

THE
Kensington
Society



Annual Report
1991-92

FRONT COVER

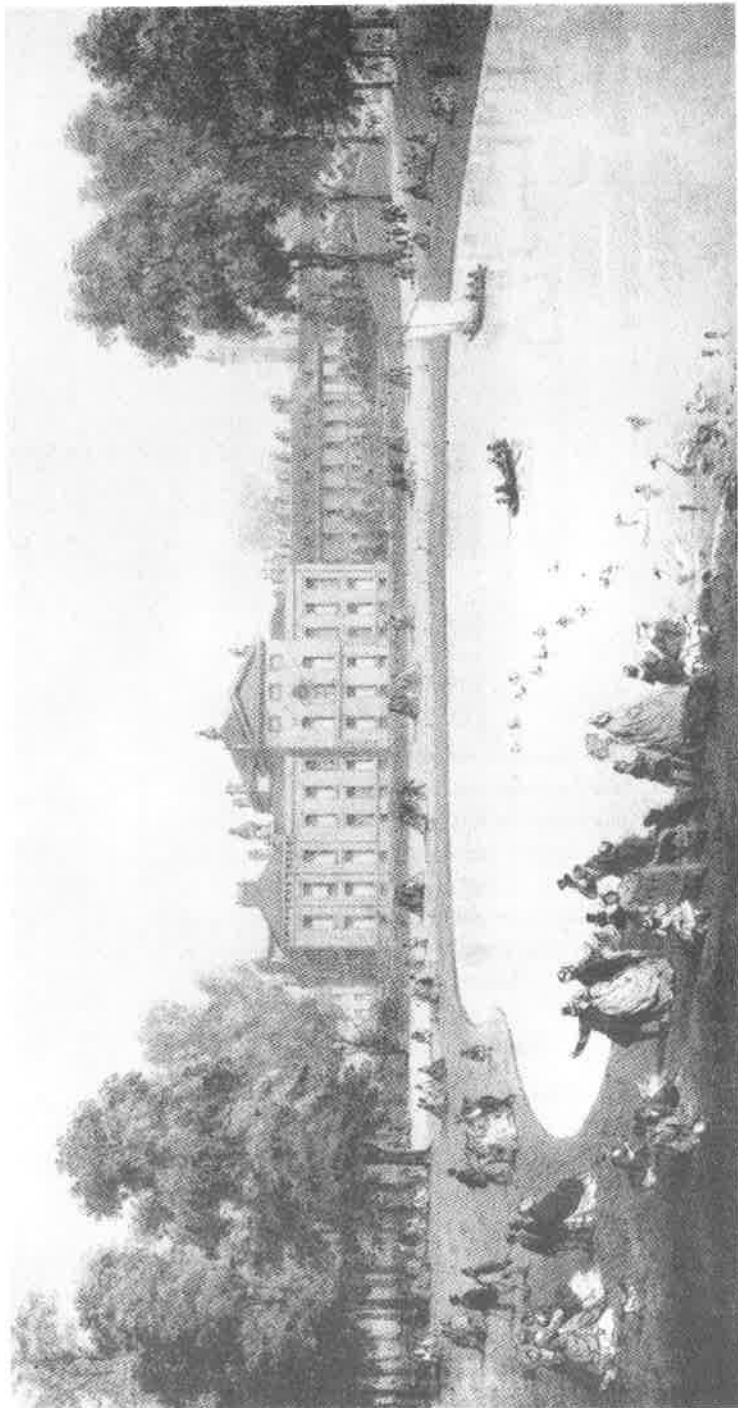
Outfall of the Westbourne, Kensington Gardens

THE
Kensington
Society

The objects of the Society shall be to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington for the public benefit by stimulating interest in its history and records, promoting good architecture and planning in its future development and by protecting, preserving and improving its buildings, open spaces and other features of beauty or historic or public interest.

Registered Charity No. 267773

Annual Report
1991-92



KENSINGTON PALACE FROM THE ROUND POND

CIRCA 1851

PALAIS DE KENSINGTON

The Kensington Society

PATRON

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

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JOHN DRUMMOND, C.B.E.

