removed.

Chairman: C. O. Pole Carew, 1 Royal Crescent, W. 11.

THURLOE AND EGERTON ASSOCIATION

The Conservation Area Policy Statement for Thurloe Estate and Smith's Charity was printed in its final version at the end of 1982, having been adopted by the Council during 1981. It covers both the area of our Association and that of the Onslow Neighbourhood Association and both groups were closely involved in its drafting. Besides outlining general policies, it gives specific and detailed guidance for roof and rear additions, alterations to front elevations and shops and change of use in the Conservation Area and it includes a planning brief for the South Kensington Station site. It is interesting to recall that it was the threat of a massive development on this site that first led to the formation of Thurloe and Egerton Association in 1973. The Policy Statement has now been in use for over a year and is proving to be a valuable document: we certainly believe that it will strengthen the Council's hand in resisting applications which could so easily erode the character of the area.

One such application, for change of use rather than architectural character, took up much of our energy last year: this concerned the introduction of a casino at the Rembrandt Hotel on Brompton Road. In February, in spite of very strong opposition from the Association and many individual residents, the applicants won an appeal against the Council's earlier decision to refuse consent for the casino. However, they still had to apply for a gaming licence and the Association pursued its objection strongly at the hearing before the magistrates in April. This time we were successful and the licence was refused on the grounds that the applicants had failed to prove that there was a need for another casino in the area. The Association was grateful for the support of the Kensington Society at the two hearings.

The other matter concerning both our Association and the Kensington Society last year was the fate of the Natural History Museum,

and we were delighted to learn in October of the Secretary of State's announcement that the infill scheme would not now go ahead.

Turning back to local planning issues, last year we reported the sad case of No. 12 Hans Road, a unique house designed by Macmurdo, left almost derelict by a succession of planning disasters. This year has seen a happy ending to the story. The house has been carefully converted into offices, retaining many of its original features, particularly the fine staircase, and we have put it forward for one of the Council's Environmental Awards.

Hon. Secretary: Susan Walker, R.I.B.A.

VICTORIA ROAD AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

It takes crisis to provide the impetus for a Residents' Association to be formed. Our crisis was the proposed conversion of the Prince of Wales Hotel, which fronts on to De Vere Gardens and Victoria Road, to housing, offices and leisure complex with additional storeys as well. After defeating that proposal, two more followed. This made us decide an Association was needed to cover the whole of the Kensington New Town Area of the De Vere Conservation area.

No sooner had we formed than we found planning problems in almost every street. The main source of these problems appears to be the fairly relaxed attitude of the development control officers to the Council's District Plan policies. We are very concerned about this and will be pressing for more care and attention in future.

One means of securing this is for a Conservation Area Policy Statement to be prepared for this area, which will provide guidance on a street-by-street basis; also what proposals for alterations and extensions are appropriate. We will be pressing the Council for this to be given high priority.

Another source of concern is the abuse by motorists of the one-way system in Victoria Grove, which is one of the exits to the environmental traffic management scheme. After years of complaints a recent accident has brought this matter at last to a head.

We hope next year to be able to report success on these three areas of concern.

Hon. Secretary: Tessa Stevens, 23 Victoria Road, W. 8.

The Campfield Press, St. Albans, Hertfordshire

Owned by The Salvation Army, The Campfield Press has occupied its present location in St. Albans, Hertfordshire, since 1901, although the movement had possessed its own printing works prior to that time.

For the first eleven years of William Booth's work in journalism his printing and publishing was done by firms kindly disposed to his newly introduced form of militant evangelism, but it was in 1878 that he approached a Mr. Crow—a printer and close confidant—with the suggestion that he should bring his printing equipment to London and work fully for The Salvation Army, which he did in 1879 and occupied premises in Fieldgate Street, Whitechapel, from whence on December 27th, 1879, the first copy of *The War Cry* was produced under the most trying of conditions, using an old machine which sometimes spoiled as many sheets as it printed. In 1890, however, the establishment moved to Clerkenwell Road where it remained until it was transferred to its present home, producing the first *War Cry* to bear the imprint The Campfield Press on February 15th, 1902.

It was reported then that 300 employees formed the work force 'in The Campfield Press which stands amongst fields and lanes and is reached from the Salvation Army siding on the Great Northern Railway', but over the years significant changes have taken place both in the environment and methods of printing, for Campfield has continually sought to update its image and ensure that the highest standards of printcraft are maintained—a goal still held in view to this present day.

