

# Annual Report

1979-80



THE  
Kensington  
Society

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Society

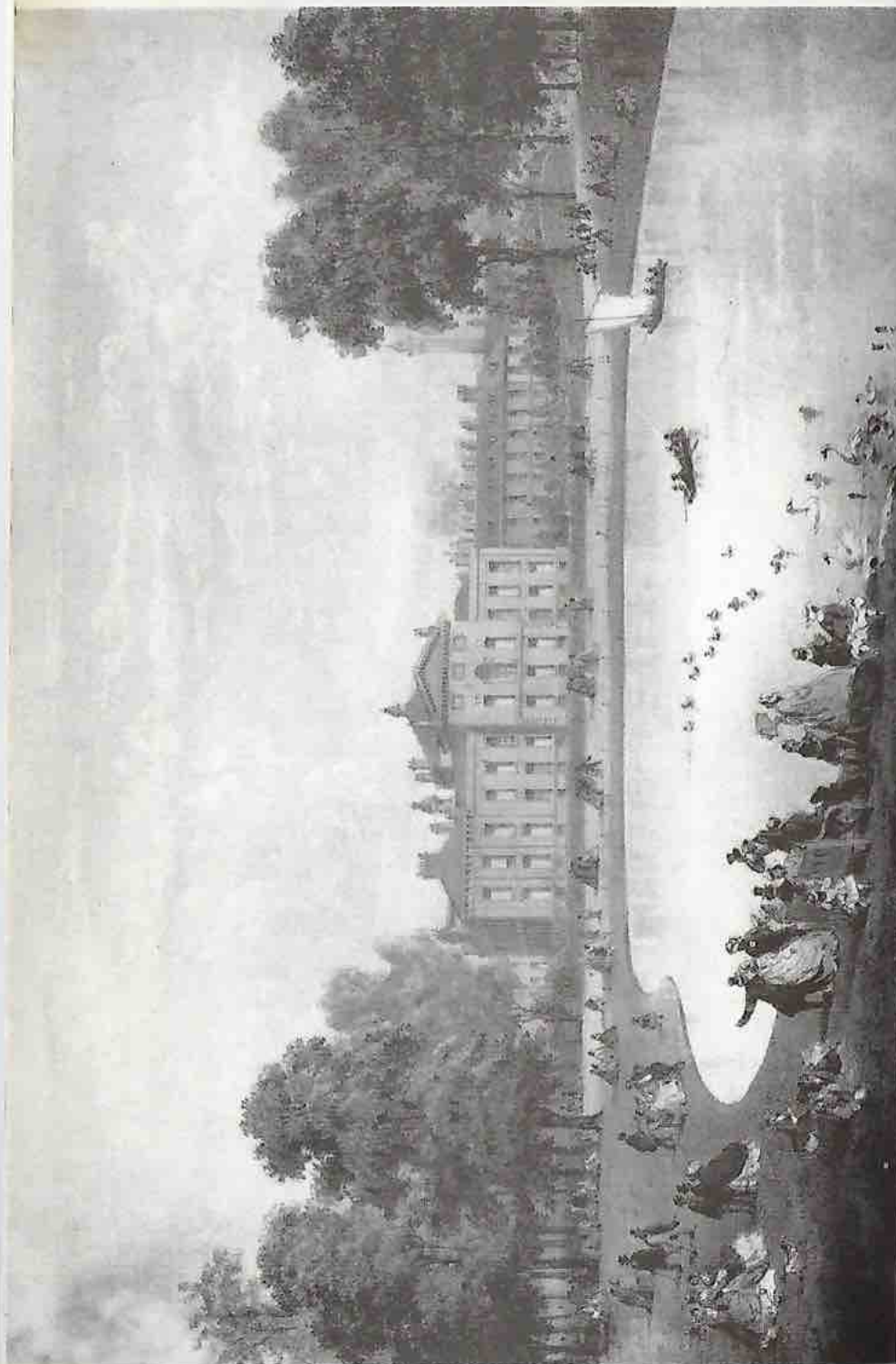
The objects of The Kensington Society are to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington by stimulating interest in its history and records, by protecting its buildings of beauty and historic interest, by preserving its open spaces from disfigurement and encroachment, and by encouraging good architecture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

Annual Report  
1979-80

FRONT COVER

*Clock Tower, Kensington Palace, c. 1860*

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KENSINGTON PALACE FROM THE ROUND POND

CIRCA 1851

PALACE IN KENSINGTON

# The Kensington Society

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HON. SECRETARY: Mrs G. Christiansen, 18 Kensington Square, W.8

AUDITORS: Messrs. Croft, May and Co.



## Foreword

A comparatively uneventful year for our Borough gives me the opportunity to ruminate not on the future of the Barracks site or of the old Town Hall, but rather more generally.

I suppose few English boroughs encompass greater visual variations than ours, variations in design and scale of individual buildings no less than in the lay-out of streets. Would you prefer, I wonder, to live, say, in Queen's Gate, which I once called 'the most Parisian street in London', with its fine trees, its touch of swagger and its unceasing traffic, or in some quiet little mews with no architectural pretensions and no glamour but a potential 'cosiness' which the big street lacks?

In either case, since this is London, it is possible to live very privately if that is what is wanted. People know far more about one another in a country village than even next-door-neighbours do in Kensington.

But however much we 'keep ourselves to ourselves', as the old phrase has it, that should not imply—and I cannot emphasise this too strongly—that where our houses are concerned we have no obligations to our neighbours. We have. And I am not thinking here only of private people. Indeed, public bodies can be particularly ruthless where their own interests are at stake. Not long ago there was the case of the Royal College of Art (yes, of Art) seeking to destroy listed houses at the north-eastern corner of Queen's Gate. Despite mutilations, this is still one of our finest Victorian streets, and it is essential to preserve its characteristic frontispiece.

In the Royal Borough a great many people live in terrace houses. Here there is a special duty to consider one's neighbours. If, in a terrace, one person seeks, say, to insert a picture window, throw out a bay, or add another storey to his house, the architectural impact of the whole terrace is ruined, and his action not only impinges on his neighbours but mars the pleasure of countless others passing through his street.

In this borough there is a street—let me name it: it is Halsey Street, S.W.3—in which the whole front of one terrace house has been painted a screaming mustard-yellow, with an aesthetic effect which for everyone else in the street is a disaster. Such behaviour is not only philistine; it is selfish and unneighbourly, and ought not to be tolerated.

So the current proposals to relax building controls at present being considered by Mr. Michael Heseltine, the Secretary of State for the Environment, will require the closest scrutiny. In some directions it may well be that the present system of controls is time-consuming and unnecessarily complex, but in others, especially in Conservation Areas, of which our Borough has, rightly, a considerable number, (22 in Kensington, 20 in Chelsea) it is possible that, so far from there being any relaxation of controls, they ought to be stricter than at present.

ALEC CLIFTON-TAYLOR.

## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Assembly Hall, The Convent of the Assumption, Kensington Square, W.8 on 6th June 1979. Mr. Alec Clifton-Taylor, President of the Society, was in the Chair.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, previously approved by the Executive Committee and circulated to members in the Annual Report, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

Mr. Clifton-Taylor said he was honoured by being elected President of the Society and glad to be Chairman of the Annual General Meeting in such delightful surroundings.

Mr. Ian Grant, Chairman of the Executive Committee, in moving the adoption of the Report said the activities since the Meeting opposing the Russian Embassy development of the Kensington Street Barracks site and the northern end of Kensington Palace Gardens had been somewhat less spectacular, but nevertheless planning applications were regularly seen and comments sent to the Council. Mrs. Christiansen and Mr. Marlow were attending the Public Inquiry giving evidence opposing the demolition of the two dinosaur galleries of the National History Museum.

Mr. Grant also referred to the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council's brief for the Town Hall and the Barrack site, which was reproduced in the Annual Report. The adoption of the Report was seconded by Mrs. Marlow. Mr. Keon Hughes, the Treasurer, presented the audited Accounts for the year ended 31st December 1978. Mr. Hughes said that in spite of inflation the deposit account had increased by nearly £600. He urged members to remember to pay their subscription on 1st January each year to save postage on reminders. Mrs. Milbourne seconded the adoption of the accounts. No nominations had been received for the Executive Committee. Miss Balian proposed and Mrs. Stedham seconded the re-election of the Officers and Committee *en bloc* for a further twelve months. Mr. Marlow asked that this should be shown to be acceptable by a show of hands. Mr. Jabez Smith suggested that consideration should be given to the retention of the façade of the Barrack Building (not the wall), with a residential development. The Meeting was closed and the Chairman, Mr. Clifton-Taylor, introduced Sister Elizabeth, Sister Superior and Co-ordinator of the Convent. Sister Elizabeth gave a short but very interesting talk about the ecumenical work being carried out in the Convent buildings. She was warmly thanked by the Chairman. Her talk was followed by an enjoyable concert by young musicians staying at the Convent. Mr. Clifton-Taylor thanked them and presented them with boxes of chocolates.



### *Obituary*

With great sadness we report the deaths of Geoffrey Dearbergh and Edward Seeley. To lose two such members of the Committee and Council, both barristers, is indeed a loss, their devotion and energy to any matter affecting Kensington will be greatly missed. An appreciation appears on pages 14 and 15.

### *Christmas Sale*

The Society much regretted that H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone was unable, the first time for many years, to attend the Sale. Miss Joan Lascelles, Lady-in-Waiting to Her Royal Highness, made a number of purchases for the Princess.

The Society sends Her Royal Highness their loyal greetings and good wishes.

We are grateful to members for their gifts and donations. For many years we have been able to buy articles for the Sale at wholesale prices from Messrs. Margolis & Bowman, we would particularly like to extend our thanks to them for allowing us to buy one or two of this or that, instead of in their normal trading manner 1,000 of this or that.

Lastly, but not least, we thank the members who helped at the Sale. Proceeds, with donations for the Sale, £384.

### *Co-option of Members to the Committee*

We welcome Mr. Philip English, Chairman of the Boltons Association, and Mr. P. W. E. Taylor, Chairman of the Onslow Neighbourhood Association, as co-opted members of the Committee, their local knowledge and experience will be of great value to the Society.

### *Tree Planting*

The Society is continuing its tree-planting project, trees have been given to Holland Park again this year, with a request that some of the plane trees should be planted at the Kensington High Street end of Holland Walk.