VICE-PRESIDENT

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VICE CHAIRMAN: ROBERT MEADOWS

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Mrs. G. Christiansen
Philip English
Judge Gerald Gordon
Robert Martin
Robert Meadows

Michael Middleton, C.B.E.
Harry Morgan
Richard Newcombe
George Pole
Robert Vigars

HON. SECRETARY AND EDITOR OF REPORT: Mrs. G. Christiansen

HON. AUDITOR: Andrew Snelling, Barclays Bank PLC

Foreword

Very much of the work of the Kensington Society is concerned with buildings, preserving and maintaining the good ones that exist, while seeking to prevent damage to the amenities or the standards of the Borough through thoughtless change. In recent years, we have given attention to open spaces, to the garden squares, for instance, where the wish to be kind to the motor car seemed at times to rank higher than the need to be kind to people. For the moment that threat seems to have abated and this had been very much the year of the larger spaces, with a Government enquiry into the future of the Royal Parks, with particular reference to Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. I have a special interest, not only as President of your Society, but as a member of the Review group.

It was a fascinating process. We met regularly over a period of nine months, and, since our meetings were held in Kensington Palace, it was impossible not to arrive without fresh thoughts, particularly about the state of Kensington Gardens. Some came in through Orme Gate with its dreadful clapboard houses, coach park, and highly unattractive dog lavatory. Some came up the Broadwalk, conscious as ever of the inappropriate height of the Royal Garden Hotel. All of us were distressed by the state of the grass by the Round Pond through the depredations of the Canada geese. We sometimes risked being knocked over by bicycles. We became very aware of the state of trees. These topics and many others came on the table before us, not only in relation to what we ourselves felt, and we were a pretty well qualified and wide-ranging group, but also through the hundreds of submissions made to the Committee. It has brought home to me as never before how impossible it is to satisfy everybody, even part of the time. For instance a high proportion of users of Kensington Gardens are there to exercise dogs. Should those dogs be restrained on leads? What can be done about the mess they frequently leave behind, especially since it is an area where people tend to lie on the grass and children play?

I believe our deliberations were practical and sensible, both in the approach and in the conclusions that were reached. Much of this was due to the enlightened chairmanship of Dame Jennifer Jenkins, who brought to it all her years of related experience. We were also strongly represented in the area of the natural landscape and the preservation of wildlife, with concern as well for human issues like catering. My own particular input related to events that take place in the park, whether by reanimating the Bandstand in Kensington Gardens or deciding how often Pavarotti or Food and Farming should have free reign.

We have made our recommendations and discussed them at a public conference. It remains to be seen what will happen now. But what emerged from all our discussions was the depth of concern expressed by many thousands of people that nothing should endanger that crucial

feeling of *Rus in Urbe* that the parks provide. They are a green lung in the centre of this vast city and once damaged, might never be reparable.

Members of the Society have expressed their views on the contracting out of the gardening services and its possible effect on the state of the Parks. I think it is well known that none of us on the Committee had any warning that this was planned before we agreed to serve. I must reiterate my deep belief that the care of gardens or parks is a slow moving business, not necessarily best served by short term contracts or transient staff. Whatever the future will bring, there is no doubt that open spaces like Kensington Gardens should rank as highly in our priorities as care for the built environment.

JOHN DRUMMOND
President, Kensington Society

Annual General Meeting

The 1990-91 Annual General Meeting was held on 14th May 1991 in the Central Hall of the Convent of the Assumption, 23 Kensington Square.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, previously approved by the Executive Committee and circulated in the Annual Report, were taken as read and adopted, and signed by the President, Mr. John Drummond, as Chairman of the Meeting. There were no matters arising.

The Chairman thanked the members for such a large attendance. He paid tribute to Mr. Keon Hughes, Honorary Treasurer, who had sadly died on his way to last year's Annual General Meeting and who had given tremendous service to the Society. Lord Ponsonby's death was also sadly recorded; he had been a great supporter of the Society. A vote of thanks was given to Mrs. Christiansen for her tireless work and dedication to the Society over so many years.