The most significant changes in production took place in 1977 when, after having been primarily a letterpress house since the inception of the company, it was decided to enter the realm of 'offset printing' in real earnest, which meant a complete change in the method of composition, forsaking the use of hot-metal type and etched blocks and embracing the newest technology of the day incorporating a computerised form of phototypesetting and the production of lithographic plates for the pre-press origination.


Whatever the method of production, it is a fact that the majority of the output over the years has been and still is in Salvation Army periodicals (the circulation of the weeklies is 20,000,000 annually!), literature and stationery. In addition, however, Campfield is highly esteemed by many commercial users (including Her Majesty's

Stationery Office), whether it be for small general items or booklets, magazines, brochures, catalogues or the binding of books as paperbacks or in cloth or leather cases.

For the benefit of the work force a Works Christian Fellowship is held regularly and addressed by leaders of various Christian communions. Employees have developed their own sponsorship scheme for deprived children in various Salvation Army homes world-wide and they also assist in the education of eleven children. The Campfield Press Bowling Club participates in local and county tournaments where the members acquit themselves with credit.

Lieut.-Colonel Gordon Bailey.
Director.

Casa Porrelli



The Casa Porrelli restaurant in Launceston Place, W8, was formerly a charming, old-fashioned tea shop called 'The Golden Kettle', and still retains much of the old-world character. This small Italian restaurant situated at the heart of Kensington 'Village', has been catering to the locals for over 30 years and offers a varied three-course menu at £6.35 (children £4.25) and a pasta menu at £4.55. An ideal venue for relaxed business entertainment and family parties. Close to Kensington High Street shopping area and the exhibition centres around Earls Court.

Casa Porrelli, 1a Launceston Place, W8
Telephone 01-937 6912

BALANCE SHEET
as at 31st December 1982

		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<u>1981</u>			
<u>£</u>	Assets		
	Office Equipment at cost,		
47	less depreciation		40
44	Income Tax Recoverable		—
	Balance at Bank		
3,834	Deposit Account	2,690	
3,212	Current Account	<u>2,349</u>	
			<u>5,039</u>
			7,137
	Liabilities		
10	Subscriptions received in advance	15	
115	Creditors for Expenses	<u>132</u>	
125			147
<u>£7,012</u>	Net Assets		<u>£4,932</u>
	Accumulated Fund		
2,946	Balance at 1st January 1981	2,891	
	Add: Surplus from Income and		
(55)	Expenditure Account	<u>88</u>	
2,891			2,979
	Princess Alice Memorial Fund		
4,121	Balance at 1st January 1982	4,121	
	Excess of Expenditure over Income	<u>(2,168)</u>	1,953
	 KEON HUGHES, <i>Hon. Treasurer</i> G. CHRISTIANSEN, <i>Hon. Secretary</i>		
<u>£7,012</u>			<u>£4,932</u>

In accordance with instructions given to us, we have prepared the foregoing accounts from the accounting records of The Kensington Society and from information and explanations supplied to us.

CROFT, MAY & CO.
Chartered Accountants

33 Marloes Road
Kensington
London W8 6LG
4th February 1983

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
for the year ended 31st December 1982

		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<u>1981</u>			
<u>£</u>			
1,434	Subscriptions		1,514
	Other Receipts		
229	Bank Deposit Interest		255
—	Income Tax Recoverable		14
648	Receipts for Visits		780
665	Advertising in Annual Report		515
500	Donations		500
			<u>3,578</u>
<u>3,476</u>			
	Expenditure		
570	Printing, Typing and Stationery	647	
745	Postage and Telephone	782	
1,173	Producing Annual Report	1,079	
115	Professional Charges	132	
68	Sundry Expenses	43	
45	Hire of Hall and Meeting Expenses	85	
615	Coach Visits, etc.	678	
133	Subscriptions and Donations	17	
59	Tree Planting	20	
8	Depreciation of Office Equipment	<u>7</u>	
3,531			3,490
	Surplus (Deficit)		
<u>(£55)</u>	Transferred to Accumulated Fund		<u>£88</u>