Following suggestions from members that some re-planting should take place in Observatory Gardens, trees were offered to the Borough Council for this site.

In spite of the fact that fully grown trees were removed two years ago, we have been informed by the Borough's Arboriculturist that tree planting cannot take place in this area owing to underground services.

Mr. Sanders, Borough Planning Officer, has been asked to look into this matter, as the Society is anxious to plant trees in this area.

The following sites and trees have been accepted for planting by the Borough Council:

Addison Place	2 Prunus Amanogawa
Darnley Terrace	2 Betula Pendula
Norland Road	2 Prunus Amanogawa
	1 Acer Platanoides
	1 Acer Platanoides 'Crimson King'
	1 Acer Platanoides 'Schwedleri'
Queensdale Road	2 Prunus Amanogawa
St James' Gardens	1 Acer Platanoides 'Schwedleri'

We would like to record our thanks to Mr. Ashley Stephenson, Bailiff to the Royal Parks, for his help in procuring the trees, his friendly advice and for his article on page 23.

### *Holland Park*

Mr. Kennedy, Chief Officer of G.L.C. Parks Department attended a Society's Committee Meeting and gave the current planning position of Holland Park.

He reported a serious loss of trees due to Dutch Elm disease and Sooty Bark, and that the Park's Department were trying to replant as quickly as funds would allow. The Committee agreed to make a contribution.

### *Environmental Awards Scheme*

Entries were invited by the Council for work relating to buildings or rehabilitation on a small scale. These would be judged under 4 categories: A. Rehabilitation or conversion work; B. New infill work; C. Commercial schemes; D. Open space or landscape work.

In categories A. and B. there were two awards, one for the north of the Borough and one for the south. This is now an annual event. The Society was invited to nominate a judge and Susan Walker, A.R.I.B.A., Hon. Secretary of the Thurloe and Egerton Association, kindly agreed to nomination.

There were 10 entries, all considered to be of high standard.

The successful schemes were:

Category A. (South) The Warehouse, 202 Earls Court Road.

Category B. (North) 22 Hippodrome Mews, W.11.

Category C. The Greyhound Public House, 1 Kensington Square; and Brompton Colonial, 255 Old Brompton Road.

Category D. Dovehouse Street, S.W.3; and Clydesdale Road.

### *Thomas Daniell*

A request by the Society that a commemorative plaque should be erected on 14 Earl's Terrace has been granted. The G.L.C. proposes to erect a plaque with the following inscription:

Thomas Daniell R.A.

1749-1840

Painter of Indian Scenes lived here



### *Canal-side Parks*

The G.L.C. are considering a chain of canal-way parks along the Grand Union Canal, this will consist of a 12-mile stretch of canal from Limehouse Basin to Wormwood Scrubs. The G.L.C.'s main strategic objective is the regeneration of the run-down areas of inner London, by the improvement of leisure facilities. The upper and lower sections of the Grand Canal has been defined in the London Development Plan as an area of opportunity with recreational potential. The G.L.C. is anxious to hear from organisations who might be interested in the Scheme and we have been asked to submit our views. The Canal runs through the northern part of the Borough. We shall be pleased to receive members' comments.

### *The Greater London Development Plan*

As stated in the Report last year, the Greater London Development Plan was approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment in July 1976. The London Government Act 1963 required the G.L.C. to prepare the plan. A public Inquiry was held from 1970 to 1972 by a panel chaired by Mr. Frank Layfield, Q.C., to hear objections. The late Mr. Geoffrey Dearbergh, a member of the Committee, appeared for the Society. The London Boroughs were required to produce their individual plan for their area by July 1979. Kensington produced their plan in 1978.

It was studied in detail by the Society and comments were sent to the Council. The Plan was revised by the Council, a number of the objections made by the Society and by residents were accepted in the revised edition. The plan was placed on deposit for general public comment, on 26th November 1979. The period for representations ended on 28th January. Further representations have been made to the Council, dealing with comments made by the Society which were not accommodated in the revised edition.

The District Plan Procedure requires the Council to make a formal request to the Secretary of State for the Environment for the appointment of an Inspector to hold a public Inquiry. Until the Inquiry, it is the Council's responsibility to decide whether objections made should be accepted. The Council will be required to provide a Programme Officer, who under the Inspector's guidance, will be responsible for recording objections and will arrange the day-to-day programme during the Inquiry.

This Officer will be available during normal working hours throughout the Inquiry and residents who wish to be heard at the Inquiry can discuss with him a suitable time.

Six weeks notice of the date of the Inquiry must be given to the public by the Council. After the Inquiry the Inspector will prepare his Report and submit it to the Council, he will have considered objections and may make recommendations to the Council requiring modifications to the Plan.

The Inquiry will be the last chance for residents to make objections to any part of the District Plan.

### *Paving*

The Society has frequently pressed the Council for proper maintenance of street furniture and paving.

The Society deplores the use of asphalt paving, particularly in Conservation Areas.

The restoration of the Greyhound Public House, 1 Kensington Square, was recently acclaimed worthy of the Council's Environmental Scheme Award. The pavement outside the Greyhound was restored by the Council's Works Department with asphalt instead of paving stones. However, we now understand that four types of footway construction is to be laid to give residents an opportunity to express an opinion on the following surfaces:

1. Flag paving footway with five-course brick-block verge—King's Road between The Vale and Old Church Street, S.W.3.
2. Flag paving with *in situ* smooth concrete verge—by Ladbroke Station.
3. Mastic Asphalt footway with five-course brick verge—Campden Hill Road, between Uxbridge Street and Notting Hill Gate.
4. Mastic Asphalt footway with white calcined flint chippings.

We do hope that members will look at these experiments and let the Society or the Council have their views.

Mr. Michael Bach, a member of the Executive Committee, recently sent the Council a leaflet about special polished paving flags 100mm thick, which are at present being laid in the Central Market Buildings in the Plaza in Covent Garden. Perhaps members would like to look at these too, and if they are thought to be preferable to materials proposed by the Council, do please send your views to the Council.

### *Membership Subscription*

A number of members who pay by Banker's Order have not increased their subscription. Some members are still paying £1.05 and others £2.10. The current subscription is £3 and subscriptions were due on 1st January.

The Society very much regrets that owing to greatly increased costs in the production of the Annual Report, it can only be sent to members who have paid their full subscription. So please will those concerned fill in a new Banker's Order, which you will find on page 55, and remember to cancel your existing order.



## A selection of cases dealt with

The Society continues to receive a list of planning applications from the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council each week.

These are examined by members of the Executive Committee. In cases where the character or the amenity of the area is affected, written comments are submitted to the Council's Planning Control Officer.

### *Natural History Museum*

Proposals by the Trustees of the British Museum (Natural History) for the demolition of three rear display galleries and the erection of a new six storey block were strongly opposed by the Society. The proposals were fully reported in our last Annual Report. A non-statutory public Inquiry was held in June, the Borough Council was represented by Counsel. Mrs. Christiansen and Mr. Marlow gave evidence for the Society. It was very disappointing that Mrs. Christiansen and Mr. Marlow appeared to be the only Kensington residents attending the Inquiry.

### *The Old Town Hall*

On 5th February the Town Planning Committee considered proposals submitted by Fitzroy Robinson Partners for the redevelopment of the old Town Hall.

At the sub-committee held immediately before the main committee, invited representatives of local organisations, including the Kensington Society, unanimously strongly objected to the proposed plan. In spite of this, the Council approved the scheme with minor alterations.

On 12th February the Society arranged a meeting with the Chairman of the Planning Committee, the Officers and the representatives of the local organisations.

The meeting was informed that the Council had 'suggested' to the Architects certain amendments to the scheme. The Architects had also been asked to prepare two or three alternatives to the proposed frontage, in sketch form, for the Council's consideration.

The Society has since written to the Chairman, Councillor John Cox, stressing that the elevational treatment of the proposed plan falls far short of the quality which should be considered for such a prominent site. The present proposed elevation is both lumpish and unimaginative and the materials have none of the quality that such an important building deserves.

### *Methodist Church Sports Ground, Kelfield Mews, W.10.*

The Society opposed this open space being used for the erection of 27 flats. The Council refused planning permission, the applicants appealed to the Secretary of State, whose decision is awaited.

### *Earls Court Garden Public Lavatory*

Objection was sent to the Council and it was considered as a residential area to be an unsuitable site for a public lavatory.

### *19/21 Ansdell Street, W.8.*

Application before Kensington Borough Council for demolition and construction of a two-storey building with a third-floor mansard roof, and a further proposal to include 23 Ansdell Street, was opposed by the Society and by residents in the area. Planning permission has been refused.

### *71/117 Gloucester Road and Stanhope Mews West*

Not opposed by the Society, but comments sent to the Council stated that the Society considered it was unnecessary to strip the northern terrace of stucco and that a balcony with traditional railings at first-floor level along the Gloucester Road frontage would be an elevational improvement.

### *18 Stafford Terrace*

The Society welcomed the proposed use of these premises, with the preservation of the Victorian contents, as a private museum.

### *15/19 Cottesmore Gardens*

In 1954 the L.C.C. granted conditional planning permission for these three houses to be used as a hostel by the Convent of the Assumption, for one year. The use had already begun without planning permission. Permission was renewed annually. Following the construction of a residential block for students at the rear of the Convent, the Council limited the period of permission stating, 'I have to inform you that the Council wish to see these properties revert to residential accommodation as soon as possible, and would urge you therefore to search for alternative hostel accommodation.' In 1972 a further statement was made by the Council: 'This permission shall be personal to the Trustees of the Convent for so long as they shall occupy the premises and shall not ensure for the benefit of the land.' In 1977 it became apparent that the houses were being used by students of the American Institute. This use was allowed until 1979 when the Convent's Trustees applied for permission to continue the use as a hostel to provide residential accommodation for staff, students and guests, involved in adult education. Planning permission was refused, the Trustees appealed to the Secretary of State and the appeal was allowed.



Within a very short period a planning application was made to the Council for permission for change from residential use to private school. The Society is appalled that in spite of the history of these houses permission was given by the Borough Council for a school in a residential area.

#### *Manson Mews Arch, Queen's Gate*

The Borough Council was congratulated on its initiative in instituting a campaign of action to restore the mews arches, which are such a special feature of the Kensington streetscape, but the Society deplored the work carried out on Manson Mews Arch. A letter was sent to the Council suggesting that suitably informed advice should be made available to would-be restorers on matters of detail. The correct profiles on the mouldings are of paramount importance.