* Mr. George Pole, Chairman of the Executive Committee, in moving the adoption of the Report, said:

'The Report contains a very brief description of the work of the Society. The Royal Borough dealt with hundreds of applications for planning permission in the course of the year and those of major interest and concern were scrutinised by the Society and brought to the attention of the Council. The Society made a very important contribution as far as policy was concerned. Of very great value was the quality and commitment of Residents' Associations, and they also help to build up the Society.

'I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Harry James, whose column "Grapevine" in the Kensington and Chelsea Times regularly draws attention to what is happening in the Royal Borough. Last year he cam-

paigned on behalf of Garden Squares in an attempt to prevent their being developed as car parks. The Society continues to express its concern regarding Grade 2 buildings being allowed to deteriorate and this is constantly being brought to the attention of the Council.

'I would like to commend the efforts of our own MP in regard to leasehold reform.'

The adoption of the Report was moved by Lady Beresford-Clark and seconded by Mrs. Christie.

Mr. Pole said that since the death of the late Treasurer last year, Mrs. Christiansen had dealt with the work. Mrs. Christiansen said that Mr. Andrew Snelling, a manager of Barclays Bank, had audited the accounts and had agreed to be the Society's Honorary Auditor; the Society was grateful for his interest and help. She said that, as was inevitable in these inflationary days, expenditure had increased but had been matched by an increase in income. She paid tribute to the support given by the advertisers in the Annual Report and the donations received.

The Princess Alice Memorial Garden continued to be maintained by the Society.

Mr. English, member of the Executive Committee, proposed the change in the Constitution of the Society and said he would like to draw attention to the major changes as seen at the end of the Annual Report:

Pursuant to Rule 11, the Society's Constitution to be altered in the manner printed on page 52 of the Annual Report.

No nominations for the Executive Committee had been received. It was proposed that the Committee be re-elected en bloc and the proposal was seconded and carried unanimously.

A plea for new members was made by Mr. John Drummond.

Mr. John Drummond, President of the Society, and the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. George Pole, answered a number of questions from the floor.

At the end of the meeting Mr. Michael Middleton, CBE, gave the Keon Hughes lecture on 'Quality in the Kensington Street Scene', followed by Mr. Colin Davies who also gave an illustrated talk. The content and quality of these talks were much appreciated by the members present.

Rodney G. Searight

As we go to press we learn of the death of Mr Searight with much sadness. He joined the Society as a life member in 1972 but has continued to pay a yearly subscription and has left the Society a legacy. He was continually in touch with the Society and cared very much about the general change in the Royal Borough.

Kensington Society News

The Society is delighted that our President Mr. John Drummond C.B.E. is to become Director of the European Arts Festival which is scheduled to run from July to December and the Society wishes him well.

Membership Subscriptions

The Annual Subscription of £10 for ordinary membership, £25 for corporate membership was due on January 1st. The work of the Society increases every year and sending out reminders not only increases the expenditure of the Society but entails extra work.

Donations

We are very grateful for the donations which we have received during the year and for the support given by our advertisers: without their help this Report could not be printed.

The Memorial Garden at the Town Hall

The Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone Memorial Garden continues to be maintained by the Society. Vandals have helped themselves to a number of plants during the year—donations towards the upkeep of the Garden would be welcome.

Miss I Scoulandi M.Sc (Econ) F.S.A.

We are very sad to hear of Miss Scoulandi's illness. For many years as Founder of the Twenty Seven Foundation she arranged for £400 to be donated to the Kensington Society. We send her our best wishes.

Acknowledgements

The Society is greatly indebted to Mrs Margaret Hardie, a member of the Society, for the considerable amount of typing she has done throughout the year.

We would also like to acknowledge the help we have had on various issues from the Royal Borough of Kensington's Member of Parliament Mr. D. Fishburn.

The Society's thanks are also due to Mr. John Bickel for his work on the Memorial Garden, for the tremendous assistance he gave at the Sale in November and for much running about he does through the year for the Society. Our thanks are also due to members who helped at the Sale, Mr. George Pole, Miss Judah, Mrs Sercombe, Miss Seabrook and Mrs Mackay.

We would like to record our appreciation for the assistance given by the Royal Parks nursery staff, and for the friendly help we receive from the Planning Information Room at the Town Hall.

