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Annual Report

1980-81



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
1980-81

FRONT COVER

Clock Tower, Kensington Palace, c. 1860

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H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, planting a Jubilee oak,
December 7th, 1977

The Kensington Society

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

AUDITORS: Messrs. Croft, May and Co.

Foreword

This year I want to write about H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, who had been Patron of this Society since its foundation in 1953. She was, of course, a figurehead, respected and loved, but she was much more than that. She always took a lively, and, until a couple of years ago, a practical interest in the affairs of our Society. She nearly always attended the Christmas sale at 18 Kensington Square, and no one who was present at the planting of Mrs. Christiansen's tree in October 1978 will ever forget the vigour with which the Princess, then aged 95, wielded the spade!

There is more about her elsewhere in the Report, but perhaps members might be interested and amused to hear about my personal meetings with her, which took place in 1964 on a banana boat, the S.S. *Camito*, 8700 tons, bound for Jamaica. With accommodation for about a hundred passengers, this was quite a snobby little ship: dressing for dinner was *de rigueur*. The Princess was paying her annual visit to Jamaica, to confer degrees in her capacity as Chancellor of the University College of the West Indies. I was bound for the United States on a lecture tour, but, having recently undergone an operation, had accepted an invitation to stay on the way at Kingston with Alec Morley, the High Commissioner, and an old friend.

Each morning we used to see the Princess doing her 'constitutional', ten or a dozen times round the deck, with her rather breathless lady-in-waiting trailing along some little way behind. She turned up continually in the public rooms, for tea, for after-dinner games, and so on, always very friendly and looking wonderful: marvellous complexion; hair done in an almost boyish way; and a very animated manner. Then, on about the fourth day out, the Captain gave a cocktail party, and I was not a little surprised to learn that H.R.H. had requested that I should be seated next to her. 'I expect you wonder why I asked for this pleasure?' she graciously remarked. 'Well, some years ago you gave a course of lectures on the English cathedrals at Leighton House. My secretary attended them, and still talks about them. So when I saw your name on the passenger list, I said to myself, 'There's somebody I must meet'. Well, now I have!' Conversation was very easy. Among other topics, she asked about my lectures in the United States. 'They will mostly be on English country houses.' 'I was brought up at Claremont.' 'Really? I have three slides of that very house with me on the ship.' 'How very interesting: could I see them?'

It was agreed that next morning we should meet on deck. I took the slides, and she reminisced interestingly, first about Claremont, and then about many other subjects. Her long tramps on Table Mountain

with General Smuts, for example: 'the one man in my lifetime who, I would say, was even greater than Churchill. Quite wasted, of course, in South Africa.' She was reading a bulky life of Mackenzie King. 'A worthy man, but very heavy going when compared with Smuts.' She seemed interested in everybody and everything, and was full of fun. Subsequently we had two more talks.

About a fortnight later, in Jamaica, there was, one day, a small commotion. The Princess, staying somewhere on the north coast, had decided to go off alone for an early morning swim. (At 81 she was still, I gathered, an excellent swimmer). But from the house someone spotted her, quite a long way out, where the currents could be dangerous. A motor boat sped out to pick her up. 'I'm absolutely all right', she cried: 'this water's such a perfect temperature!'

In London it was much the same, I believe. 'Her favourite means of transport', her lady-in-waiting said to me, despairingly, 'is to hop on to a No. 9 bus. She likes nothing better than to slip along to Harrods on her own.'

On one such occasion, having no loose money, she proffered a pound note for her fare. The conductor refused to change it, and turned her off the bus. So she completed her journey on foot.

All this was possible because, into old age, she had the greatest blessing of all: wonderful health. Few spectacles in life give me greater pleasure than to see very old people who are also very well.

ALEC CLIFTON-TAYLOR.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Assembly Hall, The Convent of the Assumption on 23rd April, 1980 at 6.00 p.m. 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. No matters arising.

In welcoming members the President expressed regret at the inability of Princess Alice to attend the Meeting, but her Lady-in-Waiting, Miss Lascelles, was present and was asked to take the Society's greetings to Her Royal Highness. Apologies for absence had been received from Lord Balfour of Inchrye and the Dowager Marchioness of Cholmondeley and The Lady Norman. The President paid tribute to Mr. Seeley and Mr. Dearbergh whose passing had been such a great loss to the Society, both of whom had given it such loyal service for so many years.

Referring to the Annual Report he said that Mrs. Christiansen was not at all pleased with the manner in which it had been printed on this occasion but the usual high standard had been maintained in the contents. Mr. Grant, Chairman of the Executive Committee, in moving the adoption of the Report also paid tribute to the work done for the Society over many years by Edward Seeley and Geoffrey Dearbergh.

He referred to a planning application which had not appeared in the Report. This had come from the purchasers of Lady Cholmondeley's house, 12 Palace Gardens Terrace for extensive alterations which would seriously detract from the character of the building. It had been approved by the Borough Council but as it was a listed building it was necessary for consent to be obtained from the G.L.C. A letter had been sent to the G.L.C.

He also spoke of the demolition of the old Town Hall and said that plans for the new building were far from satisfactory.

Thanks were due to the Victorian Society for their co-operation over the opening and running of 18 Stafford Terrace, a unique house acquired by the Council from Lord and Lady Rosse. Mrs. Seeley seconded the adoption of the Report.

In presenting the Accounts, Mr. Keon Hughes, Treasurer, said that in 1979 funds would not have allowed us to arrange a meeting about the Russians as had been done so successfully in 1978. In order to maintain funds at a satisfactory level the Executive Committee had decided that the annual subscription should be raised to £5 and

corporate membership to £7. This would not take effect till January 1981. Appreciation was expressed to Mrs. Christiansen for the amount raised by the annual sale arranged by her in her house, and to Mr. John Maclay for the collection of advertising which half covered the cost of printing the Report. Mrs. Dearbergh seconded the adoption of the Accounts. No nominations had been received for the Executive Committee. Miss Balian proposed and Mrs. Milbourne seconded the re-election of the Officers and Committee *en bloc* for a further year.

The meeting was closed and the Chairman introduced Mr. Ian Grant as an absolute authority on Victorian architecture and all things of that period.

Mr. Grant gave a most interesting talk illustrated by slides on London Clubs.

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Her Royal Highness Princess Alice Countess of Athlone

It is with much sadness that we record the death of Her Royal Highness, Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone.

How very fortunate and honoured the Society has been for so many years to have the Patronage and interest of Her Royal Highness.

It is indeed the end of an era, she was the last survivor of Queen Victoria's thirty-seven granddaughters. She was the only daughter of Prince Leopold, the youngest son of Queen Victoria, and Princess Helen of Waldeck-Pyrmont. She was born on February 15th., 1883 at Windsor Castle. She was married at St. George's Chapel, Windsor to Prince Alexander of Teck, brother of Queen Mary, in 1904.

As a child, the Princess was brought up at Claremont, Esher, now a Christian Science Girls' School. It was at Her Royal Highness's suggestion that members of the Society visited Claremont three years ago. Shortly after our visit, the School Bursar sent two pressed flowers on Claremont paper, bearing the Royal Cipher. These had been found with a box of others and drawings in an old chest in an antique shop and sent to Claremont. The Bursar asked if we could ascertain the owner from the Princess. They were taken to Kensington Palace—'Oh, of course, I did them,' she said, 'I was ten years old.' When it was remarked that her writing had changed very little—'Oh, that was Miss Potts, my Governess, my brother and I always had to write with a quill pen.'

For years the Princess has attended and has been a keen shopper at the Society's Annual Christmas Sale and for many years she used the Society's Christmas card.

The oak tree at the bottom of Kensington Palace private road was planted by the Princess when she was 95 years old on a very wet day, a porter at the Garden Hotel held an umbrella over her, as she well and truly planted the tree. A year later she planted a tree in the Square Garden, of Kensington Square, so it is a very fitting memorial to plant an avenue of trees in Kensington Gardens in memory of this memorable lady.

At the Memorial Service held at St. Mary Abbots Church on February 10th, extra seats were put in the aisles to accommodate all those who came to give thanks for her long and purposeful life. The Bishop of London, the Right Reverend Gerald Ellison gave the

address. He spoke of the great and profound changes which had taken place in the Princess's lifetime, she had seen the end of the British Empire and the emergence of the Third World, she knew of the nuclear bomb, modern communications, computers and the silicon chip and men had walked on the moon. She accepted all these changes and had never lost interest.

The Bishop spoke of her service with her husband, the Earl of Athlone, in Canada and South Africa.

He said, 'She was proud to be a resident of this Royal Borough . . . and did much to foster its interests. . . . She was not prudish, but she never lowered her standards and, although she was always a Princess, she was always human.'

The Service opened by Miss Phoebe Coleman singing Vaughan William's 'O Taste and See'. The Vicar of St. Mary Abbots, the Reverend Ian Robson, welcomed the congregation and said: 'We give thanks today for the life of Her Royal Highness Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, for her long, gracious and purposeful life.'

We remember her love for her husband and family, her care for her Godchildren, her special gift of friendship with many people in many places of the world.

We give thanks to God for her strength of character, lively spirit and charm, for her loyal service to her Queen and the peoples of the Commonwealth, for her service to education and in community endeavour; a faithful member of our congregation.

Finally, we rejoice in her lively faith in Jesus Christ and praise God for her responsive witness, making her more than conqueror over death, granting us confidence that she now lives and moves and has her being in the love of Him who died for us all, even Jesus Christ our Lord.'

The avenue of trees in memory of the Princess will have been planted by the time members receive this report. H. R. H. The Duke of Gloucester will have planted the first tree on March 24th.

We have received donations from all parts of the world and from all parts of this country. The Fund has reached £1,500, it is still open and we are still negotiating with the Borough Council to plant three Magnolia trees on the forecourt of the Town Hall, on the strip of grass between the Library and the Civic Centre. Negotiations are proving a little difficult for many reasons, but we still hope to succeed, we are confident that residents whether members of the Society or not will welcome Magnolia trees on a very dreary forecourt.

The Society is delighted and greatly honoured to learn as we go to press that His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester has given his Patronage to the Society.

Obituary

With much regret we report the death of the following members of the Society: The Hon. Pamela Hurcomb, daughter of a late President of the Society. Lady Kenyon, wife of a Past Vice-President of the Society, and Sir Geoffrey Harmsworth, Miss N. Wallace, Miss E. M. Davies, Ivor Mackay Founder Members of the Society.