#### *Portobello Bays Project—Closing of Acklam and Portobello Roads*

The Council was informed that the Society welcomed the proposed road closures, which would make a positive gain in open space and amenity for the local community.

#### *Stanford Court, 45/6 Cornwall Gardens*

Application for the erection of an additional mansard storey at sixth-floor level was strongly opposed by the Society and local residents. It was considered to be an overdevelopment of the site with no additional off-street car parking facilities. Refused planning permission by Kensington Borough Council. The Secretary of State has dismissed the applicants appeal.

#### *Holland Park, Illumination of the Dutch Garden*

The Society strongly opposes the proposal by the G.L.C. to erect 4 x 10 metre (30ft) columns along the north side of the Dutch Garden, each having two high pressure sodium floods, the upper fitting having a 400 watt 'son' lamp for long-range illumination, the lower fitting a 250 watt 'son' lamp for short-range illumination. The proposal includes a six metre steel column at the N.E. corner of the refreshment building, with two high pressure sodium floods each having a 250 watt 'son' lamp for the Dahlia and Tulip tree areas.

It would appear that the proposal is mainly for the benefit of the Belvedere Restaurant. Members will remember that some years ago, the Society managed to prevent the Orangery being taken over by the Restaurant. Following the G.L.C.'s declared insufficient resources for the replacement of the 2,000 dead elms, the Society has allocated a number of trees each year, to assist with any replanting scheme.

The Society considers that the needs of the Belvedere Restaurant should not take precedence over the replanting, conservation and preservation of Holland Park as a natural park. Letters were sent to Mr. Vigars, the G.L.C. member and Chairman of the G.L.C.; to

the Planning Department of the Kensington Borough Council and to the Greater London Council. The Society awaits the final decision and hopes that the G.L.C. will find a better use of the money they hold in trust.

#### *Entertainment Licensing*

The Honorary Secretary over the years has attended a great number of Music and Dancing Licensing applications; the deciding panel has always consisted of G.L.C. Councillors from anywhere but Kensington, always without local knowledge of the area concerned.

Letters were sent to the local associations affiliated to the Society asking for their support, all but one society responded and sent letters to the Council and to the Borough Association asking for the transfer of decision making from the G.L.C. to local boroughs. The Society sent letters to the Borough Association, to the G.L.C. and to other London amenity societies.

We have recently heard that the Association has decided not to transfer the decision function from the G.L.C. to the local boroughs, 'as a substantial number of boroughs were not in favour of the transfer'.

#### *Freston Road Industrial Estate Proposals*

The Society supports the Royal Crescent Association and the Norland Conservation Society in their efforts to persuade the G.L.C. and the Hammersmith Council to give some thought to an access road for the M41, before the area is made intolerable by extra traffic from the proposed industrial estate. St Ann's Road, St Ann's Villas and Royal Crescent already take a tremendous amount of traffic, the remedy is comparatively simple, a slip road onto and off the motorway with complete restriction of heavy traffic through the residential area.

The threat of the additional traffic is a poor reward for the highly successful effort made by the Royal Crescent to resuscitate the area. We still hope that common sense will prevail.

#### *114A Cromwell Road, 8/9 Grenville Place, 11/25 Emperor's Gate and 1/7 McLeods Mews, S.W.7.*

The 1976 applications to erect a seven-storey building containing 97,000 square feet of offices and 97,000 square feet providing 63 residential units, with car parking for 63 cars was given conditional planning permission by the Secretary of State, on appeal. The permission was subject to all vehicular traffic into and from the site using the Air Terminal access road, with a link bridge over the railway cutting.

An application was made in 1979 for change of the traffic condition to allow access and egress to the offices from Grenville Place and the residential block from Emperor's Gate.

The present position is that planning permission has been refused by the Council.



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

1/70 Wynnstay Gardens; 30 Kensington Church Street; 19/26 Pembroke Gardens; 19 Manson Mews; 8 Stanley Crescent, W.11; Kensington Temple, Kensington Park Road; 18 Lansdowne Walk; 64 Ladbroke Grove; 16 Holland Park; 51 Holland Park; 42 Kensington Park Gardens; Bowley Private Clinic, Ladbroke Terrace, W.11; 29 Holland Park Mews; 47 Powis Square; 17-23 Denbigh Road, W.11; 16 Denbigh Road; 115 Elgin Crescent; 5 Stanley Crescent; 12 Chepstow Villas; 23 Holland Park Mews; 4 Hillsleigh Road; 8 Ladbroke Square; 23 St. Ann's Villas; 29 Holland Park Avenue; 78 Holland Park; 24 Kensington Park Gardens; 46 Harcourt Terrace; 4 Manson Mews; Hollywood Court, Hollywood Road, S.W.10; 13 Radley Mews; 1 and 2 Stanford Cottages, S.W.10; 16 Clareville Grove; 19 Queen's Gate Gardens; 10/11 Ashburn Gardens; 15 South End; 4, 5 and 6 Kensington Square; 4-18 Earls Court Road; 10 Launceston Place; 1 Derry Street; 5th Floor, 99/121 Kensington High Street; Porter's Lodge, Trebovir Road; College House, Wright's Lane; 4 Marloes Road; 26 Kensington Court; Gloucester Road Station site; Barrack site; Golly's Garage site.

130-149 Palace Garden Terrace; 12-14 Victoria Road; Regines Club.

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## Other Activities and Future Arrangements

### *Other Activities*

Visits have been made to the following: Marble Hill House, Twickenham; Nymans, Handcross, Sussex; Swanton Mill, Mersham, Kent; Geological Museum, Royal Horticultural Gardens, Wisely; Losely House, Guildford; Donaldson Museum, The Royal College of Music; Russian Orthodox Church in Exile, Emperor's Gate; Royal Hospital, Chelsea; Queen Alexandra House, near Albert Hall.

### *Future Arrangements*

23rd April ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING in the Assembly Hall, Convent of the Assumption, Kensington Square, W.8. at 6.00 p.m., followed by an illustrated talk by Mr. Ian Grant entitled 'London Clubs'. Chairman Mr. Alec Clifton-Taylor, President of the Society. Tickets are not required, friends are welcome.

30th April 2.30 p.m. Wimbledon Windmill. Mr. Norman Plastow, F.R.I.B.A., the Architect responsible for the restoration of the Mill and the setting up of the Museum, has kindly agreed to meet and tell members the history of windmills and milling. A small charge is made at the door. Mr. and Mrs. Montague Cleeve, founder members of the Society who now live at Parkside Wimbledon, have kindly invited members for tea and biscuits. A coach has been arranged leaving Kensington Square at 2.30 p.m. Tickets £1.00.

14th May St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham. The house was bought by Horace Walpole in 1748, house extended and remodelled in the Gothic Style. The house was further extended by the Countess of Waldgrave in the 19th century and taken by the College in 1927. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1.30 p.m. Tickets £2.00.

24th June The usual visit to Swanton Mill, Mersham, Kent. Since members visited last year a nature conservancy has been started. A lake has been made in the field between the river and tail stream and 300 trees have been planted. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 12.30 p.m. Coach tickets £3.50.



24th July Stonor Park, Henley-on-Thames, ancient home of the Stonor family, built over many centuries from c. 1190-1930. Fine pictures and important sculpture. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1 p.m. Tickets including coach and entrance fee £3.50. Teas available.

17th September Mapledurham House, Reading, (at the request of several members). Elizabethan Mansion by the River Thames. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1 p.m. Tickets including coach and entrance fee £3.50. Teas available.

2nd October 6.15 p.m. Local Historical Treasures in the Public Library, Hornton Street, W.8. Mr. Curle, local studies Librarian, has kindly agreed to talk to members about the collection.

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## Geoffrey Dearbergh

The death of Geoffrey Dearbergh is a great loss to the Kensington Society. He joined the Society in 1960, became a member of the Executive Committee in 1962 and served on the Committee as Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 6 years.

He chaired sub-committees for the Society, doing a tremendous amount of work before each meeting. He was responsible for many of the Memorandums sent to the Council from the Society.

Geoffrey was specially active in the preparation of the Society's Comments on the Kensington District Development Plan. He appeared for the Society at the Layfield Panel of Inquiry on the Greater London Development Plan.

The following announcement appeared on 10th October, 1979 in *The Wykehamist*:

Geoffrey Frederick Dearbergh (D 1937-42), K.R.R.C. 1942; 2 Lt. 1943; Normandy 1944 (wounded); Capt. B.A.O.R. 1946-47; barrister 1948 (Inner Temple); married Elizabeth Mary Bryant in 1954; two daughters, Belinda and Juliet, practised at Chancery Bar till 1975; latterly Registrar in Bankruptcy of High Court, and Clerk of Restrictive Practices Court. These bare bones of his career, however, do less than justice to his considerable intellect, to his love of literature and music, or to his unusually perceptive and original mind. His shaggy, unflappable exterior concealed a depth of feeling which soon showed in any conversation with him. This was always a delight. He was amusing without being trivial, manifestly well read without being condescending, trenchant without being unkind. Kindness seemed to come naturally to him. He and his wife made their home both a centre of good talk for those who enjoyed it and a haven of comfort for those who needed it. (It is worth mentioning also that they were both superb cooks.) Between them the Dearberghs brought to the world a warmth of heart and a rare generosity of spirit that their friends will not forget.

Died at his London home on 3rd July, 1979.



## Edward Seeley

The Kensington Society has lost a staunch advocate and friend following the untimely death on 7th September last of Edward Seeley, who succeeded Mary Stocks as Chairman of the Executive Committee in 1974.

Edward Seeley was educated at St. Paul's School and Jesus College, Cambridge, where he distinguished himself as an oarsman rowing for the University in the Boat Race of 1935. After Cambridge he went into the metallurgical industry, where he remained for 15 years until, in 1951, he was called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn. Thereafter he practised at the Chancery Bar until 1971, when he left to become a Permanent Chairman of the Industrial Tribunals (England and Wales). In 1974 he succeeded the late Sir Diamaid Conroy as President of the Industrial Tribunals.

Edward Seeley held the Presidency through a testing period and by general consent discharged his duties firmly and positively. Among tributes to his role in the Industrial Tribunals many have remarked on his integrity, his unassuming manner, and good judgment.