Obituaries

It is with great sadness that we report the deaths of long-standing members.

Miss Nellie Houlton

A member since the foundation of the Society, a member who attended all the activities of the Society.

For many years an Annual Sale was held at 18 Kensington Square to increase our funds; during the last few years sales have been held elsewhere, to provide plants and maintenance for the Memorial Garden to H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone. Miss Houlton has been the main producer of food sold at these sales.

At all the receptions which have been held at Kensington Square and Swanton Mill over the years, the refreshments have been cooked and presented by Miss Houlton.

Dear Nellie will be greatly missed.

Alderman Frank Carter

Joined the Society in 1953 and he served on the Executive Committee for 11 years.

Alderman Carter was very instrumental in the formation of a music room in the Public Library. In 1949 a Gramophone Record Library was started, but owing to the lack of space and records, a lending service was only available to clubs and societies. In the new £700,000 Public Library Alderman Carter and many residents hoped that suitable accommodation would be found for the requisite equipment to provide a music room, with a music library service, similar to that provided in most other London boroughs. The Council's library committee at that time considered it unnecessary and had offered the room to the Women's Voluntary Service.

Alderman Carter then pressed the Society to arrange a public meeting; this was held on February 1st, 1960 in the Town Hall. Mr Bulmer-Thomas was in the Chair. At the end of the meeting a resolution was passed:

'That this meeting called by the Kensington Society urges the Borough Council to make in the new Library provision for music worthy of the standing of the Royal Borough and of the present revival in musical appreciation.'

It was with great joy that Frank Carter eventually informed the Executive Committee of the Society that the resolution had been accepted and that, in the Borough Council's estimates for the following year, £700 was to be included for starting a scheme and £500 for the binding of music scores.

Alderman Carter was an Honorary Freeman of the Royal Borough in recognition of his eminent and distinguished public services. He was a Justice of the Peace. He was first elected as a Councillor for the Golborne Ward in 1928. He was appointed an Alderman in 1945 and sat on the Aldermanic Bench for 19 years.

His great interests were music, housing, trees and planning. How fortunate the Kensington Society was in its early years to have this dynamic man a member of its Executive Committee.

Mr. L. Handley-Derry

It is with sadness that we learn as we go to press of the recent death of Mr. Handley-Derry. He joined the Society in 1970, was I know an active member of the Campden Hill Association, and always very appreciative of the Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone's Memorial Garden.

Cases Dealt With

The Privatisation of the Royal Parks

The Society has been greatly concerned about the future of the Royal Parks, in particular Kensington Gardens, which the Society considers are an unequalled treasure of large open space, providing a breath of country air in an overcrowded city. Last year the Secretary of State for the Environment announced a fundamental change in the way that the Royal Parks are to be serviced. In the future the upkeep of the Royal Parks will be put out to competitive tender to private firms.

The Minister has appointed a Committee to review the use of the Royal Parks.

We welcome the fact that Dame Jennifer Jenkins has been appointed Chairman of the Review Group and that our President is on the Committee.

The Review Group will present its report and recommendations at a Conference to be held on March 5th 1992.

The following letters were sent to Dame Jennifer and to the Minister, Mr. Heseltine last year:

Dear Mr Heseltine,

You announced, on 18 July, certain proposals in connection with the Royal Parks. Your statement covered, first, the setting up of a Royal Parks review under the Chairmanship of Dame Jennifer Jenkins; secondly, the proposal to contract out ground maintenance and related work in the Royal Parks (excluding Buckingham Palace and Clarence House). I write now on behalf of the Kensington Society to express our deep disquiet at the apparent timing of these two moves.

We note that contracts for the first batch of parks, including Kensington Gardens, are to start in February 1992. Dame Jennifer's review group has been asked to report 'early in 1992', such report to be followed by a conference, a

subsequent revision, recommendations to yourself, and an opportunity for public comment before final decisions are taken. Clearly, therefore, contracting-out will be a fait accompli long before any recommendations by the review group can be implemented and it will not be possible to tailor the contracts to fit such recommendations. This point is of particular importance if, as has been widely read into your statement, contractors are to be allowed to conduct or promote activities of a commercial nature or otherwise incompatible with the traditional character of the Gardens.