Christmas Sale

We are grateful to members for their support, especially for the donations sent by members unable to come, or, in appreciation of the Society's work! Mr. and Mrs. Bowman, Wholesalers, again allowed the Society to buy in small quantities, we are grateful to them for their interest in the Society. Special thanks are due to Mrs. Dennis Morley, who managed to persuade many of her friends to contribute cakes. Thanks are overdue to Mr. Tony Dunn, who each year apart from being one of our salesmen, becomes a removal man, and with a little assistance manages to move the furniture and carpets from the ground and first floors to the upper floors ready for the Sale, and to replace them. Lastly, but not least, we thank all who helped to sell the goods and those who bought.

Proceeds with donations this year were £551. This is the last of the Christmas sales; it is hoped that the increased subscriptions will make the Christmas sale, which has been held at 18 Kensington Square for many years, unnecessary. We do hope, however, that kind and generous donors will continue to remember the needs of the Society.

Environmental Award Scheme

Entries were again invited by the Council for works relating to buildings or rehabilitation on a small scale.

These to be judged under four categories: A. Rehabilitation or conversion work, B. New infill work; C. Commercial schemes, and D. Open space or landscape work. The Society was invited to nominate a judge. Mr. Ian Grant, F.R.I.B.A., Chairman of the Executive Committee, agreed to the nomination by the Society. The Society has put forward schemes for the Award including De Vere Gardens Mews, 3 & 5 Gilston Road, 17 Kensington Square. Judging has not taken place as we go to print.

Paving

In spite of a request in last year's Report for members' observations of the experimental types of footway construction by the Council, the Society regrets to report that not a single observation was received from members. There were, as in previous years, a number of complaints about the use of asphalt paving. The treatment approved by the Society is that shown in last year's Report as (1)—Flag paving footway with five-course brick block verge—(can be seen King's Road between The Vale and Old Church Street, S.W.3) if you think this preferable to asphalt paving, do please write to the Borough Council's Planning and Works Departments.

Membership Subscriptions

The Annual Subscription was increased at the last Annual General Meeting to £5, corporate membership to £7. The Executive Committee regretted having to make this increase.

This is largely due to the increase in the cost of postage. The Society's post is a heavy one, we are often treated as a reference source; letters come from all parts of the country, and from abroad, often referred to us by the Civic Trust, wanting to know who lived where, and, if this or that house is still standing, or for help with some thesis or other. It is a rare occasion to receive a stamped envelope. Although many of the letters are of no real benefit to Kensington—letters have to be answered. Stationery and printing costs have also increased.

Trees

Nine trees were given to the Borough Council for planting in the Norland area in the early part of the year, one being planted by the Honorary Secretary in St. James's Gardens.

The Society has planted a number of trees in the Borough, but is very disappointed at the after care—there seems little point in planting trees unless they can receive a modicum of care. The plane tree opposite the Milestone Hotel appeared to be growing out of a gooseberry bush. This has now been dealt with, following complaints made by the Society. The tree at the bottom of Kensington Palace Private Road, planted in 1977 by Her Royal Highness Princess Alice, has been very badly attended. The Secretary telephoned the Town Clerk to get the Coca Cola tins, cigarette boxes, plastic food boxes and every kind of rubbish removed from inside the cage. We are glad to say this particular tree was dealt with within hours of the telephone call to Mr. Webber, the Town Clerk. The Society has recently arranged for a bag of forest bark to be put round the tree.

Most of the other trees given by the Society for Kensington High Street are a sorry sight. It is surely better to plant less trees, if help is not available for them to be looked after. We must, however, give the Borough Council high marks for the trouble taken in employing a first-rate firm for pruning the plane and other fully grown trees in the Borough.

Music and Dancing Licence Procedure

As was stated in last year's Annual Report, the Society proposed a change of procedure of Music and Dancing Licence applications. The Borough Council supported this view and made representation to the Greater London Council requesting them to accept residents' evidence in writing at hearings of objection. The Borough Council has received a reply from the Greater London Council stating that the procedure cannot be changed. They considered that if residents felt sufficiently strongly against an application they would be prepared to attend the oral hearing in public in supporting an objection. They also stated that as objections were heard first they would rarely need to attend a hearing for more than one morning.

One rather wonders what their reaction would be if, for instance, they required their doctor urgently and were told that he was at County Hall objecting to a licence application which he might feel 'strongly' about!

Railings in the Flower Walk, Kensington Gardens

Letters were sent to the Royal Parks' Bailiff deploring the erection of railings in the Flower Walk, giving what had always appeared a garden walk, a municipal appearance. The Society was told that the flower beds were frequently walked on in spite of notices to 'Keep Off'—should it, perhaps, have been written in other languages as well? It's a sad reflection of tourists in Kensington—Battersea Park is able to have flower walks without railings and it is surprising how much cleaner the park is able to keep. Residents of Battersea seem to know where the litter bins are situated.

Natural History Museum

Was built on land acquired by the Government in 1863 from the 1851 Commissioners following the 1862 Exhibition. It was designed by the famous Liverpool architect Alfred Waterhouse in a Romanesque style and opened to the public in 1881.

The Geology, Minerology and Botany galleries were the first to be on view, three years later the Zoology galleries were opened; the Museum has continued to expand now with four acres of gallery space and unseen by the public are vast collections, laboratories, workshops, libraries and scientific and technical departments. And so, one must accept the expressed need of the Trustees for additional space.

The Trustees require the additional space to be concentrated within the limited area covered by the original plan, thereby disregarding the importance of the listed building, which is surely as important as the exhibits within it.

After the Public Inquiry in 1979 the Inspector said, 'the Trustees scheme is expensive, it would lead to the loss of two floors of the present accommodation and would take six years to materialise'. In

spite of this statement permission has been given. Mr. Bell and others in the letter to *The Times*, February 20th deplores the Secretary of State for the Environment decision for the demolition of the galleries and considers a realistic estimate for rebuilding the galleries project to probably be in excess of £30m. At the Inquiry the Greater London Council's architect Mr. John Bancroft put forward an alternative scheme showing how the same amount of accommodation could be provided at less cost and without the demolition of the Waterhouse Galleries.

Within a very short walk is St. Paul's Church, Onslow Square, redundant, waiting for a use to be found for it. Within six years Brompton Hospital is likely to be redundant, when the new Cardiothoracic Hospital is completed.

May we hope that during the centenary celebrations the 'Powers that be' may think again and decide that either or both redundant buildings may be an asset to the Museum with a saving of many million pounds.

A selection of cases dealt with

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

These are examined by members of the Executive Committee. Sites or areas where the character or amenity is likely to be affected are visited and comments are sent to the Council's Planning Control Officer.

Meeting with Council at 18 Kensington Square

Mr. Cox, Chairman of the Council's Planning Committee, the Chief Architect, the Planning Control Officer, and the Design Officer met members of the Executive Committee at the beginning of the year. The main discussion concerned the inadequacies of the current planning legislation, more restraints necessary over diplomatic users. Sympathetic street lighting and local licensing for music and dancing were also discussed. The Society thought that this was a useful meeting and welcomed this kind of informal meeting and co-operation with the Council.

The District Development Plan

The Greater London Development Plan which was approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment in 1976 required the individual London Boroughs to produce their Plans for their area by 1979. The Royal Borough of Kensington produced their plan in 1978, it was studied in detail by the Executive Committee and comments and objections were sent to the Council. Many of these were accepted by the Council in their revised edition.

The Inquiry began on October 7th and continued until the end of January. The Society submitted a number of written objections; 547 objection forms were received by the Council, containing several thousand objections. Mr. Stedham, the Secretary of State for the Environment Inspector is now preparing his Report, considering the many objections, he may make recommendations to the Council with suggestions for modifications to the Plan. It will then be for the Council to decide whether or not to amend the Draft Plan, before finally adopting it. We hope the Council will adopt a flexible attitude towards any proposals the Inspector makes.

Sir Donald Logan represented the Society with the Thurloe and Egerton Association and a number of other Residents' Associations at

the Inquiry. He gave evidence against the Council's 'preferred areas for diplomatic use' (see Diplomatic Premises in Kensington page 24).

The Society supported the West London Traffic Reform Association in their evidence on Movement; they had studied traffic Movement in considerable detail. A donation of £50 was sent to them to help with their expenses.

It is hoped that the Council will be able to formally adopt the District Plan by the end of the year.

The Old Town Hall

Two public meetings have been arranged by the Borough Council to discuss proposals for the site and members of the Executive Committee have attended meetings arranged by the Parents' Association, St. Mary Abbott's School.

The latest plan has recently been refused planning permission as being an overdevelopment and much too bulky.

The Society is of the opinion that this important site is worthy of a building of some distinction. We hope that a more suitable plan will be presented without much delay. There are too many important sites vacant in the Borough not bringing in rates, e.g. Gloucester Road Station Site, Golly's Garage Site, East side of Earls Court Road, Emperor's Gate.

Kensington Church Street Barracks Site

As reported in the September letter to Members, the Society was invited by the Crown Commissioners to discuss the future development of this site. The Society opposed the shop development on the Church Street frontage; we understand that opposition has also been expressed by the Royal Fine Arts Commission and that meetings are taking place with the Borough Council's Planning Officers and the Architects for some amendment.

Channel Tunnel Terminal

The Greater London Council has suggested a number of locations for the Terminal in London including a dockland site in East London; the West Brompton Good's Yard site; the Olympia Station Site. British Rail prefers a West London Site. The Society considers that a dockland site is the only site which should be considered by the Greater London Council and British Rail. For the terminal to be sited in West London could only have a disastrous effect on the residential areas of Kensington. It is intended to hold a Public Meeting to allow residents to put forward their views; the timing of this is of paramount importance. On page 28 will be found the West London Traffic Reform's submission to the House of Commons Transport Committee's Inquiry, into the Channel Tunnel Link. The Society supports the views expressed.

Conservation Areas

Since 1967 33 areas have been designated in the Borough as Conservation Areas. The Council recently requested the views of the Society with regard to their proposals to amalgamate a number of the areas as a matter of rationalization. The Society opposed the amalgamation of Earl's Court Square, Courtfield Gardens and the Northern part of the Bolton's Conservation area; also Kensington Court and de Vere Gardens.

The Society supported the Bolton's Association in their request that Redcliffe Mews should be part of the Conservation Area and not designated as suitable for redevelopment. The Council has ignored this request, the Society will carefully watch applications for this area.

Golly's Garage Site

Strongly supported Earl's Court Residents' Association in opposing an African Cultural Centre consisting of accommodation for over 200 visitors, conference rooms, shops, etc.