Long before he joined the Executive Committee of the Kensington Society in 1962, Edward Seeley had shown an active interest in Kensington. As a resident of, firstly, Upper Phillimore Gardens and later (after his marriage) of Barkston Gardens, he had become acquainted with the anxieties of those endeavouring to preserve and improve the quality of Kensington's buildings, thoroughfares and open spaces. Soon after moving to Campden Street he was asked to become Chairman of the Campden Street Society, a position he discharged with his customary dedication.

As a member of the Executive Committee of the Kensington Society, Edward Seeley often volunteered to express the Society's views at Public Inquiries into matters of local concern. In 1968 he was elected Vice-Chairman, and two years later he played an important role in the Society's ultimately successful representations to the Greater London Council opposing the sale of the Orangery, Holland Park, to commercial interests.

To all his endeavours on the Society's behalf—not least as Chairman—Edward Seeley brought a strong sense of duty, a selfless nature and a quiet good humour. To his wife Patricia and his son Richard, his many friends in the Society will wish to extend their sympathy.

## Inadequacies of Present Legislation

The Executive Committee of the Society met the Chairman of the Town Planning Councillor Cox, the Council's Director of Architecture, the Borough Planning Officer and the Design Officer, at 18 Kensington Square in December. The main discussion concerned the inadequacies of current planning legislation. More restraint on diplomatic use and more sympathetic treatment of street lighting was also discussed. Subsequently the following memorandum was received from the Planning Council Office:

### **The environment, conservation areas, and the local planning authority's control.**

Planning control by the local authority was introduced in its present general form 32 years ago on 1st July 1948. Legislation since that time has given emphasis to the protection of the environment, and has sought to control inappropriate change in areas of architectural and historic interest.

For example, a local planning authority, since the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, has been charged with a duty to 'pay special attention . . . to the desirability of preserving or enhancing (the) character or appearance' of each conservation area; and in a conservation area, since 1974, listed building consent has been required for the demolition of any building in a conservation area (except ecclesiastical or Crown buildings, or ancient monuments, to which different procedures apply).

Notwithstanding this later legislation the Borough Council find that neither the Acts nor consequential regulations and directions made thereunder give the authority adequate statutory powers to carry out their duty in the way which either they or most local residents wish. In particular the authority is unable to prevent the continual erosion of many small building features which collectively form an essential part of an area's architectural integrity.

The Royal Borough Council consider the failures of present legislation to be four in number:

#### *1. Section 169 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971;*

This section provides that in certain circumstances the local planning authority may become liable to a claim for compensation if they refuse planning permission for the alteration or 10% extension of a building as referred to in Schedule 8 and 18 of Act—that is all pre-1st July 1948 buildings.

The unfortunate result of this legislation is that a local planning authority is reluctant to refuse planning permission for (say) a 10% extension to a building, because of the likelihood of



a compensation claim, even if that development would have a harmful effect on the character of a conservation area. A typical example, referred to by the Royal Borough Council in its evidence of the Kensington and Chelsea Corporation Bill 1976, is no. 13 Cheltenham Terrace in Chelsea where a 10% rear extension was allowed notwithstanding the fact that it destroyed the open character or the open garden space which then existed between two terraces of houses. A similar recent case is at Pear Tree Cottage in Edwardes Square.

2. *Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1977*, and Classes I and II of the 1st schedule to that Order; this is the legislation which sets out classes of 'permitted development', whereby a grant of planning permission by the Council is *not* required:

- (a) to alter or extend a dwelling house (subject to certain conditions) by up to 10% or 50 cubic metres whichever is the greater.
- (b) to erect porches not exceeding 2 square metres.
- (c) to erect domestic outbuildings, including swimming pools.
- (d) to construct a car hardstanding.
- (e) to erect gates, fences and walls up to certain specified heights.

The provisions (a)-(d) relate to all dwelling houses. (A dwelling house does not include a building used as one or more flats). Provision (e) relates to all buildings.

Examples of the damage caused by 'permitted development' are prevalent throughout Kensington and Chelsea. Recent cases are the alteration of an original 19th-century façade in Elgin Crescent by the insertion of circular windows, the re-roofing of a house in Lansdowne Road in red tiles when the conservation area derives its character from roofs of grey slates, and the erection of front boundary walls and railings of a design totally alien to the original 19th-century uniform design of the terrace in Campden Hill Road and Denbigh Road.

A more general example is architectural erosion caused by the removal of glazing bars, and the replacement of timber framed double-hung sash windows by aluminium framed windows of different materials and proportions.

It has to be admitted that Article 4 of the General Development Order does make provision for a direction to be made such that 'permitted development' cannot be carried out without a grant of planning permission. In most cases however that direction has to have the approval of the Secretary of State (Article 4 (2)), and there is often reluctance on the part of the Department of the Environment to grant such approval. The Council's proposals for an Article 4 direction on property in the

Ladbroke Estate Conservation Area are an example: the direction was proposed on 2.2.77 and has yet to be approved.

3. *Section 277A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971*; this section requires that listed building consent is needed to the demolition of a building (which includes part of a building) in a conservation area; however, it does not specify whether listed building consent is required for the removal of architectural ornamentation or for minor demolition related to the alteration of a building. This lack of clarity in the law undoubtedly inhibits the Council's officers in attempting to prevent the removal of architectural ornamentation, urns, railings and glazing bars. One recent example is the removal of original front doors to a number of houses in Earls Court Square.

4. *A direction by the Secretary of State contained in paragraph 71 of Circular no. 23/77 whereby listed building consent is not required for the demolition of certain small buildings including (by virtue of paragraph 1 (a) and 1 (b) of the direction) the demolition of such works and alterations which would have been 'permitted development' to erect.* This provision affects all non-listed buildings in a conservation area. It is probably the most damaging of all since it permits, in the case of dwelling houses, the removal of cornices as recently occurred in Berkeley Gardens; and, in the case of all buildings, the removal of certain boundary walls and railings as recently occurred in Stratford Road. The removal of these items damages beyond repair the architectural integrity of those conservation areas which are founded on Georgian and Victorian town developments—where to remove the architectural features or front walls or railings of one house destroys the appearance of a whole terrace.

#### THE REMEDY

*The remedy lies* in the repeal or modification of one or more of these legislative provisions in so far as they relate to Conservation areas:

- (a) Section 169 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 could be amended so as not to apply to buildings within a conservation area.
- (b) Section 227A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 could be clarified to make it clear that listed building consent is required for the removal of any architectural or decorative ornamentation, including balustrades, cornices, urns, gates, railings, walls and other means of enclosure; and the removal of front entrance doors and roofing materials.
- (c) Classes I and II of the 1st schedule to the Town and Country General Development Order 1977, could be conditioned so as *not* to apply in conservation areas.



- (d) Article 4 (1) to 4 (3) of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1977, could be modified such that an Article 4 direction in a conservation area does not require the approval of the Secretary of State; and
- (e) The Circular 23/77 (paragraph 71) direction, in so far as it relates to permitted development, should be repealed.

It is the Borough Council's present hope that the Government will take the opportunity to deal with at least some of these matters both in the new Planning Bill and in a new Town and Country Planning General Development Order which the Government is now considering.

E. A. SANDERS,  
Borough Planning Officer.

## LONDON GROSVENOR BUILDING SOCIETY

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## An artist's house preserved

18 Stafford Terrace, Kensington

By Simon Jervis

Despite all the dangers that beset them, England is still rich in surviving country house ensembles, many of which have remained in the same family for several generations or even centuries. Town houses are altogether a different case. Not only do the English prefer the country, but also the frequency of leasehold in towns encourages changes of ownership, and, even where the same family have remained *in situ*, redecoration and refurnishing will inevitably have had a more radical effect than would usually be the case within a country house, a much larger building. The few town houses open to the public thus tend to be reconstructions, like 1 Royal Crescent in Bath or the Georgian House in Edinburgh, or shrines which contain only some of the original elements, such as Dickens's House or Carlyle's House.

One remarkable exception to this rule is 18 Stafford Terrace in Kensington. The first owner of the house, the artist Linley Sambourne, died in 1910: it was then preserved intact by his daughter, Mrs. L. C. R. Messell, who never lived in it, until her death in 1960, when it passed to her daughter, the Countess of Rosse. For the last 19 years Lady Rosse and the late Lord Rosse carefully tended this unique survival with a view to its eventual preservation in perpetuity. The future of 18 Stafford Terrace has now been finally secured, and the intention of this article is to give some flavour of its quality and to describe its future potential.

18 Stafford Terrace is on the south side of a street running across the southern slope of Campden Hill, a little above Kensington High Street. The Phillimore Estate, on which it stands, was once attached to Campden House; in 1741 it was inherited by Robert Phillimore (1699-1779). In 1788 his son, William Phillimore, initiated the first suburban development in this area, Phillimore Place, fronting Kensington High Street. Progress was, however, slow and there was a moratorium on further building from about 1825 to 1855. In the latter year Charles Phillimore entered into an agreement with Joseph Gordon Davis, a builder who had been active in Pimlico, to develop most of the remainder of the estate. Stafford Terrace, built from 1868 to 1874, marks the completion of this enterprise. The year in which it was begun, 1868, saw the high-point of Victorian building in Northern Kensington. The ground landlord at that date was William Brough Phillimore.

The houses in Stafford Terrace are typical of their date and situation, classical Italianate in style, with moulded stucco dressings on a solid structure of grey Suffolk bricks—no trace here of the red



brick and gables of the newly fashionable Queen Anne style. They have the standard four floors above a basement, and are on sites slightly narrower than most of the Phillimore development. The inhabitants of the estate in the 1860s were professional men or the equivalent, and Stafford Terrace, as listed in the 1871 census, before No. 18 had been finished, followed the same pattern: retired officers, senior civil servants, a barrister, a Knight's widow living with her daughter, and several tradesmen, including Mr. Templeton, the well-known carpet manufacturer of Glasgow. The standard complement of servants was three. The only profession lacking in 1871 but common elsewhere on the Phillimore Estate was artist. The arrival of Sambourne at No. 18 in 1874 thus reflected statistical probability.

Edward Linley Sambourne was 30 in that year, newly married and well established as a *Punch* cartoonist. He had abandoned his earlier career as an engineer's draughtsman after publishing his first *Punch* cartoon in 1867. He gradually rose to second political cartoonist under John Tenniel, taking over top billing on the latter's retirement in 1901. He held the position until 1909 and an illness which led to his death in the next year. As an artist Sambourne was witty and elegant, although Stafford Terrace, which contains not only many of his drawings but also a vast collection of his photographic models, bears witness to the painstaking foundations of compositions which, produced under the tightest of deadlines, were intended first and foremost to amuse.