We express no view on the principle of contracting-out but I have to say that many of our members—influenced in some cases by certain insensitive 'improvements' that have resulted in Holland Park—have already expressed their disquiet at the possible effects in Kensington Gardens. At this stage I would say only that the Society is glad to endorse the general thrust of your Department's Management Plan of 1989, which followed Land Use Consultants' report, and we hope that this may in fact provide the basis for future work in Kensington Gardens.

The Kensington Society was formed in 1953. It is the principal amenities Society for the Royal Borough. Apart from its other contributions to the public weal in Kensington—for example the garden which it created and maintains at the Town Hall—it has always enjoyed close contact with the Superintendent of Kensington Gardens and Bailiff of the Royal Parks and was pleased to present a number of trees to Kensington Gardens following the great gales.

The Society has been invited by the Secretary to the Review to comment on a number of issues and our statement to Dame Jennifer Jenkins is enclosed.

Yours sincerely,

Hon. Secretary

To Dame Jennifer Jenkins

Mr. Grice has invited the Society to comment on some of the issues to be taken into account by your Royal Parks Review Group. For this we are grateful, although we would have appreciated a longer period in which to reply (the invitation was received only at the end of August). On behalf of the Kensington Society I submit the following points for your consideration.

What are the Parks for? Different parks have different characteristics and serve different purposes. Kensington Gardens are essentially a place for peaceful relaxation and quiet enjoyment in surroundings of beauty and dignity. As the pressure of urban life intensify, there is increasing need for these qualities at all costs to be preserved and enhanced. We would welcome any measures which would hasten the restoration of the Gardens to their former beauty from their present rather tired and worn appearance (which we attribute to natural wear and tear coupled with shortage of funds, rather than to any lack of skill or dedication on the part of the present staff).

Facilities in the Parks. It follows from the above that the Society would utterly deplore the introduction into any part of the Gardens of special 'events', particularly any requiring amplified sound. We would resist the provision of car and coach parks, and of provision for organised sports, calling for formal pitches and ancillary structures (for example, barriers of wire netting). We would welcome the creation of 'dog exclusion' areas, on health grounds, and modest provision for cyclists. Such measures, however, call for proper enforcement and in this connection we see a need for strengthening the policing within the

Gardens. The transfer of this function to the Metropolitan Police would not, we believe, be helpful—if only because of the probable need to withdraw police from the Gardens in the event of serious disturbances elsewhere. We welcome the Serpentine Gallery. The present position of the bandstand, which is well away from traffic routes and traffic noise, seems to us admirable and we would welcome its repair and return to full use. It does not appear to us that new pedestrian routes are necessary.

New development. The Society would oppose any further building, or extensions to existing buildings, in the Gardens. It appears to us that any provision of riding facilities should be considered only in close physical conjunction with Rotten Row (avoiding, for example, the heavy traffic on the bridge across the Serpentine from the Magazine). We would not oppose the use of the Magazine for suitable cultural purposes or as a restaurant—thought not, in the latter case, additionally to any restaurant on the other side of the bridge. Should the site of the previous restaurant there be used for a replacement, we assume that the present temporary restaurant, closer to the Lido, would be removed. The use of the Orangery as a restaurant seems to us perfectly acceptable and satisfactory.

Contracting out of maintenance work. I enclose a copy of the Society's letter to the Secretary of State. Many of our members have expressed fears as to the wisdom of such a move. On behalf of the Society I would express the concern that premature contracting out could result in the loss of valuable residential staff, who may prefer to accept redundancy while retaining their living accommodation, thereby reducing the ability of the contractors to attract successors of equal calibre. We assume anyway that in any case all plans and specifications relating to proposed changes within the Royal Parks will be subject to public consultation.

The Kensington Society has long enjoyed close and fruitful relations with the management of the Gardens and was glad, for example, following the great gales, to be able to contribute towards the costs of replacement trees. I have deliberately confined comment for the most part to Kensington Gardens; clearly, however, consideration of the role of the Gardens, and proposals for their future, will have to be closely integrated with those for Hyde Park and the impact each will have upon the other.