St. Paul's Church, Onslow Square

Earlier in the year we understood that this church was for sale and likely to be demolished. The Chairman of the Executive Committee wrote to the Council stating that in the event of demolition the Society would favour the extension southwards of the façade of the existing western terrace to form the front of any new building in a matching style. Mr. Grant added that 'the architectural integrity of the façades of the Square resides in their consistently nineteenth-century classical character . . . the northern end of the eastern terrace was replaced after war damage as an accurate copy of the original buildings'.

We understand that three possible purchasers have so far come forward with schemes to adapt the building.

This is a residential conservation area and any new use for the church must avoid having a detrimental effect traffic or otherwise on the area.

Clydesdale Road, Talbot Road and Coalville House, W.11

The Chairman, Mr. Ian Grant, wrote to the Chairman of the Planning Committee deploring the large-scale development proposal for this area, he stated that the Society would strongly favour rehabilitation of the existing buildings.

Princes House, Buckingham Court, Kensington Park Road, W.11

The Society opposed the application to build an extra floor on the above.

39 and 41 Victoria Road, W.8

Application to demolish the rear of Lady Eden's School and the construction of a part-two and part-three-storey building to provide

an assembly hall, classrooms and cloakrooms was opposed by the Society being against any enlargement of the school owing to the traffic congestion caused by the delivering and collecting of children. Planning permission was given by the Council with the condition that No. 39 Victoria Road returns to residential use as a single-family dwelling.

43 Clareville Grove

Supported the Council's refusal of planning permission for the erection of an angle post and barbed-wire fence against party wall at roof level.

114a Cromwell Road, 8/9 Grenville Place, 11/25 Emperor's Gate, 1/7 McLeod's Mews

Supported Council's planning refusal. Appeal allowed.

3 and 4 Elvaston Place

An application for premises to be used as a day school was refused by the Council. The Society supported the Council on Appeal. The Appeal was allowed by the Secretary of State for the Environment with the following condition, premises are only to be used as a day school during normal school hours for not more than 275 children.

16 Clareville Grove

Supported the Council at Appeal for planning permission for the erection of a heightened second floor extension. Appeal dismissed.

Freston Road

The Society supported the Norland Society and the Kensington Borough Council at the Hammersmith and Fulham District Plan Inquiry, requesting that paragraph 14.6 of the Plan should be amended to provide a slip road to the M41 from the Freston Road industrial development, owing to the very high traffic flows through Braly Road, St. Ann's Road and Royal Crescent.

The Inquiry into the Plan has now been held, the Inspector supported the objection and has recommended the Hammersmith-Fulham Borough Council to consider a comprehensive re-examination of the proposal for a link road to the M41.

17 Victoria Grove, W.8

Enforcement notice relating to change of use of the first floor to offices. Appeal was allowed. The Society supported the Council.

Stanford Court, Cornwall Gardens

Refusal of permission for the construction of a new sixth-floor containing two flats. Appeal was dismissed. The Society supported the Council.

104/106 Cromwell Road

Refusal of permission for use of the premises as an extension to existing hotel with use of basement as Casino. Appeal for extension allowed—for Casino dismissed. The Society supported the Council.

17/19 Collesmore Gardens

Application for change of use to a private day school for 250-300 children was strongly opposed by the Society, but given planning permission by the Borough Council subject to the following conditions:

1. Garden shall not at any time be used for play facilities.
2. No more than 300 children shall at any time attend the school—age restricted to 6-11 years.
3. The premises shall be only used as a day school during normal school term.
4. Permission personal to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas for so long as they occupy premises and shall not endure for the benefit of the land.

The garden has already been used as a play area by the school, causing much annoyance to residents in the area. The Society supported residents' complaint to the Council; subsequently, a planning application was made to:

Condition 1—The Society has strongly opposed permission being allowed for the garden to be used as a play centre. Permission for 200-300 children to use a garden in a residential conservation area as a play centre would be deplorable, and if permission is given, make nonsense of planning conditions.

East and West Lodges Earl's Terrace

Opposed planning application for change of use to office and studio accommodation use. Planning permission refused by Council.

12 Queen's Gate

Opposed change of use from residential to educational purposes. Council has refused planning permission.

College House, Wrights Lane

Supported Council on Appeal for change of use of ground floor and part basement of north wing from storage to retail and ancillary storage. Appeal dismissed.

4-18 (even) and 26 (even) Earl's Court Road

Supported Edwardes Square and Scarsdale Association in opposing application. Planning permission has been refused.

21 Kensington Park Gardens

Opposed additional storey. Planning permission has been refused.

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

1/70 Wynnstay Gardens; 33 Kensington Court; 1/2 Cheniston Gardens; 22/25 Kelso Place; Roof additions Queen's Gate; 19/21 Ansdell Street; 1a Holland Park Mews; 11a Lansdown Road; 14 Pembroke Villas; 66 Notting Hill Gate; 42 Elvaston Place; Crofton Hotel Queen's Gate; 4 Queen's Gate Mews; Earl's Court Gardens Public Lavatory; 8 Prince's Gate Mews; Rear of Nos. 1-7 Ladbroke Road; 86 Clarendon Road; 2 Victoria Gardens W.11; 64 Lansdowne Road; 24 Kensington Park Gardens; 12 Penzance Place; 41 Norland Square; 88 Kensington Park Road; 174 Ladbroke Grove; 12 Clarendon Road; 38 Linden Gardens; 47 Kensington Court; Iverna Court; 57 Elgin Crescent; 26/30 Earl's Court Road; 95/99 Ladbroke Grove; 16 Dawson Place; 19 Pembroke Gardens; 47 Blenheim Crescent; 69 Blenheim Crescent; 65/67 Elgin Crescent; 79/81 Ledbury Road; 16 Stanley Crescent; 12 St. James's Gardens; 8a and 8b Ladbroke Walk; 106 Kensington High Street; 8 Upper Addison Gardens; 159 Holland Park Avenue; 35 Chepstow Villas; 110 and 112 Princedale Road and 75 Pottery Lane; 92 Lansdowne Road; 4 Kensington Park Gardens; 123 Portland Road; Kensington Gate Central Garden; 4 Stanley Gardens; 58a Drayton Gardens and 29 and 30 Creswell Place; 25 Kensington Square; Sainsbury Super Market London Air Terminal Site; Paving; Kelfield Gardens; 12 Kensington Palace Gardens.

Other Activities and Future Arrangements

Other Activities

Visits were made to the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile; the Royal Chelsea Hospital; Queen Alexandra House; Wimbledon Windmill; Mr. and Mrs. Montague Cleeve entertained members to tea; following the Annual General Meeting Mr. Ian Grant gave an illustrated talk entitled 'London Clubs'; St. Mary's College, Strawberry Hill; Swanton Mill; Stoner Park, Henley on Thames; Mapledurham House, Reading; Mr. Curle, local studies Librarian and Miss. Ensing both old friends of the Society arranged a very interesting evening showing and talking about the extensive local historical collection; Hyde Park Hotel, Knightsbridge, The Manager gave a talk on the history of the building; Two visits were arranged for 18 Stafford Terrace, W.8.

Future Arrangements

14th April *Leeds Castle, Maidstone*. Members visited this castle in 1976; many more facilities are now available. The yellow drawing room, Thorpe Hall, the Conference Room which contains one of the finest collection of French Impressionist paintings in the Country, Dog collar museum and the Chapel which was re-consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1978. Last year the Culpeper garden was opened and this Autumn the mediaeval lake known as the Great Water has been re-established. The castle has been described by Lord Conway as 'the loveliest castle in the whole world'. Tickets £5. which only includes coach ticket and entrance. Tea will be available. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1 p.m.

29th April 2 p.m. *A visit has been arranged to the Royal Park Nursery, Hyde Park (opposite Hyde Park Police Station)*. Car parking is available at the nursery. Tickets required.

21st May 6 p.m. *In the Assembly Hall at the Convent of the Assumption, Kensington Square*. The Annual General Meeting. This will be followed at 6.30 p.m. by an illustrated lecture by the President of the Society, Mr. Alec Clifton-Taylor entitled 'Houses of English Stone'. Members who have heard Mr. Clifton-Taylor on other occasions will know that they can expect a treat. Members' friends are welcome.

9th June *Swanton Water Mill, Mersham*. Mrs. Christiansen will be happy to entertain members as usual, but will quite understand if members think they have seen enough of Swanton Mill! Coach tickets £3.50. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1 p.m.

8th July 5.00—7.00 p.m. *18 Kensington Square*, garden and house will be open to members. Wine and light refreshments will be available, also stalls of produce, cakes, etc. The Secretary hopes that the proceeds from the above, and the increased subscriptions will make it unnecessary for her to hold a Christmas sale in her house, which entails a great deal of moving furniture etc. Entrance 50p, donations, of course, be gratefully received, also help with the one or two stalls.

2nd September *Chicheley Hall near Newport Pagnall* built for Sir John Chester between 1719 and 1723, one of the finest and least altered early 18th-century houses in the country. Tea will be available. Coach and entrance fee £4.50. Coach leaves Kensington Square at one o'clock.

17th September *Royal Horticultural Gardens at Wisley*, near Guildford. Teas are available in the Gardens. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1.30 p.m. Coach and entrance fee £3.50.

Will you please enclose a stamped addressed envelope when applying for tickets. Coach tickets may be passed to non-members, but cannot be refunded. A charge of 50p is made for non-coach visits, to cover expenses, with the exception of the A.G.M.

Lady Kenyon

Lady Kenyon died on 9th October aged 105. She was the daughter of Charles Hamilton Jackson, Administrator General and Island Secretary of Jamaica, her paternal grandfather and great-grandfather had been Lord Chief Justices of Jamaica. At the age of seventeen she was brought to London, she became a student at the National Art Training School (now the Royal College of Art). She became engaged to the brother of a fellow student named Harold Vaughan Kenyon. The engagement was not approved, and, she was sent to Paris, where she continued her art studies. On her return to London she joined the London Hospital, Whitechapel as a student nurse. During the 1914-1918 war she served with the Queen Alexandra Military Nursing Reserve, but when the war finished she returned to flower painting. She had a small house built at Dogmersfield in Hampshire where she made a beautiful garden.

When she was seventy-two she met again the man to whom she had been engaged when she was an art student, Harold Kenyon, now a widower, with a successful career behind him and a grown-up family. They were married at St. Mary Abbots Church in 1947. Sir Harold Kenyon had a phenomenal memory of old Kensington and in 1953 became the first Vice-President of the Kensington Society. Sir Harold and Lady Kenyon took an intense interest in the Borough.