*Punch* was becoming more and more a part of the establishment in the late Victorian period and Sambourne, whose letters and diaries are another of the treasures of 18 Stafford Terrace, fitted into the social mould established for the artist by John Leech, Millais and Trollope. In 1902 he notes shooting over 2,000 birds in three days in Suffolk, he was a popular host to the successful and famous, and, rarely without a cigar, a genial *bon viveur*.

In decorating his house Sambourne accepted the developer's fireplaces, mouldings and ceiling roses. But the surfaces were transformed by the use of carefully articulated colour and pattern, including the ceilings, which were papered, and the windows, which were filled with stained glass designed by Sambourne. The style he favoured was that fashionable in the 1870s, wallpapers designed by William Morris, blue-and-white porcelain, bracketed overmantels, and massed pictures on the walls. The furniture was not only modern and influenced by Pugin, Eastlake and Talbert, but also included 18th-century pieces in the styles from Chippendale onwards. It is a charming and eclectic mixture which it would be impossible to reconstruct in a museum 'period room'. 18 Stafford Terrace thus has great importance as an archaeological document.

Like so many London terrace houses, its plan is basically two good rooms behind one another on each floor with the staircase to the side.

The rooms are so full of furniture, ornaments, paintings and knick-knackery that a large through-put of visitors is unthinkable. It would not only be physically deleterious to the house and its contents, but would destroy its flavour. But 18 Stafford Terrace has three floors—dining room and morning room on the ground, double drawing room on the first, and two bedrooms—which would be fascinating to a discriminating and limited visitation. In Copenhagen, a middle-class apartment of about the same date has been successfully preserved for posterity on the basis of limited opening.

18 Stafford Terrace was thus an ideal candidate for a rather specialised conservation package. The formula is that the house and its contents have been purchased by the Greater London Council, and that the running and opening of the house will be the responsibility of the Victorian Society.

The participation of the Victorian Society is a key and appropriate element. It can call on volunteers to service the opening of the house, thus obviating the need for a large endowment to finance a warding staff. Moreover the Society was founded at a meeting called by Lady Rosse at 18 Stafford Terrace in 1957. It could thus have no more fitting flagship. Let us hope that this imaginative co-operation between central and local government, a volunteer society and the generous and devoted owner will succeed. 18 Stafford Terrace is a precious and unique relic of Victorian urban culture: it deserves preservation. The Victorian Society is stretching its own resources to undertake this project, and would be very grateful for any donations. *Note:* it is hoped that 18 Stafford Terrace will be opened to the public from July 1980. Visits, which will be guided, will be by appointment with the Victorian Society (Tel. 01-994 1019) only.

The original version of this article appeared in *Country Life*, 25th Jan. 1979; this amended version is reprinted by kind permission of *Country Life*. The photographs are by the National Monuments Record.



# Kensington Gardens

by Ashley Stephenson

*Bailiff of the Royal Parks*

Looking at a map of central London shows Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens almost as one, the dividing line is the road which runs from Bayswater Road on the north to Kensington Gore on the south. There is, however, a vast difference in character between the two parks and it is difficult to say why this should be. Hyde Park is more of a national park whilst Kensington Gardens has the feel of being part of the district.

Despite Kensington Gardens being largely situated outside the Borough of Kensington, from the Broad Walk on the east, going west it is in Westminster and only the little bit to the west being actually in Kensington. The gardens retain a flavour of the Royal Borough and it is looked upon with great pride by the residents. My dealings with the Kensington Society over many years have brought this to my notice on more than one occasion. Kensington Gardens has no motor road through its grounds the only motor traffic being parks maintenance vehicles and the contractors who have business in the park. It is in effect the most tranquil of the central London open spaces and I think it is this reason which makes it so much in demand by the locals. There is much of the original design still apparent, ie the avenues of trees which were planted many years ago when the park was changing from hunting grounds to a more formal layout.

The ravages of Dutch Elm Disease are plainly apparent and there are many areas of the gardens which are almost treeless. There has been for a number of years a replacement planting programme to try to put back all that has been lost. An Elm tree which was in late maturity could be up to 100 feet or more high and have a spread of 60 feet: it is impossible to replace this with young heavy duty nursery stock (which is 12 to 15 feet high). Our planting plans make provision for thinning to take place in 25 to 30 years hence. Unfortunately public opinion often makes this impossible as any tree felling is regarded as vandalism. Kensington Gardens did not have a disproportionate number of Elms. In consequence, although we have sadly missed the trees which have died, they have not denuded the landscape to such an extent that they have left the gardens looking bare. Today we do not plant single species to replace those lost but have selected from a wide range of good trees suitable for the area. So in the future we are not likely to be put in a difficult position should there be another epidemic.

There are a number of trees of note in the gardens and these we

look after to the best of our ability. Unfortunately the dry summers a few years ago killed some we would have liked to have kept. To the east of the Broad Walk and a little north of the Orangery are a small group of the single leaved Ash; these are big trees and are good specimens which should be better known. In the Flower Walk is a specimen of the Headache Tree, ie *Umbellularia californica*. It is often called a laurel by those who casually pass but this is probably the most unusual tree in the gardens now. Close to the Serpentine Gallery and also close to the Statue of Physical Energy are groups of *Sorbus aucuparia Beissneri*; this is of the mountain ash family but this variety has a bright orange bark. During spells of winter sunshine the bark on these trees glows, this is the tree we get most questions about over the year. Recently we have been planting a few different trees and one which is now reaching a decent size and actually flowers each year, frost permitting, is the *Paulownia tomentosa*. In May, if the weather has been kind to us, purple flowers cover the tree which is planted close to the south wall of Kensington Palace. Forming an avenue along the road side near the Royal Gardens Hotel are a number of *Aesculus indica*, better known as the Indian Horse Chestnut. These trees flower a little later than the common Horse Chestnut and as the 'conkers' are tiny they are not sought after by the children. There are many more fine trees in the gardens such as Oaks, Ash, Maple, Lime and Plane. With good fortune these will remain long enough so that the planting we are doing now will make the trees of the future.

In Kensington Gardens there are two formal areas where we practise ornamental gardening, the Sunken Garden and the Flower Walk. The plants for these areas are produced in the central nursery situated in Hyde Park.

The Sunken Garden, placed close to the Orangery, has a Lime Bowery on three sides. It has 'windows' cut into the framework so as the public walk through it is possible to get many different views of the garden. This garden is labour intensive, the bowery needs constant attention and the beds in the gardens themselves are small enough to allow us to carry out replacement planting three or four times a year. I think this is probably one of the most photographed gardens in London. It is placed so it runs north to south; in consequence in the early parts of the season the southern aspect is in colour before the rest of the garden.

In the Flower Walk, which also runs north to south, although the conditions are much the same a different type of gardening is practised: plantings carried out here have to last as far as possible the summer through. We must always plan for a catastrophe even though they rarely happen, it is important that the bedding is always looking at its best. Shade plays a big part in our thinking; the Flower Walk is lined with a selection of tall trees and shrubs and the north face has to contend with this problem. This is a good place to see if you have a



shade problem at home. Begonias, Impatiens and Primulas are used to great effect.

Vandalism was one of the big problems associated with public parks but today there is by no means as much as there used to be. When I first came into the parks 25 years ago we would lose more than half the trees we planted but this is no longer true today. We have changed our methods to try to combat what was a difficult problem in that we now plant only trees which have a good chance of surviving. Standard nursery stock are not used for outside planting as these are easily broken. Heavy duty nursery stock is planted, which means we do not plant as many as we used to but at the end of the season there are more trees standing. I am no great believer in planting very large trees as I think a young tree in many cases will overtake a bigger tree, the shock to the system is less and they grow more quickly. Litter too was a headache but once again this has become easier. There is still some litter about but it is more likely to be placed in the receptacles provided and less is left on the ground. There are still times when a concerted effort has to be made to clean up the gardens but these are now few and far between. It is no longer a job for everyone on the staff to assist in the clearance of litter before 9 a.m.

There is so much of interest in the Gardens from the many very good statues to the collection of waterfowl and other bird life in the grounds. The Round Pond every Sunday has its model yacht enthusiasts and the area surrounding the water has the kite fliers (if that is the right word). There is also the Serpentine Gallery, which although not to everyone's taste has much to offer, and the children's playground sited close to the Elfin Oak on the Bayswater Road side. I do hope my few words have served to increase the awareness of Kensington Gardens so it can be used with even greater pleasure in the future.

## Reports from Local Societies

### ABBOTSBURY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Trends in the management of the grounds of Holland House by the Greater London Council continue to be a matter of concern to the Association. In common with other amenity groups the Association has objected strongly to current plans for 'improvements' drawn up by the Parks Department, a principal feature of which is the erection of double sodium floodlights on 10-metre high tubular steel masts in the Dutch Garden. The Association has noted with appreciation that the Borough Council has also registered an objection with the G.L.C. to this and other features of the plans. It is hard to understand how a scheme so inappropriate to the character of this historic site could be proposed, especially at a time of severe financial stringency.

The speed control humps installed in Abbotsbury Road on a temporary basis during 1977 proved extremely successful in reducing the speed, volume and noise of through traffic and were welcomed by an overwhelming majority of residents in Abbotsbury Close. The Association is therefore supporting the Bill introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. Anthony Grant that would empower highway authorities to install humps on suitable public roads on a permanent basis, subject to regulations to be made by the Minister of Transport regarding the design, signing and lighting of the humps.

A management scheme in respect of enfranchised leaseholds in parts of the Abbotsbury Estate is close to final approval by the High Court. It would appear that the scheme will incorporate most of the features sought by the Association on behalf of members.

The Association accepted with much regret the resignation of Mr. M. Morrison-Jones as Vice-Chairman and Mrs. F. L. Morrison-Jones as Hon. Secretary on leaving the district. They had been associated with the Association since its inception.

We welcome Mr. P. R. Levy as Vice-Chairman and Mrs. P. Gillis as Hon. Secretary.

The 1980 Annual General Meeting will be held on 12th November at Leighton House.

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

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



## THE BOLTONS ASSOCIATION

The main concerns of the Association this year have been with traffic. The campaign launched by West London Traffic Reform to restrain the flow of heavy lorry traffic in the residential streets of West London (in particular through the Earl's Court one-way system) has been the subject of much discussion. The Association has given its full support to W.L.T.R., and its demand for short- and medium-term restraint measures, and has agreed to become an affiliate of W.L.T.R. In doing so, however, the Association will continue to press for a relief road along the line of the railway, with a link to Wandsworth Bridge, as essential to any real relief from the traffic burden.