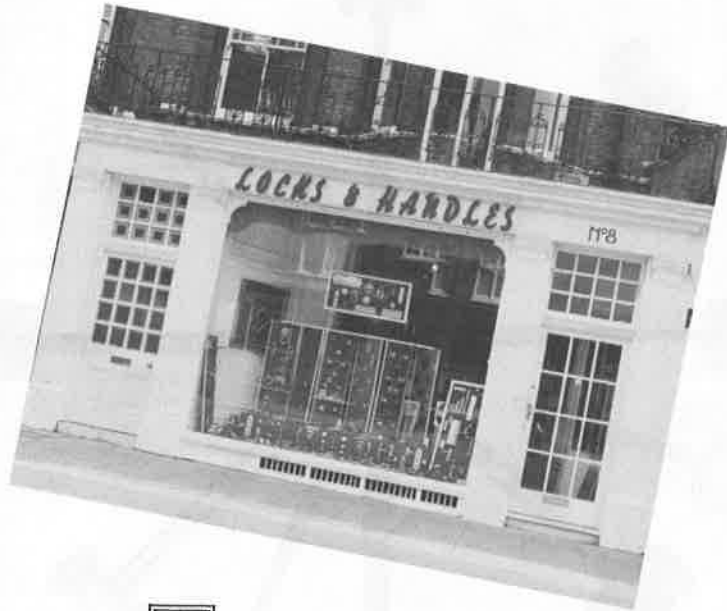
PRINCESS ALICE MEMORIAL FUND
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
for the year ended 31st December 1982

<u>1981</u>		£	£
<u>£</u>	Income		
5,079	Donations and Sale Proceeds		1,697
<u>101</u>	Bank Deposit Interest		293
5,180			1,990
	Expenditure		
—	Cost of Memorial Garden	3,564	
645	Tree Planting	—	
153	Cost of Sale Items	155	
72	Postage and Telephone	84	
106	Advertising	—	
36	Hire of Hall and Meeting Expenses ..	—	
47	Sundry Expenses	13	
—	Memorial Book	<u>342</u>	
1,059			4,158
<u>£4,121</u>	Balance		
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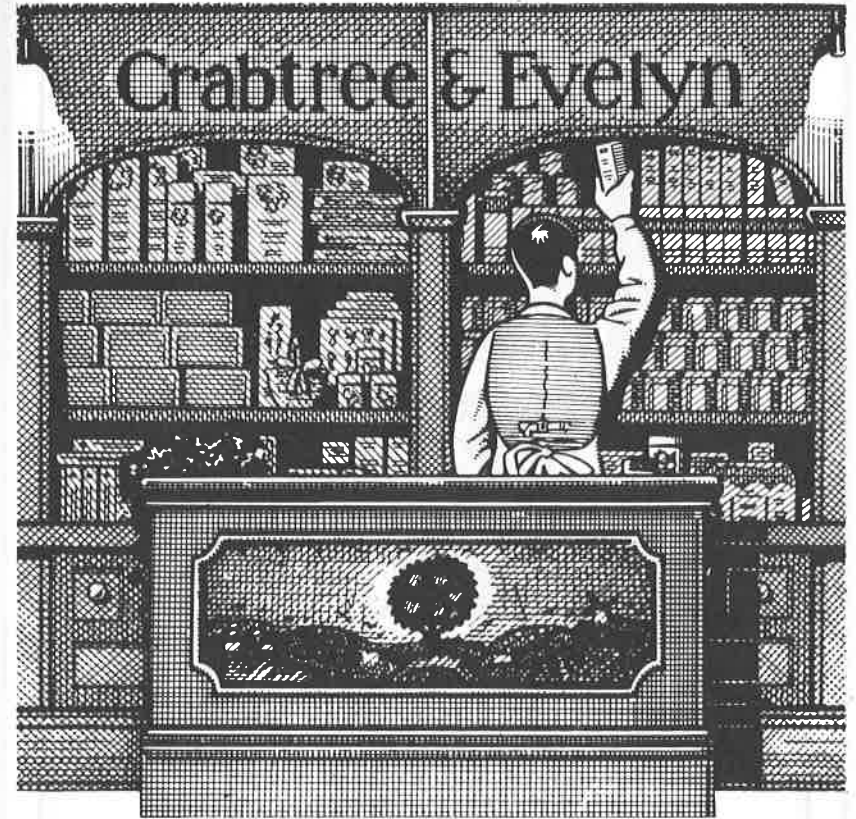
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