Sir Harold died in 1959 and Lady Kenyon returned to live in her cottage in Hampshire, where she lived alone until she broke her leg in June 1980. When she was asked how it happened, she replied 'I was gardening my dear and lost my balance'. To the end she never lost her interest in life, she was interested in politics, she read the papers every day and could discuss anything going on in the world, her memory matched that of her late husband. She was a very generous Life Member of the Kensington Society, each year, though living in Hampshire until 1979, she came to London for the Annual General Meeting and the Annual Sale. A great lady—and as *The Times* Obituary notice stated, 'adored by all who knew her'.

The Hon. Pamela Hurcomb

To Pamela Hurcomb, who died on 16th November, 1980, at the age of 65, the Society owes a debt of gratitude. She gave Lord Hurcomb her unstinting support in all his many activities, not least during his presidency from 1967 to 1975. Pamela kept house for her father from her mother's death in 1947 until his in 1975, entertained for him and drove him to his engagements, on time.

After 1975, Pamela would have liked to travel, to places of her own choice. But multiple sclerosis had already developed too far to make this possible. She bore her illness and increasing immobility with unwavering courage and maintained a lively and shrewd interest in all the work of the Society. Even when crippled, she would struggle into the annual money-raising sale on elbow crutches and later, when housebound, would send someone to buy things for her from it.

The one great personal interest Pamela was able to pursue was her work for the Red Cross. She joined the Westminster Division in 1939 and shortly after the end of the war went out to the British Zone in Germany and then to India as a Welfare Officer. She was then appointed head of the Red Cross in New Zealand and was looking forward to her new life there when her mother died and she remained here to look after her father. She found time, however, until 1973, when she became too ill, to run the Westminster Division's records. She was a very able administrator. And how handsome she looked in her uniform!

JANE LIDDEDALE.

Architectural Details

It is now thirteen years (1968) since I first wrote about architectural details in the Annual Report of the Kensington Society. At that time it was still the accepted practice to crop off any ornamental architectural feature from the outside of a building that might need repair on the grounds of probable expense, and indeed few householders or Authorities seemed to be even aware of the terrible visual and environmental consequences of such emasculation.

Since then however, a gradual shift in official policy has brought about a welcome change in public attitudes, and over the last three years or so I have noticed a marked general improvement in the whole preservation scene.

Probably the most important influence was the emergence of the great movement in favour of conservation that first appeared during the mid-1970s, when a disenchanted public, threatened also by a worsening economic climate, began to re-assess the heritage of the past in terms of active preservation as an alternative to the tawdry mediocrity of so much post-war building.

The long overdue stiffening of official policy which took place at the same time gave essential assistance to the conservation movement, and now Local Authorities were able to take a much more positive role in the promotion of preservation than had been possible in their previous situation as rather passive onlookers.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea has now adopted a constructive attitude over the whole preservation question, and (much as I had hoped in my article back in 1969) the Planning Department is willing and able to give help and advice to property owners in restoring and maintaining their buildings.

A vital component of the re-thought policy has been the development of various methods by which financial help can be made available for restoration work, sometimes through direct grants of money, sometimes by financing the manufacture of moulds for the economic reproduction of external ornament, sometimes through the promotion of General Improvement Schemes covering a whole street or area.

The Council now also stores numbers of railings, balcony fronts, balustrades and other features which have been recovered from demolitions, so that these may be re-used or copied where appropriate. All this provides a most happy contrast to those bleak times when I wrote about such matters in the 'swinging sixties', for at that time all that seemed to be swinging on the preservation scene was the wrecker's ball and the cornice cropper's pick!

These 'before and after' photographs on Page 25 show how the front of this mid-nineteenth century terrace house has been restored.

The crowning balustrade has been replaced (concealing an ugly modern dormer window). The main cornice has also been replaced, in this case using a fibreglass moulding because the original supporting stones had been cropped back. The heads of the large windows on the first and second floors were re-run to correct profile.

The owners wished to retain their forecourt parking space, but it was possible to rebuild the piers flanking the dustbin store to correct size and to give them the correct caps, so that the back edge of pavement line was properly defined.

Finally, the ironwork to the ground floor balcony guard was repaired and a short length of correct railing was set on the top of the dustbin store.

All this work was assisted by grants of money from the Department of the Environment and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

IAN GRANT.

Diplomatic Premises in Kensington

One of the main subjects raised at the Public Inquiry into the Kensington and Chelsea District Plan has been diplomatic use—the use of premises for diplomatic offices. (Residential use, whether by diplomats or others, does not require planning consent).

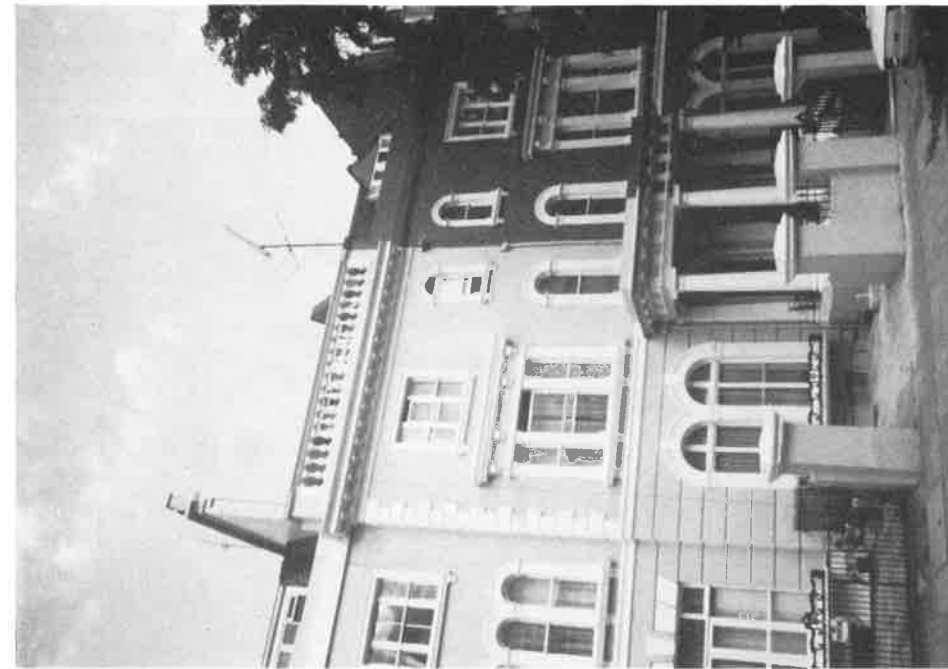
In response to public concern at the concentration of diplomatic offices in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the Council have proposed in the District Plan as now amended that the area lying north of Holland Park Avenue/Notting Hill Gate and that south of Fulham Road and Sloane Avenue shall be designated as unsuitable for diplomatic and allied use. In the rest of the Borough, applications would be judged by the Council against a set of criteria. Council officers have publicly expressed their intention to adopt a very restrictive policy, if not a complete ban, on diplomatic use, an aim which could be popular if attainable.

Although the first of these areas is within Kensington, the Kensington Society decided to join with other amenity societies covering the whole of the rest of the Borough in opposing this policy and the objection was presented at the Public Inquiry on 12th November last by Sir Donald Logan, Hon. Treasurer of the Thurloe and Egerton Association.

The objection was made on the grounds that the policy would be ineffective in preventing further diplomatic use and that in its only practical effect it would prove seriously discriminatory against residents in half the Borough.

As a restrictive policy it is likely to be ineffective since the final decision on whether an embassy can use premises for offices lies in practice with the Secretary of State for the Environment. The attitude of Whitehall is therefore relevant. The view of the Foreign Office is that with the City of Westminster the Royal Borough is naturally favoured by diplomatic missions and that provided certain criteria are observed missions ought to be free to seek premises anywhere in the Borough. If, for special reasons, there must be zones where they could not go, they should be kept as small as possible. The view of the Department of the Environment is that they are not committed to the definition of areas in local plans for diplomatic use. The objectors have argued that the more freedom of choice of diplomatic missions is restricted by the Council's policies, the more will the Secretary of State for the Environment be inclined to grant applications in the areas where the Council have expressed a preference for the location

After



Before





H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone with Lord Hurcomb and the Dowager Marchioness of Cholmondeley and Miss Mary Goldie after the A.G.M. held in the Orangery, Holland Park, 1973

of diplomatic use. The Council's criteria would thus be progressively eroded and would provide no adequate protection for the centre of the Borough. (The City of Westminster has objected to the introduction of zones in the Kensington and Chelsea Plan).

The objectors have argued that the practical effect of the Council's policy will be to lead diplomatic missions, and in particular their advisors such as estate agents, to look for premises in the centre of the Borough where the concentration of diplomatic use is already great. Furthermore, since the policy is to apply to 'diplomatic and allied use', missions seeking premises for such purposes as schools, hospitals, or medical centres or even the offices of state airlines or tourist agencies will concentrate on the centre of the Borough.

As a result of the concentration of diplomatic and allied use in the centre of the Royal Borough, residents there would be required not only to carry the present burden of diplomatic use but to suffer any further expansion which the Borough finds itself obliged to accept. The problems of parking and obstruction and the disturbance of demonstrations are multiplied by the location of diplomatic offices close to each other. Dispersal of new diplomatic offices throughout the Borough would minimise the effects. Concentration makes the burden heavy and compounds it.

The objectors argue that the right policy must be to encourage dispersal of diplomatic missions as far as possible in the interest of diplomats and residents alike, with a suitable set of criteria applicable equally throughout the Borough. This would not only be good planning: it would also provide the best basis for reconciling conflict with Whitehall where the last word lies. In a Borough like Kensington and Chelsea where the existing residential use which needs protection is so widely and evenly distributed, any zoning is impracticable. The arbitrary zoning written into the District Plan is unfairly discriminatory and the antithesis of good planning.

SIR DONALD LOGAN.

House of Commons Transport Committee

Submission to the Inquiry into the Channel Link By Keith Buchan for West London Traffic Reform

1. Introduction

1.1 It is not the intention of this paper to analyse in detail the various financial and technical aspects of all the present schemes for a new cross-Channel link. However, the low-cost single-track rail tunnel offers clear commercial and environmental benefits in the near future, and therefore with greater certainty, with fewer side-effects and lower risk than the more grandiose projects. Nor would it preclude the construction of a second tunnel later if more capacity were to be required. The major environmental, financial and construction problems of a road bridge or 'rolling motorway' tunnel would be avoided by the modest scheme. It thus appears likely and desirable that the single tunnel will be built, and in this case the main area of doubt would be where to locate the London passenger terminal. It is this issue which is addressed in the next section of this paper, and relates to items (1) and (2) of the Committee's public brief of 3rd April, 1980.