At a more local level the Association is becoming increasingly concerned at the flow of heavy traffic turning left into Fulham Road off Redcliffe Gardens, in order to cross Battersea Bridge via Beaufort Street. There is little immediate prospect, however, of relief being obtained, as this forms part of the G.L.C. system. On another long-standing matter, the width restriction at Drayton Gardens has been restored, but still only on a temporary basis as it is subject to a legal challenge on the part of a business concern which claims to be adversely affected.

We continue to monitor all planning applications for development in the conservation area, of which there were over 50 in the course of 1979, in addition to others already in progress at the beginning of the year. The Association's main achievement has been to secure a vastly improved scheme for the extension of the Telephone Exchange in The Boltons, which in substance meets all the objections that we raised earlier.

We have continued to give consideration to the Council's Draft District Plan, the new version of which incorporates a number of amendments we put forward. The Boltons Conservation Area Policy document is still in a somewhat embryonic stage, although the Council hope to produce a draft before long.

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

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

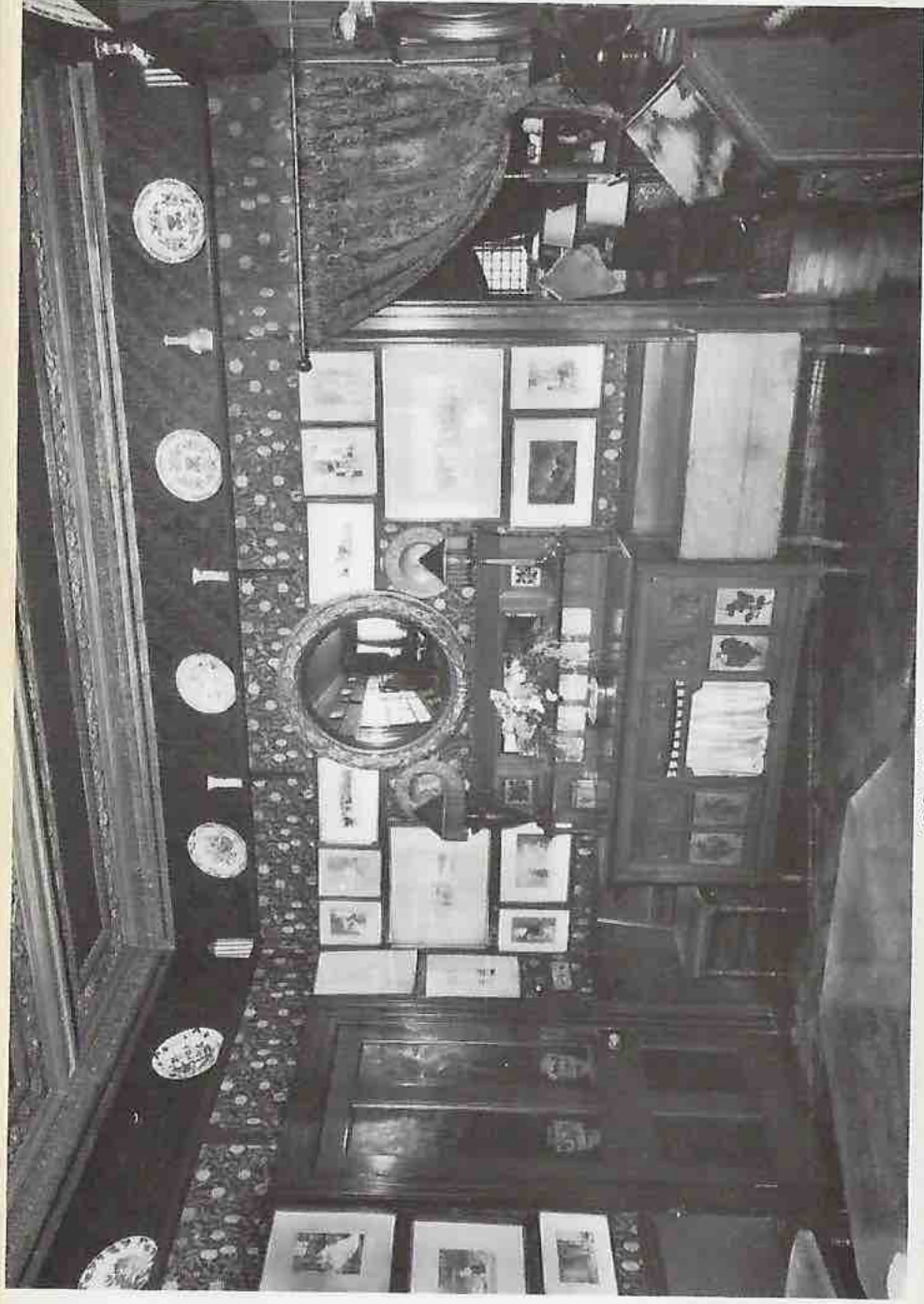
## THE CAMPDEN STREET PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Membership of the Association increased significantly in 1979 and the Committee has been well supported in efforts to oppose planning proposals which tend to erode the attractive character of the Street. In particular, we opposed plans for the development of a building which would have resulted in a marked increase in its existing height and bulk. These plans were withdrawn and replaced by proposals which were entirely satisfactory to us.



18 Stafford Terrace, Guinevere in stained glass





18 Stafford Terrace, Dining Room



18 Stafford Terrace, a Bedroom







temporary planning permission. As a good, and useful, neighbour, we would favour a permanent planning permission rather than a six-storey building!

Hopefully the District Plan, when it is finalised after the Local Plan Inquiry later this year, will make it clear that the opportunities for the intensification of uses, particularly in conservation areas, are limited. We are, however, pleased to see that the Council is already refusing most proposals for building additional storeys on top of blocks of flats such as Stanford Court, and hope that this will be part of a wider policy to stop projects resulting in overdevelopment.

*Chairman:* Sir Reginald Bennett, 37 Cottessmore Court, Stanford Road, W.8.

*Hon. Secretary:* Michael Bach

### EARLS COURT SQUARE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Association suffered a sad loss at the departure of Mr. and Miss Gandell who had lived at no. 16 for seventy six years. Mr. Gandell (who is President of the Association) and his sister have retired to the country. Their active interest in the Association and its objectives had been a great source of strength. Their many memories of the square over the years were of great interest to members. Their house, which has a well-preserved Victorian interior, has been purchased by another Association member, who intends to preserve it as a private residence.

Association representatives attended the Council's meetings to discuss the contents of the proposed Earls Court study document. They stressed that local conditions were only likely to improve once the one-way system was relieved by traffic restraint in the short term followed as soon as possible by the proposed relief road. Representation at the West London Traffic Reform meetings has linked the Association with other groups concerned with these problems.

Conservation policy in the square is already yielding positive results. Residents have responded to the Article IV Direction on colour schemes and 1979 saw the repainting of many houses in the recommended colours. The Borough Planning Department also arranged for the manufacture and sale of cast iron 'medallion spears' to replace those which have disappeared from the tops of house railings. Several households have already ordered some from the Council. This initiative from the Council is greatly appreciated by the Association.

The Association has objected to some unauthorised changes in the conservation area including the installation of incongruous doorways, the removal of protected trees from a back garden and unauthorised hotel uses. An application for licensed restaurant use of the notorious 'Pink Pig' premises near the corner of Earls Court

Road was unsuccessfully objected to by the Association. The Council has written to support the Association's further objection to a late night Music and Dancing licence application for the premises.

The Association's social events for the year were a summer garden party and a Christmas supper party. Both were greatly enjoyed and well attended. Contact is maintained with members through the distribution of a newsletter.

*Chairman:* D. E. Fair, 34 Earl's Court Square, SW5 9DQ.

### EARLS COURT VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

As has been the case for many years, the Association's main preoccupation was with Golly's Garage site. A truly horrible plan, including a supermarket, and which took no account of traffic flow, came up but was turned down by the Council. It does not appear that any alternative is in view. The site was—illegally—used as a dumping ground for builders' rubble and of course ordinary household refuse after the corrugated ten-foot high fence had been deliberately pulled down. The Council was obliged to re-erect it as the owners cannot be traced in this country.

The Association supported the new owners of some of the houses on the north side of Redfield Lane when they asked for permission to replace the old wooden garage doors. Three houses now have modern tip-over doors, nicely recessed, so that both cars and owners can enter without being in danger of getting knocked down by fast-moving passing vehicles.

Objection has been raised to the unauthorised change of use of 77 Kenway Road which is being used as an overseas student organisation headquarters and we expect an Enforcement Order to be served on the rightful owners when they can be located.

No. 45 Kenway Road was enlarged at the back without planning permission. When eventually applied for it was refused by the Council on the grounds of unsuitability of design. The owner went to Appeal and the result is awaited.

The Association continues to keep an eye on the King's Head public house because of many complaints by residents who have been disturbed by noise or even molested. The brewers are co-operating and we hope for lasting improvements.

*Secretary:* Mrs Francis Hopkins/Col. A. Mackenzie.

### EDWARDES SQUARE AND SCARSDALE ASSOCIATION

E.S.S.A. continues to increase its membership, and now has a larger Committee. Members organised a petition for a traffic light pedestrian phase at the top of the Earls Court Road, and over 800 signatures were collected and presented to the Mayor at the Town Hall in November. A Committee member persuaded the Council to set up a traffic island at the junction of Scarsdale Villas and Allen Street, in an attempt to reduce the number of accidents.



The Association had three public meetings in 1979, which were well attended, and lively discussions took place. Once again the main concern of the Association has been with planning, and the proposed development of the old 'Rank' site at the top of the Earls Court Road has had a prior claim for the attention of the members and Committee. On the western side the Association criticised Rank City Wall's proposals for the elevational treatment of their development, but otherwise welcomed their proposal. The Planning Committee agreed with this criticism, and revised drawings are being prepared. The east side of the site was acquired by H.I.B.A., a Liechtenstein-based property company, and the new Chairman, John Arthur, and Committee members had several meetings with the new owners to try and formulate a scheme which would be viable both in economic and environmental terms. It became obvious on critical examination of the problem that the constraint imposed by the Borough's road-widening proposal has in the past led to unsatisfactory solutions, and the Council are now prepared to abandon the road-widening requirement.

Meetings were held with the English Property Company with regard to its proposals to develop Phases 3 and 4 of the Wright's Lane site. E.S.S.A.'s proposals for an integrated development were put forward at a public meeting in October on the basis that it was very necessary to accommodate the catering, recreational and leisure needs of the 2,000 extra office workers that should be expected in the High Street Station area in the next few years. Again the Planning Committee agreed with E.S.S.A. proposals, and wrote to the architects concerned asking if their clients could carry out a development on the lines suggested by the Association.

The Association opposed an application to build seven penthouse flats on top of the Wynstay Gardens Mansions, and for these the Council refused its consent.

The Council's attention was drawn by E.S.S.A. to the poor structural state of Earls Terrace and its two lodges, and it is hoped in the coming year that remedial work may be put in hand for these Grade III listed buildings. Other planning applications that have given concern relate to office development in the area, in some cases without consent, and the Association is urging the Council to take enforcement action where appropriate. The Association continues to monitor all planning applications in the area, both for commercial and for private development, and makes appropriate representations to the Council so as to protect the conservation area.

*Chairman:* John Arthur.

*Hon. Secretary:* Mrs M. Bain.

## KENSINGTON COURT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Executive Committee of the K.C.R.A. elected two new officers this year. Michael Driver, who has moved from the Court, has been replaced as Chairman by Harold Lee, and Marjorie Wills has been elected Secretary of the Association. New members of the Committee include Mrs. Wanda Grenville Hill and Professor Harold Ham.

At our Annual General Meeting in October, P.C. Brett, the Crime Prevention Officer for Notting Hill Police Station, gave a talk and presented a film on home security. As is traditional for this gathering, members and guests concluded the evening with conversation and refreshment.

We are still hoping for a modified improvement scheme for Kensington Passage. Plans have been drawn by the Borough Planning Department, but spending cuts have placed the proposal in jeopardy.

With the full co-operation of the Department of Cleansing, we have had two major uninhabited sites in the Court cleared of rubbish. During the dustmen's strike, the Executive Committee organised a volunteer effort to remove the worst of the accumulated refuse at that time. We have taken various actions with respect to problems of noise, parking, and commercial applications for restaurants in the Court.

The Association at present has 108 members.

*Secretary:* Mrs. M. Wills, 3 Cornwall Mansions, W.8.

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## THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT

The committee have met monthly, under the chairmanship of Mr. Ian Grant. Matters discussed have been chiefly planning, traffic, trees, and the promotion of two 'town schemes'. The first is, in conjunction with the Council, and it is hoped, with the agreement of residents, to set up a uniform restoration of the North Terrace in Kensington Park Road. A survey by a team of architects who supervised the Royal Crescent project has been made, and a public meeting will be held shortly.

The second scheme is long-term acquisition of moulds for restorations now in the Association's possession, and from this many mouldings which are missing from the fronts of houses in that road can be supplied.

At the Spring Members' Meeting Mr. Mark Girouard gave an instructive and entertaining talk on 'The English Country House—Heating, Lighting and Plumbing'. The A.G.M. was held in June, a cold day unfortunately, so we were unable to sit in candle-lit gardens after the meeting. There was a display of very fine photographs of architectural details in the area taken by a member, Mr. David Cavanaugh. These have since been on view at the Public Library. The Autumn Members' Meeting took the form of a walk conducted by Mr. Ian Grant. It was a lovely October day, and members enjoyed visiting garden squares, two churches, and an example of high Victoriana, 31 Kensington Park Gardens, shortly to be restored, and to be a post-graduate centre for an American University. The walk was followed by tea at the Knights of St. Columba Club.

There have been two Newsletters during the year, ably edited by Mr. Peter Chapman.

*Hon. Secretary:* Muriel Cosh.

## NORLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

At the A.G.M. in June the outgoing Chairman Mr. Robert Norgren after four years dedicated enthusiasm reminded us that it was the 10th anniversary of our founding and the problems of the next decade would be as many as the last decade. The challenge of formulating a reasonable and responsible policy regarding the nature of the conservation area consistent with the needs of all the inhabitants of its mix of flats, bed-sitters, family houses, pubs and offices would need to be met by considerable civic statesmanship and wisdom. Should we be concerned more at the proportion of the constituent elements or the appearance and integrity of the buildings?

Mr. Norgren while reporting the concern of our Committee at the increasing acquisition of property within our area by Housing Associations praised the completion of the rehabilitation by the Notting Hill Housing Trust of some of the houses on the east side of Norland Road. Further progress has now been made and shops opened on the east side but there is still a long way to go and the delay in starting on the more extensive rebuilding of the western side is we understand largely due to administration holdups.

The Society, with a slight sense of grievance that it should have been accorded such a low priority, but it is appreciated that other Areas have their problems too, has now made application to the Royal Borough Council for the preparation of a Policy Statement for the Norland Conservation Area and sub-committees have been formed to collate the necessary information which is going to require considerable effort and dedication on the part of all concerned.

We have been, and are, much concerned by the apparent failure by the G.L.C. to take any steps whatsoever to alleviate the effect of the substantial traffic which must flow from the Freston Road Industrial Estate Development where the G.L.C. are involved principally as landowners. The enthusiastic support of our M.P. has been obtained to suggestions that there should be access to and from such estate from the motorway spur road, the M.41, for want of any better or, indeed, any other, alternative. It is a suggestion that poses problems but none that could not be overcome with a little drive and imagination.

We are pleased to be told that plans for the landscaping of the Shepherd's Bush roundabout are now proceeding. We had previously been advised that after several years of deliberation, plans had been shelved due to the discovery that the Common Blue Butterfly which is comparatively rare despite its name, was establishing a colony on the site which the G.L.C. were loath to disturb.

*Chairman:* Nigel Judah, 49 Addison Avenue, W.11.

*Hon. Secretary:* Miss Lewis, 8 Queensdale Road, W.11.

## ONSLOW NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

1979 has been an interesting year for the Association and 1980 promises to be even more so. The preparation by the Council of the District Plan has entailed further work and in general we are very pleased with the result. Our only major objection to the plan now on deposit is the proposal to provide a small 'preferred' area for diplomatic use. With the Thurloe & Egerton Association, who would be major sufferers, we feel that such users should be encouraged to disperse throughout London. Otherwise there is a danger that areas now predominantly residential will become pressurised and the residents driven out and the character changed.

The Council is now preparing the Policy Statement for the Thurloe Estate and Smiths Charity Conservation Area, the western half of which is covered by the Association. This is involving continued discussion with the Councils officers in liaison with the Thurloe & Egerton Association. The content of this Policy Statement is of course of great importance for the future of the area.

Also, by coincidence, the G.L.C. Historical Buildings Division is currently engaged in the preparation of the next volume of their Survey of London which will cover this part of South Kensington. The historical research for this is proving of great assistance in completing the background for the Policy Statement and we are indebted to the G.L.C. officers concerned for their assistance.



Planning applications and problems are headed by the prospective sale this year of St. Paul's Church, Onslow Square, and the redevelopment of blocks of the Onslow Gardens terraces. The latter, while keeping the external façades and indeed bringing them to a good state of repair, involves the gutting of interiors, the loss of fine staircases and plasterwork, and the formation of large luxury flat units by lateral conversion. There is also a social problem. These terraces have for many years been occupied as bed-sitters and small flatlets, by students, many foreign, but also by long-term single residents, professional people and office workers. This type of accommodation is fast disappearing from Kensington and such people are being forced away. The new flats are often being taken by overseas buyers for occasional use or for senior company employees. This is bringing about a change of social mix which is affecting local amenities, in particular small shops. Stop press news is that such an application, for nos. 30-34 Onslow Gardens, has been turned down by the Planning Committee. Our 1979 Annual General Meeting was as successful and well attended as any in recent years. As guest speakers we had Mr. John Plant, House Governor of the Brompton Hospital, and Councillor Maclaren, Chairman of the Town Planning Committee.

Copies of our newsletter are available from the Hon. Secretary.  
*Hon. Secretary:* Hugh Brady, 16 Selwood Terrace, SW7 3QG.

#### THE PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

The main problem of the previous year, the future of Sion Convent in Chepstow Villas, was finally settled early in 1979 when the revised plans of the Central and Provincial Housing Trust were agreed, according to which 85 dwellings and 60 car parking spaces were to be provided. At present work has not yet begun on the conversion of the building. The future of the main open space in the area, Pembridge Square Garden was called in question following upon the death of Mr. William Irving who, as the sole resident freeholder of a whole house, had maintained the garden virtually at his own expense. Although he had left letters addressed to the Kensington Society and to the Pembridge Association recommending that those bodies should take over the administration, it proved that neither had the requisite resources to undertake this. Finally, a committee of leaseholders and freeholders resident in the Square has been formed which, it is hoped, will bring the garden under the terms of the Kensington Improvement Act of 1851 and enable the Borough Council to levy a garden rate to be used for its maintenance.

A major concern has been the loss of original stucco ornament from the houses in the area, either through decay or the failure of builders to replace loose stucco. An attempt to persuade one house owner in the area to replace a newly demolished cornice failed, as the Planning Officer came to the conclusion that an owner-occupier was free to make such alterations without planning permission, even in a

conservation area. This points to a serious lacuna in the legislation relating to conservation. In two cases where permission has been given for the erection of an additional storey, the condition that the cornice should be replaced has fortunately been fulfilled.

The Committee has been much occupied with the perennial problems of illegal parking, traffic congestion, the presence of alcoholics and also with the disastrous design of the new public convenience in Westbourne Grove, which must be accepted as a *fait accompli*. Efforts to increase the membership of the Association by the free distribution of the Newsletter have not yet met with success, but a great increase in production cost makes a larger membership essential.

*Hon. Secretary:* J. Hayward, 28 Chepstow Villas, W.11.

#### ROYAL CRESCENT ASSOCIATION

The restoration of Royal Crescent as a project under the European Architectural Heritage Year 1975, with redecoration of the houses in a standard colour scheme of magnolia outlined in white, which the Royal Crescent Association was originally formed to promote, is now so far advanced that it makes the few untouched houses stand out—some more starkly than others, and they, of course, remain the concern of the Committee of the Association. Despite these exceptions the improved appearance of the Crescent as a whole is now so impressive that it has evoked unsolicited testimonials from outside.