2. The Location of the London Terminal and its Transport Access

2.1 Wherever the London passenger terminal is situated, there will be two questions which are of overriding importance. Firstly, who pays for the terminal and transport access to it, and secondly, how much car traffic will be generated?

2.2 Problems under the first heading are easily identified. For example, a terminal which involves minimum expenditure by British Rail, i.e. Olympia or West Brompton, may involve huge expenditure by the G.L.C. and local boroughs. In fact, British Rail allow £25 million for *all* improvements to existing railway installations at 1978 prices (1). However, in 1980 (2), the G.L.C. put a price of £200 million on the construction of the West London Relief Road and special links to a West London terminal. The road alone was estimated to cost approximately £80 million in 1979 (3). The extra money would be the responsibility of the G.L.C. Additionally, London Transport would have to provide improved services, and there would still be significant increases in traffic congestion on East-West roads, particularly Cromwell Road and the Embankment. A

different terminal site, for example Victoria or Waterloo, would involve BR in certain additional expenditure, but would be cheaper for public authorities as a whole, especially the G.L.C.; have fewer planning and environmental problems; and be more convenient for most passengers.

2.3 In view of the financial implications for British Rail, particularly because of the impending difficulties over cash limits and the proposed 'hiving off' of its Property Board, it is hardly surprising that they find it imperative to minimise their own direct expenditure on the terminal. However it would be ridiculous if this special consideration determined its London site.

2.4 As regards road traffic generation, there are two main sources—taxis and cars—and both are very sensitive to the availability of public transport. In 1972, the G.L.C. considered three terminal sites in some detail, White City, Victoria, and Surrey Docks (4). Taxis were predicted to be greater in number than cars in each case, but numbers varied widely. Comparing Victoria (with good public transport links) to Surrey Docks (with poor links) more than twice as many taxis were predicted by the report at Surrey Docks, and 64% more cars.

2.5 More recently, estimates were prepared by officers of the G.L.C., the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. These were for a West London terminal and gave a 'most likely' figure for vehicle trips per day of 8,100, comprising 2,800 cars, 5,100 taxis, and 200 coaches. The estimated range was between 5,000 and 11,500 vehicle trips, again depending on the quality of public transport. In turn, to a great extent this depends on the location of the terminal. Victoria, with Circle, District and Victoria London Transport lines, or Waterloo, with Northern and Bakerloo L.T. lines, have excellent facilities in this respect, with good connections to other main line stations. Neither West London terminal could match this provision, even with major changes to other L.T. services. For example, if trains were to run from Olympia or West Brompton northwards to main line termini, the Metropolitan or Circle services would have to be reduced.

2.6 Even using the single tunnel, overall traffic could be increased by 50% above BR's estimate of 8 million passengers per year by the year 2000. In addition, the planned close arrival times of channel trains means that traffic is concentrated into certain periods of the day. For example, between 9.05 and 9.50 a.m. six departures are assumed from London (5). Even if two are 'premium' trains from Victoria, the rest would carry just under 10% of daily passengers (4 out of 43 arrival/departures). This would result in between 500 and 1,100 vehicle trips in the highly congested West London area during the sensitive period from 8.40 to 9.40 a.m., using G.L.C. figures. This figure could double just by the re-scheduling of four freight trains in the morning 'flight'.

2.7 Wherever the terminal is sited in London, road congestion will pose some sort of problem. In the case of West London, where a major road scheme is contemplated, the plan is to provide local North-South relief, not to cater for the radial traffic to Central London or to B.R. main line stations. The only effective way to reduce such traffic is the provision of the highest quality public transport links. In the foreseeable future this must exclude West London, which is over-heated both in development and traffic terms. It is ironic that one of the few rail improvements suggested in the area, the development of the West London Line (linking with the North London Line) which was recommended by the London Rail Advisory Committee and approved by the G.L.C., would be rendered impossible by the combination of the road scheme and a West Brompton terminal.

2.8 The problem with the sites which make overall transport and planning sense, are more concerned with the cost to British Rail of reorganising an existing station, and possibly some of its services. It would be wrong to make light of these costs, but the underlying problem seems to be that B.R. is responsible for them. Even so, there are, for example, plans for Victoria to undergo major re-building; and changes to cater for channel traffic could be actively considered now for inclusion. In any case, Victoria has already been chosen as the 'premium' terminal, using the existing two Boat Train platforms. The only other factor which might be a drawback is the diversion of certain Herne Hill B.R. services away from Victoria. If this small change was felt to be a problem, the obvious solution would be the extension of the Victoria tube line from Brixton (one stop) to connect at Herne Hill. The tunnel was started, and L.T. has design plans for the station. This would improve transport in the area as well as access to the terminal. It is a comment on the present relationship between B.R. and L.T. that the feasibility of viewing both lines as part of the same rail system has been studied. Given the limited initial number of services, Victoria seems the most sensible choice. If capacity was to be expanded, with additional large expenditure, more expensive solutions should be considered, for example the track reconstruction costs at Waterloo, or the possible combination of channel traffic and a cross-London B.R. tunnel. Such expenditure would be necessary anyway, because if a West London terminal were chosen, any expansion would cause extreme access problems, given the restricted capacity of the road or rail network in the area. There is a further possible method of avoiding congestion in London, and that is to provide another station South of London to attract passengers from Southern England, probably about 20% of passengers (6).

2.9 In conclusion, it would appear that the British Rail preference for a terminal at West Brompton or Olympia (not necessarily shared by the G.L.C. or local boroughs) is at least in part a product of the financial and organisational structure of B.R. and the other

authorities responsible for transport in London. Overall, West London is unsuitable on grounds of traffic congestion and limited public transport access. The design of the possible relief road would have to be radically altered, limiting local relief and not meeting the channel traffic needs in a radial East-West direction. The committee should recommend that part of the channel link scheme should be a London terminal with the highest standards of public transport and as close as possible to Central London's services. This means not at Olympia or West Brompton. For such a major project, B.R. and L.T. links should be considered together, and indeed such a strategic view is long overdue for London as a whole.

3. Freight Traffic

3.1 After focusing so much attention on the passenger terminal, it is important to recall the safety, environmental, and energy benefits that will be gained if any long distance lorry traffic is diverted to rail. The tunnel is predicted to carry about 8 million tonnes (single bore) by the year 2000, and this would only amount to ½ % of tonnes lifted nationally. Nevertheless, most transfer will take place from the heaviest lorries which travel further, and so the effect will be greater in terms of tonne-kilometres or of damage and nuisance. On certain roads which suffer a special problem from long distance heavy lorry traffic from the continent the relief could be significant, though not total. This applies in the West London corridor, and could be particularly helpful in conjunction with other traffic management measures.

4. Conclusions

4.1 While broadly supporting the most modest rail channel tunnel, this paper opposes the idea of a West London terminal because of inadequate public transport links and the improbability of their improvement; and because of the existing road traffic congestion, which would be badly aggravated by the surges caused by closely grouped series of train arrivals and departures. The initially small number of services should be handled mostly at Victoria, possibly retaining Motorail services at Olympia or a station further South. Future increases could be taken into Waterloo, or incorporated into a cross-London tunnel scheme.

1881—St. Charles Hospital—1981

On a fine Wednesday afternoon in 1881 Rackham Street, North Kensington, was *en fête*. A huge crowd enlivened by the strains of a brass band eagerly awaited the arrival of the Prince and Princess of Wales to open the newly completed Infirmary for the sick poor of the parish of St. Marylebone. Soon after 4 p.m., to much applause, the royal party drew up outside the St. Marks Mission Room where a bouquet of flowers was presented to the Princess and the royal couple then drove on to the Infirmary which they duly opened. Thus, on 29th June, was founded St. Charles Hospital which initially opened to serve the sick of a parish some distance away, and today serves the community of North Kensington and will this summer celebrate one hundred years of service to the sick.

The genesis of the new infirmary can be traced back to 1867 when minor structural collapses in the old and overcrowded workhouse in Northumberland Street brought home to the Guardians of St. Marylebone the necessity to provide adequate accommodation. They decided to build a modern and separate infirmary to relieve pressure on the workhouse and meet current legislation. There being no suitable site in Marylebone a suitable plot of land was eventually found in North Kensington. In the architect to the Board, Henry Saxon Snell, they already had a man who had specialised in the design of this type of institution and under Snell's direction an infirmary of the most modern design speedily arose, the foundation stone being laid on 7th July, 1879 on a site which at that date was still adjacent to open fields.

The infirmary was designed on the 'pavilion' principle and for its time was considered to be very up-to-date. From the beginning all its senior nursing staff were fully qualified 'graduates' from the nursing school at St. Thomas's Hospital set up by Florence Nightingale in 1860 out of the 'Nightingale Fund' subscribed by the public after the Crimean War and since administered by a committee of which she was a member and consultant. Florence Nightingale thoroughly approved of the new infirmary and of the training school for nurses that it was soon necessary to set up as the matron soon found difficulty in obtaining suitable recruits to what was a new and to some minds still a slightly dubious profession, for the tradition of 'Sarah Gamp' died hard.

The Nurses Home was opened in 1884 and it included a lecture room for the eight probationer nurses with which the scheme began, their salaries of £10 a year being paid for out of the Nightingale Fund. Probationers received regular training from the senior medical and nursing staff and if successful were taken on to the nursing establishment of the infirmary. The scheme proved a great success, the number of probationers sanctioned steadily rising until by 1894 twenty-four were allowed at any one time.

In 1908 the agreement between the Nightingale Committee and the Guardians was terminated—the school was successful and no longer needed financial support. Throughout this period the progress of the school, only the third of its kind to be attached to a Poor Law institution, was followed with the keenest interest by the Committee of the Fund and Miss Nightingale. Its reputation was high and by 1897 there were some 300-400 applicants for every vacancy.

Until 1948 the staff/patient ratio was the opposite of that in being today. The infirmary had been registered for 744 patients and in 1881 these were serviced by 86 resident staff and a similar number of what would now be called ancillary workers. This compares with the modern establishment of some 800 medical, nursing and ancillary staff to serve the needs of some 350 in-patients and a large number of out-patients, a change that has been brought about by a number of factors including advances in medical science and the huge expansion in the services offered by the hospital since 1948.

Over the years the nursing staff steadily if slowly increased in number but the resident medical staff was always small, not more than six and this was partly a reflection of the fact that until 1930 this was a Poor Law institution whose basic task was to care for the sick poor of a particular parish, which practised few specialities, had no out-patients service to speak of and ran a very rudimentary casualty department. Furthermore until 1902 the infirmary had very inadequate operating facilities. Outside consultants could be called upon in emergency or for second opinions in difficult cases and in 1919 the Medical Superintendent, Basil Hood, was able to persuade the Guardians to retain consultants on a regular basis, this being the first Poor Law infirmary to adopt this practice.

The first major change came in 1930. In that year the London County Council took over the Poor Law infirmaries in its area and the name 'St. Charles Hospital' was officially adopted. The Council was anxious to dispel the Poor Law image and various changes were initiated over the next few years. These included more generous visiting hours, the provision of a children's playground for the children's ward, better facilities for x-ray treatment, a pathological laboratory and a new nurses home. Not the least of the changes was that the hospital was now open to the general public and was no longer reserved for sick paupers. For the nursing staff this was a time of an increasing establishment and better working conditions and hours.

As with all large institutions the quality of the senior staff is important and in this respect St. Charles was well served from the beginning. The first 60 years were guided by two outstanding Medical Superintendents. The first, John Reuben Lunn, was appointed at the age of 27 and served St. Charles until his retirement through ill health in 1910. A graduate of St. Thomas's Hospital it was he who set up the initial administration, actively encouraged the

training of nurses and successfully campaigned for a proper operating room. His successor, Basil Hood, was equally distinguished. Appointed at the age of 34 he was instrumental in obtaining the appointment of consultants on a regular basis, improving x-ray facilities, devised diagnostic forms for his assistants to use and supervised the changeover to the L.C.C. One of his last acts was to prepare the hospital as a receiving station for air-raid casualties on the outbreak of war in 1939.

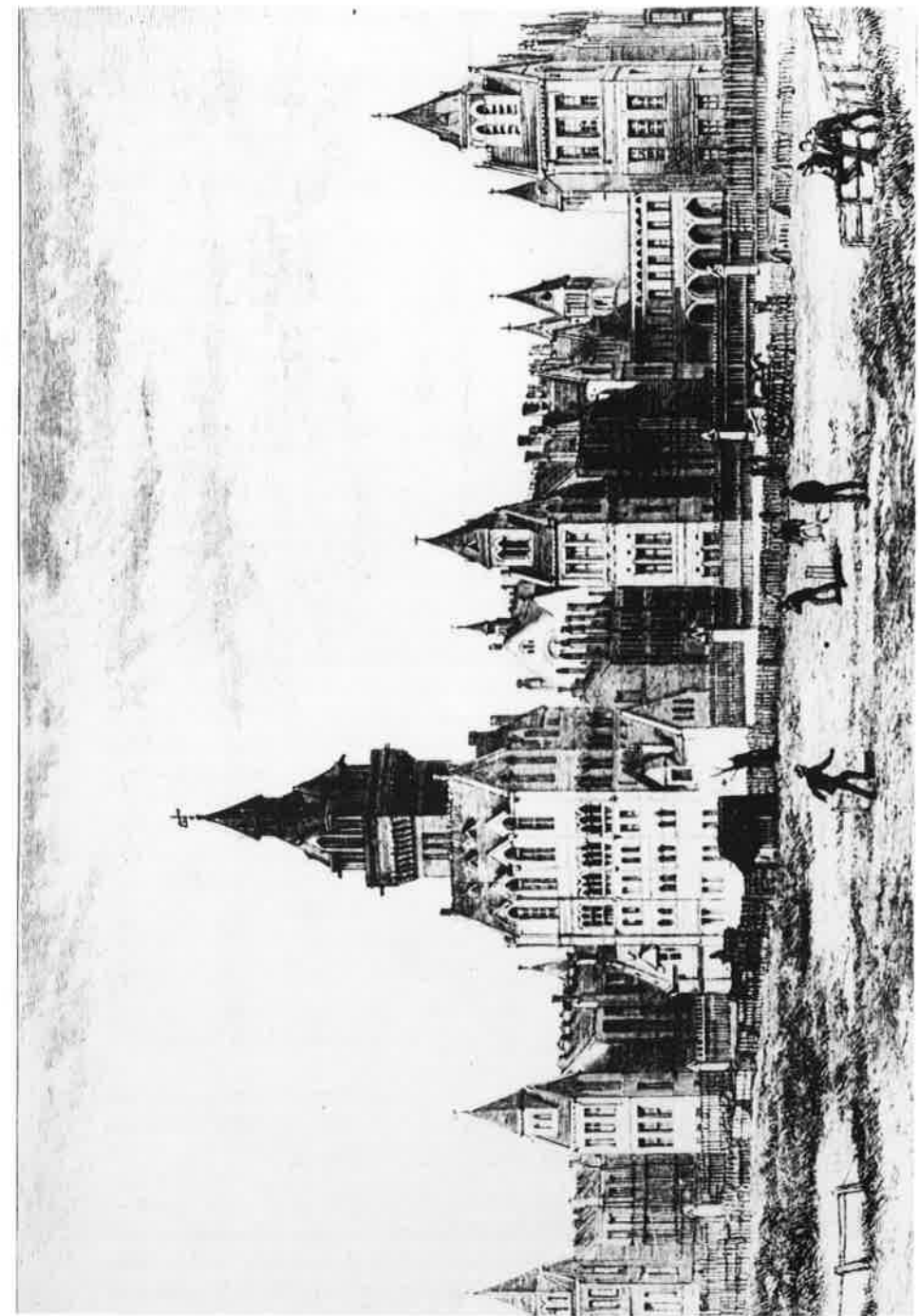
Early matrons were equally outstanding. Miss Elizabeth Vincent, the first matron, had been trained at the Nightingale School at St. Thomas's and was personally selected for the post by the Nightingale Committee. She served until 1900 when ill-health also forced her retirement, and she, together with Dr. Lunn, ensured the success of the Nurses' Training School and the early years of the infirmary. The third matron, Miss Sarah Cockrell, was noted not only for her personal qualities but also for the fact that she had received her initial training at the school attached to the infirmary. She also had to retire through ill-health in 1933 and died in that year, a memorial window later being erected to her in the hospital chapel.

The war years brought little change to the hospital and it was fortunate in that it was not seriously damaged although streets adjacent were reduced to rubble during the blitz. The next major landmark in the history of the hospital was 1948 when on 5th April it became a component part of the new National Health Service. St. Charles was still a hospital with a small resident medical staff and few specialities, most wards being general medical and surgical. There was a rudimentary casualty department and few out-patients while the number of beds was still around 700. All this was now to change. The medical and nursing staff was progressively increased, technical and ancillary staff supplemented, new departments formed, up-to-date operating theatres installed, an accident and emergency service developed and an out-patients department instituted. Portakabins and other structures mushroomed between the original buildings and every effort was made to eradicate the old Poor Law institution image which still clung to the building.

The up-grading of wards to meet modern ideas of medical and nursing care was begun and in some cases has entered a second phase. Fewer beds, brighter colours and the use of cubicles and screening are amongst first impressions together with improved toilet and hygiene facilities. Radio and in some cases television help patients to ease the long hours of recovery while physiotherapy aids the more active to regain full use of un-exercised limbs. A social welfare department can help the return of patients to the problems of the world outside the hospital walls.

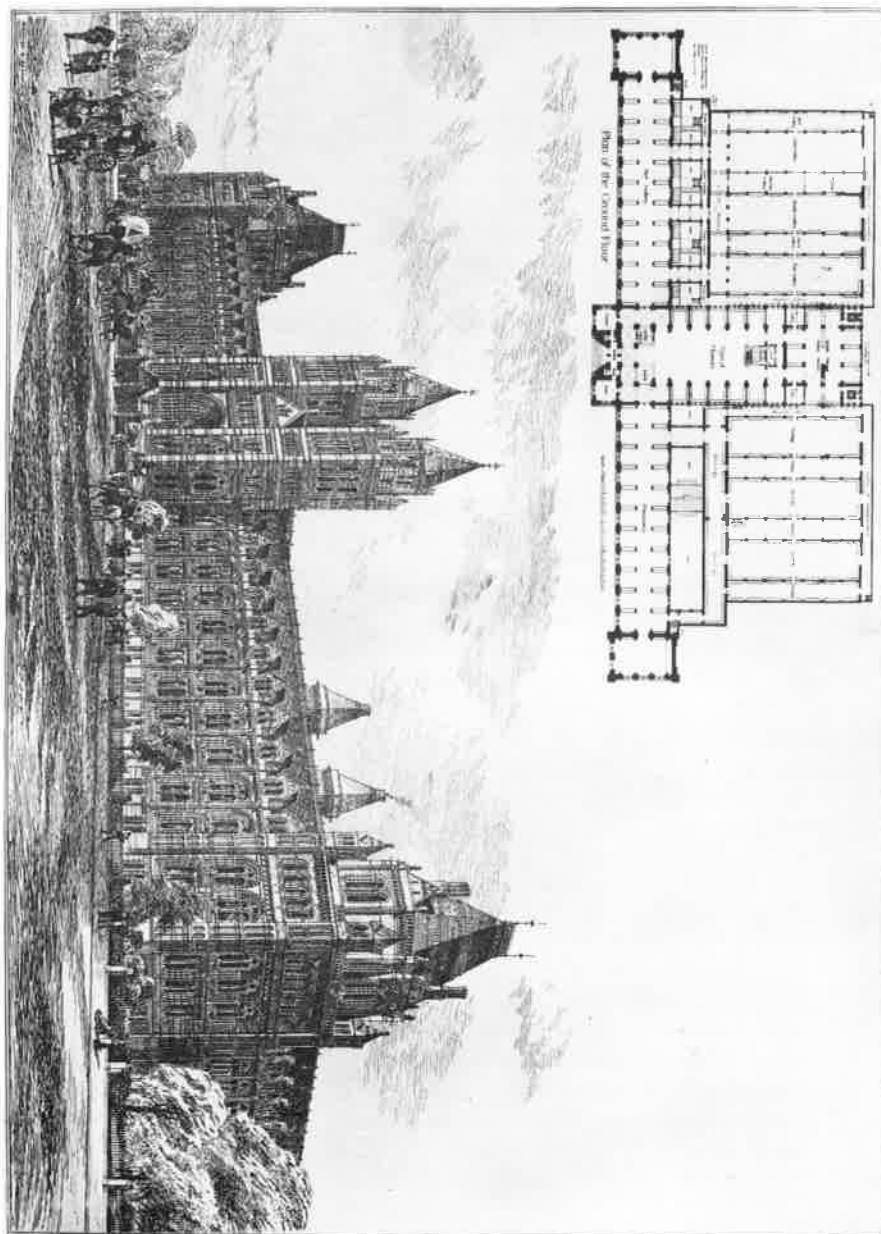
St. Charles has seen many changes in its first 100 years of existence but its primary aim, care of the sick, has never altered and it enters its second century with this very much in mind.