The Association also continue to make their presence felt in matters of local concern, including area development—the unsatisfactory state of Norland Road is still under review—and traffic control. The current problem is the threat of a greatly increased volume of traffic through Royal Crescent and adjoining areas due to the proposed development by the Greater London Council of an industrial estate in Freston Road. To prevent this increase the Association, in conjunction with a number of other local organisations and individuals, prominent among them Sir Brandon Rhys Williams M.P., have been trying, so far without success, to persuade the G.L.C. to construct a slip road from the M.41 motorway directly on to the site. Joint efforts have included correspondence, meetings and a public demonstration. At the time of writing the matter has still not been finally resolved, but the G.L.C. have tentatively agreed to reconsider their previous stand.

*Chairman:* Colin D. MacInnes, 35 Royal Crescent, W.11.

#### ROYAL CRESCENT GARDEN COMMITTEE

The Annual General Meeting of the Royal Crescent Garden Committee was held on the 11th January. In her report the Chairman, Miss H. Balfour, said that whilst 1978 has been a year of clearance and replanting, 1979 had been the year of security worries.

This is something that all garden committees have to contend with and with current high cost of replacing broken fences the problem is



indeed serious. During the summer some young boys, not residents of the Crescent, scrambled under the fencing wire and snatched a handbag from a resident sitting in the garden.

Although football is forbidden in the garden and there are notices on the gate boys still persist in playing although Holland Park with large playing areas is not far away.

The other great nuisance is rubbish thrown over the fence, mainly from the Kentucky Fried Chicken and MacDonald's Hamburger shops. The debris from these two establishments is so bad in the Borough that we feel representation should be made to the council to have them pay street cleaning.

These are the worries, on the credit side the long-term planting of an ash, a chestnut and a Magnolia are all flourishing, the spring bulbs are all in and already a rash cherry is in flower. The lights in the trees installed in 1977 will be overhauled before the summer and they should look as effective as ever.

*Hon. Secretary:* Ray Stoupe

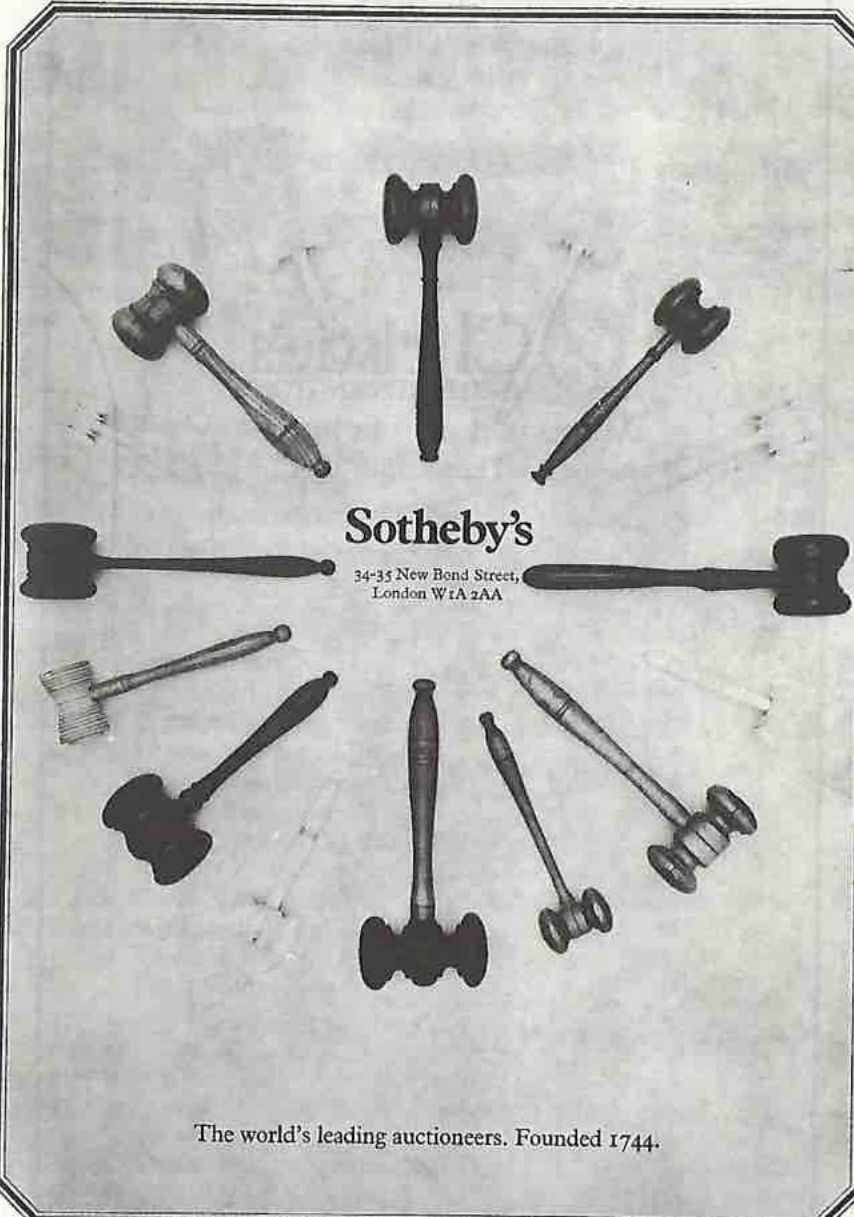
#### THURLOE & EGERTON ASSOCIATION

1979 was a fairly quiet year for the Association as far as planning applications were concerned, with no major schemes to consider, although we did submit our views to the public Inquiry into the 'infil' scheme proposed for the Natural History Museum and anxiously await the Inspector's decision.

In other directions, however, there has been a great deal to occupy us: the District Plan reached its deposit stage and we have continued to participate in its preparation; the local Planning Forums were re-constituted and the Association is represented on the Brompton/Hans Town/Royal Hospital Forum. But perhaps the most important aspect of our involvement with the Council's Planning Department is our co-operation with them in the preparation of a Policy Report for our conservation area—Thurloe and Smith's Charity—which we think will be a very valuable aid in the future conservation of the neighbourhood. The conservation area and therefore the Policy Statement, covers the areas represented by both this Association and the Onslow Neighbourhood Association and the two Associations, together with the Estates are represented on the special committee set up by the Council to consider the Policy Statement.

South Kensington is the hub of a great deal of traffic: students coming and going to Imperial College, visitors and tourists making for the museums and, of course, local residents going about their everyday business. In our view, the arrangements for buying tickets at the underground station are quite inadequate and we are making every effort to persuade London Transport to take action to improve facilities there. So far we have been unsuccessful and the views of other Societies facing a similar problem would be welcomed.

*Hon. Secretary:* Susan Walker, R.I.B.A., 95 Walton Street SW3 2HP.



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1978		£	£
<b>Subscriptions</b>			
1,296	Annual .. .. .		1,188
200	Life .. .. .		—
1,496			1,188
<b>Other Receipts</b>			
	Receipts from Sales .. .. .	540	
	Less: Expenses of Sales .. .. .	156	
403			384
86	Bank Deposit Interest .. .. .		190
48	Income Tax Recoverable .. .. .		51
294	Receipts for Visits .. .. .		388
420	Advertising in Annual Report .. .. .		570
529	Donations .. .. .		262
3,276			3,033
<b>Expenditure</b>			
348	Printing, Typing and Stationery .. .. .	366	
435	Postage and Telephone .. .. .	482	
900	Producing Annual Report .. .. .	968	
140	Professional Charges .. .. .	86	
53	Sundry Expenses .. .. .	48	
75	Hire of Hall and Meeting Expenses .. .. .	67	
312	Russian Embassy Meeting Expenses .. .. .	—	
228	Coach Visits, etc. .. .. .	428	
16	Subscriptions and Donations .. .. .	36	
304	Tree Planting .. .. .	220	
5	Photographic Records .. .. .	2	
2,816			2,703
<b>Surplus</b>			
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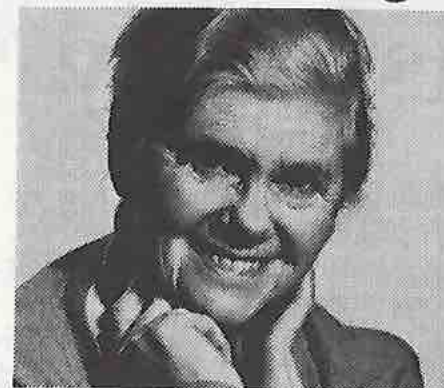
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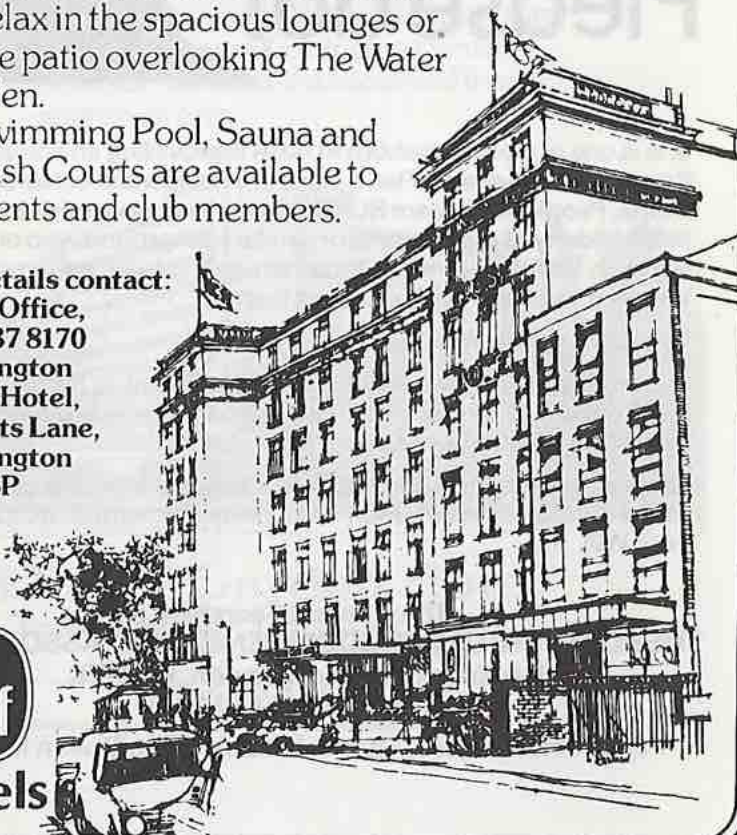
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