BRIAN CURL.



St. Charles Hospital

By kind permission of Kensington Public Library



Reports from Local Societies

ABBOTSBURY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Association has noted with relief that the Greater London Council has apparently bowed to many protests and abandoned its plan to erect sodium floodlights on 10-metre high steel columns in the Dutch Garden in Holland Park.

As a token of members' regard for the amenity of Holland Park, the Association has met the cost of planting a *Zelkova serrata* in the Old Kitchen Garden.

The loss in the House of Lords of Mr. Anthony Grant's Bill to empower highway authorities to instal traffic control humps on public roads was a great disappointment. These humps greatly reduced the speed, volume and noise of through traffic in Abbotsbury Road when they were installed on a temporary basis in 1977. The Association will continue to encourage legislation in the sense of Mr. Grant's Bill.

A management scheme for enfranchised leaseholds for parts of the Abbotsbury Estate has been approved by the High Court in terms very close to those proposed by the Association.

Members with enfranchisable leaseholds who wish to acquire their freeholds have been recommended to instruct a firm of surveyors with wide experience in the difficult field of Leasehold Reform Act valuations.

Help has been given to members with shorter leases who are seeking to negotiate new leases for their properties.

The 1981 Annual General Meeting will be held at Leighton House on 12th November.

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 Association's main pre-occupation this year has been with two documents prepared by the Borough Council—the District Plan for the Royal Borough and the Policy Document for the Boltons Conservation Area.

Most of the points that we raised on the District Plan have been met by amendments already made by the Council. However, we have maintained our strong objections to the designation of Redcliffe Gardens as a 'Major Secondary Road' and Drayton Gardens as a 'District Road'. We feel that this will tend to perpetuate the present

unsatisfactory situation whereby these roads have carried more than their fair share of traffic. We have added our support to the objections put forward by West London Traffic Reform at the District Plan Public Inquiry, while we continue to regard the construction of a Relief Road as a top priority. We also supported the objection ably presented by Sir Denis Logan on behalf of a large number of residents' associations throughout the Borough against the Council's proposal to exclude diplomatic uses from the Northern and southern sections, leaving the central area of the Borough to bear the brunt of all demands for embassies and their related offices.

The Conservation Area Policy Document has now been completed and approved by the Council's Planning Committee in its final form. The Association has been very actively involved in its preparation and revision. One or two important points of difference remain between the Council and ourselves on matters of local concern. On the whole, however, the exercise has been a satisfactory one.

As usual, there has been a steady flow of planning applications—some 70 during the year—for our investigation and comment. In most cases where a decision has been reached, it has accorded with our recommendation. Early in the year, we successfully resisted a proposal to remove certain streets (or parts of streets) from the Conservation Area, but we have not objected to the more recent plan (now to be implemented) to transfer all the streets to the north of the Old Brompton Road to an enlarged Courtfield Conservation Area, which we consider logical.

The membership of the Association, which now embraces about 300 households in the Conservation Area, has increased slightly during the year.

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

THE CAMPDEN STREET PRESERVATION SOCIETY

The year 1980 was a very uneventful one for the Society; there were no major issues to be tackled and there were few planning applications for even minor improvements. It has been all the more gratifying therefore to report that our membership has not declined and we foresee no problems in keeping the Society alive to face the problems of the future.

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

COTTESMORE COURT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Cottesmore Court is now an island in a sea of conservation areas. Not that we mind, for since the designation at last of Kensington Court as a conservation area and the amendment of the boundaries of Kensington Square and De Vere conservation areas, the whole area,

except Cottesmore Court, South Kensington Telephone Exchange, Esmonde Court and Ansdell Street, is now covered.

Whilst most of the threats of development have receded for the time being, the problems anticipated as a result of planning permission being granted for a school for up to 300 children at 17/19 Cottesmore Gardens have materialised. Despite the conditions imposed, the school has failed to ameliorate the traffic and parking problems and is now seeking the use of the gardens as a playground. Both these problems illustrate the mistake of granting permission in the first place. We only hope that the Planning Committee can get the situation under control.

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

Hon. Secretary: Michael Bach.

EARL'S COURT GARDENS AND MORTON MEWS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Earl's Court Gardens is a short street of distinctive residential houses built about 1840. Early last year the Council threatened to build a public lavatory in the street and a Residents' Association was formed, together with the adjacent Morton Mews, to fight this proposal. This objective was achieved in March, with the support of several other Associations in the Royal Borough, on the grounds that planning permission was technically invalid and due to the considerable number and strength of objections which the Council had received to the scheme.

The Association now continues not only with the aim of preventing any further such developments but also generally to try to improve our street and immediate surroundings wherever possible.

Joint Secretaries: Lady Farnham and Mrs. Martin Hunter.

EARL'S COURT SQUARE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Association has been concerned particularly with the 'Movement' Chapter of the Borough's District Plan and has been represented by Mrs. Ware at the hearings. It seeks more priority for the restriction of hours for juggernauts using Earls Court—and for the construction of a Relief Road which could provide benefits for all residential areas on the one-way system. The Association has also pressed for the extension of parking hour restrictions and the control of property acquisitions by Housing Associations, which have in some instances bought houses in the area only to neglect them for long periods and have failed to honour undertakings to restore original features, notably gates.

The appearance of the square over the year has benefitted greatly from the repainting of façades by homeowners in matching colours as specified in the Article 4 Direction on colour schemes. The Association was pleased to learn that the Secretary of State dismissed an Appeal against an objection by the Council (and supported the Association) to the installation of glass entrance doors in lieu of the original wooden doors on a building in the square. Residents were also pleased that the Council had agreed not to go ahead with the proposal to amalgamate the Earl's Court Square Conservation Area with Courtfield Gardens and the northern part of the Boltons Conservation Areas, which have different problems and was grateful for support in this from the Kensington Society. Earl's Court Square was the second Conservation Area in the Borough to produce a policy statement, published in December 1977.

A Garden Party, in the Square, followed by an evening barbeque was a great success and a midsummer general meeting stimulated much interest and will be repeated this year.

Mr. David Ware took over as Chairman of the Association in January from Don Fair. Mr. Fair and his family, who have been active in the interests of the square for some years have moved elsewhere in the Borough and were given a farewell presentation by the Association and Garden Committee.

Chairman: David Ware, Esq., 40a Earl's Court Square.

EDWARDES SQUARE, SCARSDALE AND ABINGDON ASSOCIATION

One of E.S.S.A.'s main preoccupations this year has been the problem of enforcement. With the High Street Study Group meetings have been held with Chamber of Commerce against the proliferation of pavement selling but under law no action can be taken. In Earl's Court Road the Association drew the attention of the Council to the unofficial use of offices, and an Enforcement Notice was served. A garage repair shop was started in Pembroke Square, and again representations made. After a visit from the Enforcement Officer operations have temporarily ceased.

Strenuous efforts were made both by E.S.S.A. and three other amenity groups to stop the continuance of ground floor office use in South Edwardes Square and Committee members appeared before the Main Planning Committee to oppose this. Regardless of this the Council gave permission for a further three years, in complete disregard of the District Plan.

The Association pressed for a design of distinction on the vacant site on the west side of the top of the Earl's Court Road, proposing amendments to give the undistinguished design a less bland appearance. No work has commenced and meanwhile yet another

'dead' site remains opposite to that of the N.C.P. site on the east side, owned by 'Hiba', and three houses purchased by the Family Housing Association also in the Earl's Court Road, where work has not been able to commence due to lack of government funds.

Members of E.S.S.A. are working with the Council and others on the Conservation Area Policy Statement and have made representations on the Draft Plan as well as opposing the current plans for the Old Town Hall, considering it a gross overdevelopment of offices on the site.

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

KENSINGTON COURT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Although our year has been an uneventful one, apart from the continuous battle regarding the dumping of rubbish in the Court and keeping a keen eye on planning applications, our major highlight has been the inclusion in the District Plan of the whole of Kensington Court as a Conservation Area instead of only part. The additional Residents' Parking in Thackeray Street is very welcome too.

Secretary: M. C. Wills, 3 Cornwall Mansions, 33 Kensington Court, London, W.8.

THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION

Mr. Ian Grant's three year term of office came to an end at the A.G.M. in 1980, and Mr. Peter Thorold was elected as Chairman. Mr. Grant remains on the committee. Architect members of the committee sent comment on Planning Proposals to the Council throughout the year.

At the Spring Members' Meeting, Sir John Summerson gave a most interesting talk on Stucco. The meeting was very well attended.

A mould of one of the roundels, which ornament some houses in Lansdowne Road, was made, and several houses have had missing roundels replaced by copies of the mould.

A major project is now in progress. This is the restoration of Kensington Park Road Terrace North. Meetings were held, sponsored by the Ladbroke Association and the Council to discuss a survey, and this was accepted by the residents. A Residents' Committee has now been formed and work is now under way which will result in a great improvement in the appearance of this terrace of small attractive houses.

The committee were disturbed by the derelict condition of the Cabmens' Shelter in Kensington Park Road, and a number of letters were written to various bodies to establish the ownership. Eventually restoration was carried out and the shelter is now being used for its

original purpose. It is to be hoped that this state of affairs will continue.

A meeting for Members on Trees in Ladbroke will be held on 9th February at the K.S.C. Club. The committee are to circulate letters hoping to increase membership.

Hon. Secretary: Muriel Cosh.

ONSLow NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

A report which includes such items as the District Plan Public Inquiry and public lavatories must have a familiar ring to those committee members of our neighbouring societies, but such have indeed taken up much of our time during the past year. Apart from these vexed topics (the public lavatories, or rather lack of them, at South Kensington Station being a continuing battle between the Council and London Transport on one side and ourselves and our friends of the Thurloe and Egerton Association on the other) our problems include the future of the now for sale St. Paul's Church and small developments either departing from the conditions of the Planning Permission or being constructed without permission at all, as example the roof-top extension at 2 Neville Terrace.

On the more social side we had a most successful Annual General Meeting in March with, as guest speakers, Councillor Cox, Chairman of the Planning Committee and Mr. Lejeune, Principal Public Relations Officer at London Transport. Then in June we held our first garden party. The venue, by kind permission of The Henry Smith Charity Estate, was the beautiful garden in the west section of Onslow Square, and, in spite of the weather choosing our day to break after a warm dry spell, it was much enjoyed by our members and guests.

The new year promises to prove as eventful and, as ever, we need more help and more members.

Hon. Secretary: Hugh Brady, 16 Selwood Terrace, SW7 3QG.

THE PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

The year began with what appeared to be the satisfactory conclusion of the long drawn out negotiations concerning the conversion of Sion Convent and the Denbigh Road site for residential purposes, following upon the acceptance by the Central and Provincial Housing Trust of the modifications proposed by the Association. This was, however, followed in October by the disappointing news that the scheme had not proved to be viable and the site had been put on the market again. The Association must prepare for another round of negotiations in 1981.

A solution has been found for the problem of the maintenance of Pembridge Square Gardens, responsibility for which had for long been accepted by one of the residents, since deceased. A Garden Committee has now been formed.

An unexpected development has been the closing of some of the hotels which have hitherto been the main feature of Pembridge Gardens; the Association welcomes their conversion by Housing Trusts to residential accommodation. The temporary occupation of the premises in question by squatters was terminated by the speedy arrival of the builders.

During the current year the Association will be working in co-operation with the Borough Planning Office on a policy document for the Pembridge Conservation Area.

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

ROYAL CRESCENT GARDEN COMMITTEE

The year 1980 was a very active one in the Royal Crescent Garden for major tree surgery was carried out for the first time in some years and the trees will undoubtedly benefit and look better.

We have had some difficulties as our gardener was getting old and unable to cope adequately with the heavier work, so reluctantly he has retired and at present tenders are being sought from contract gardeners. To cover increased costs the garden rate has had to be increased for the first time in three years and we are no doubt in the same position as other garden committees in the Borough where the costs of gardeners are necessitating such rises.

It will be interesting to attend the meeting on 28th January when the question of a higher rating maximum is to be discussed and to find out how other garden committees are managing.

No new tree planting has been made this year and as, even in gardens, fashions change we are removing some of the heavy dark laurels and cultivating a more open look.

At the Annual General Meeting Miss Honor Balfour was re-elected as Chairman.

Hon. Secretary: Raymond Stoupe.

THURLOE AND EGERTON ASSOCIATION

During 1981 the Association has been much engaged with the Council. There has been the continuing need to keep a watchful eye on planning applications and there has, too, been our co-operation with Council Officers in drafting the Planning Policy Statement for our Conservation Area. The Council hopes to publish this in the Spring and members of the Association will be fully involved in the ensuing debate.

In both these activities, we have generally found ourselves in accord with the Council. On the other hand we have strongly opposed a number of its policies in the District Plan and have objected to these at the Public Inquiry. Supported by the Kensington Society and many other residents' associations we led the objection to the Council's policies on diplomatic use which would effectively concentrate all additional embassy premises into the central area of the Borough in order to give complete protection to areas in the north and south—in our view a most inequitable arrangement. To oppose Council policies on traffic, we joined forces with West London Traffic Reform, the principal group urging stronger measures of restraint. The outcome on these issues will of course have to await the publication of the Inspector's report but we can report one small success now: we did succeed in persuading the Council to accept the need for more public lavatories in the centre of the Borough and to agree to a commitment to provide these as financial conditions allow.

One of the places in most urgent need of a public lavatory centres on South Kensington Station and we shall continue to press the Council to take action to provide one. Our parallel campaign, to improve conditions at the station for ticket buyers, has continued and London Transport officers are helpful. Here again we intend to persevere with our efforts.

Hon. Secretary: Susan Walker, 95 Walton Street, London SW3 2HP.



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INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
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1979	£	£
Subscriptions		
1,188 Annual		1,223
— Life		—
<u>1,188</u>		<u>1,223</u>
Other Receipts		
Receipts from Sales	718	
Less: Expenses of Sales	<u>167</u>	
		551
190 Bank Deposit Interest		294
51 Income Tax Recoverable		44
388 Receipts for Visits		563
570 Advertising in Annual Report		500
262 Donations		350
<u>3,033</u>		<u>3,525</u>
Expenditure		
366 Printing, Typing and Stationery	456	
482 Postage and Telephone	689	
968 Producing Annual Report	890	
86 Professional Charges	103	
48 Sundry Expenses	69	
67 Hire of Hall and Meeting Expenses	8	
— Christmas Cards written off	96	
428 Coach Visits, etc.	489	
36 Subscriptions and Donations	101	
220 Tree Planting	271	
2 Photographic Records	—	
— Depreciation of Office Equipment	10	
<u>2,703</u>		<u>3,182</u>
Surplus		
<u>£330</u> Transferred to Accumulated Fund		<u>£343</u>

BALANCE SHEET
as at 31st December 1980

1979	£	£
Assets		
— Office Equipment at cost, less depreciation		55
96 Stock of Christmas Cards		—
51 Income Tax Recoverable		44
Balance at Bank		
1,795 Deposit Account	2,090	
769 Current Account	<u>918</u>	
		<u>3,008</u>
<u>2,711</u>		<u>3,107</u>
Liabilities		
22 Subscriptions received in advance	58	
86 Creditors for Expenses	<u>103</u>	
<u>108</u>		<u>161</u>
<u>£2,603</u>		<u>£2,946</u>
Accumulated Fund		
£2,273 Balance at 1st January 1980		£2,603
Add: Surplus from Income and Expenditure Account		343
K. HUGHES, <i>Hon. Treasurer</i>		
G. CHRISTIANSEN, <i>Hon. Secretary</i>		
<u>£2,273</u>		<u>£2,946</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

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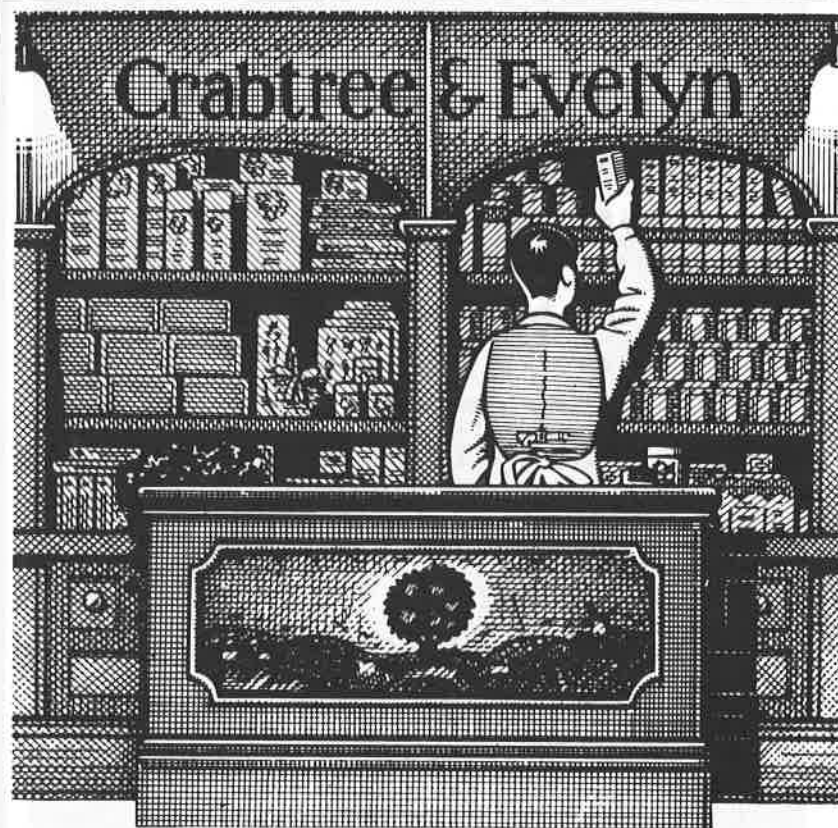
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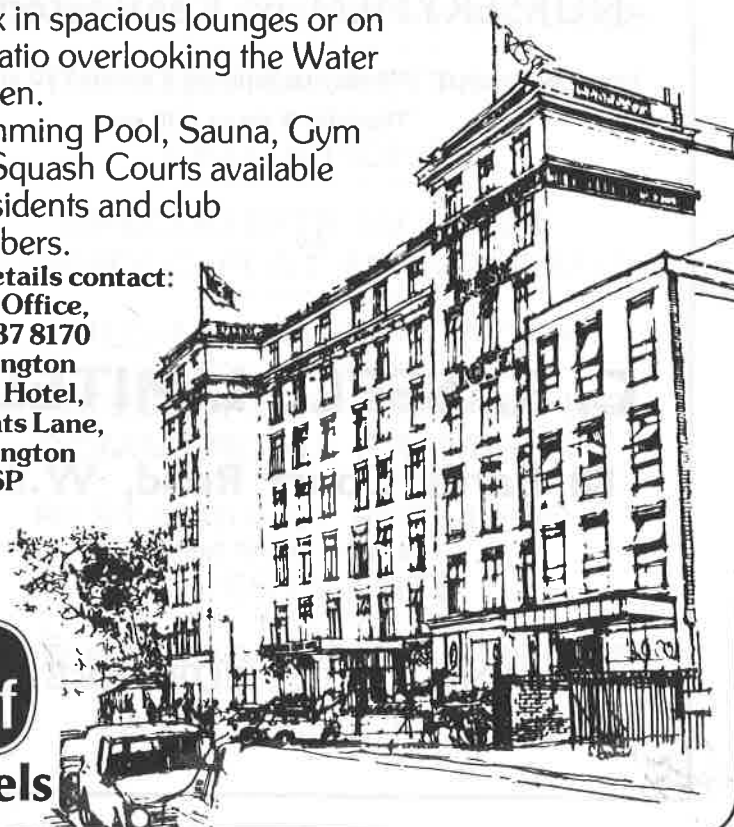
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Signed, sealed and delivered by the above-named COVENANTOR in the presence of

WITNESS

ADDRESS

.....

.....

OCCUPATION

SIGNATURE

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- 2 The date to be inserted as the beginning of the period should not be earlier than the date on which the covenant is executed.
- 3 Unless your first subscription under the covenant is paid on or after the date when the above period begins, the Society will not be able to reclaim the Income Tax on such payment.
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