I hope these few comments may be useful.

Hon. Secretary



Kensington Gardens

St. Mary Abbots Hospital Site

As the largest development for many years it started as an exciting concept for a new Kensington Garden Square, surrounded by houses. It has ended as something very different. From the outset the high density to maximise the land values for the Health Authority has caused much concern.

The second phase of the scheme was refused planning consent on the grounds of too high density. The refusal of planning consent was supported by the Kensington Society, Victoria Road Residents Association, Lxham Gardens Residents Association, Cornwall Gardens Residents Association and Edwardes Square, Scarsdale and Abingdon Association. Mr. Philip English gave evidence at the inquiry for the Kensington Society.

Following a lengthy inquiry, the Department of the Environment Inspector ruled that the developers' plans were acceptable; he therefore reversed the Council's refusal, apart from allowing a pedestrian access into Cornwall Gardens Walk, but not into Kelso Place. Environmental considerations were non-existent. The Minister's decision is still awaited.

Listed Buildings

Early in 1991 the Society received from English Heritage a register containing 900 listed buildings in London at risk from neglect or dilapidation; 46 were in the Royal Borough.

Letters have been sent to the Borough Council, in particular about 1-12 Observatory Gardens, 42-52 Stanhope Gardens and 29-32 Harrington Gardens. The reply from the Council states that the officers have been asked to monitor these properties and where no work has taken place to keep the matter under review!

Observatory Gardens are 1873-83 buildings designed in the French tradition with a great deal of stucco ornament. We understand that the terrace has recently been re-sold; we hope restoration will take place in the near future.

Harrods Depository, Trevor Square, 96/98 Brompton Road

Partial demolition and extension with conversion for use as an hotel, with restaurant, car parking and warehouses in part of basement. The Kensington Borough Council had been asked for their views by Westminster City Council. Kensington Council raised objections. The Society wrote to Westminster City Council. Westminster City Council has refused permission for the development. Harrods have appealed. An inquiry is expected early this year.

Scribes Club

An application from Scribes Club to remove a condition made by the Council when the club transferred from Fleet Street in 1938, which

stipulated that the club was to remain closed from midnight to 3 a.m. to protect local residents from noise in the early hours. Planning consent has now been given. What nonsense this makes of 'conditions to planning consent' when a year or so later the condition can be so easily removed.

Residents living in Kensington Square, Thackeray Street and other streets nearby, as well as the Kensington Society, strongly opposed the application. It was reported in the local press that, at the time Spurs boss Terry Venables bought the controlling interest, it was his stated intention to increase the membership.

Kensington Mansion Blocks

The Society regrets that so many of the mansion blocks in Kensington are being emptied of permanent residents and replaced with short lets for visitors and overseas firms. Allen House, Allen Street, has suffered long by the change of use of permanent residential to short stay. The Society supported the Borough Council enforcement notice on the change of use of Flats No.5, 16A, 16B, 18B, 19B, 30A and 30B. We await the Department of the Environment's decision.

15 and 16 Albert Mews

Letter sent to the Borough Council and to the Department of the Environment supporting the Council's planning refusal for demolition and redevelopment.

32 Nevern Square

The Society supported Nevern Square Residents Association in their opposition to the retention of 32 Nevern Square as a hostel, with a letter to the Borough Council.

Westbourne Grove

Pembridge Association asked the Society for support for an improvement in the style of the pre-fab-like lavatory unit envisaged by the Borough Council for Westbourne Grove. Letter was sent to the Council and the plan was sent to Mr. Colin Davis.

22 Kynance Mews

Letter was sent to the Department of the Environment supporting the Council's enforcement on the erection of mansard roof without planning consent.

114 Queen's Gate

Application for rear extension at 4th floor level. The Society supported the Council at appeal.

53 Abingdon Road

Application for erection of 3-storey building for use as Health Club opposed by the Society.

28 Roland Gardens

Application for a rear roof extension and erection of a terrace at 4th floor level. The Society supported the Council at appeal. Appeal dismissed.

189-193 Earls Court Road

Application for change of use from part office and residential. The Society supported Council's refusal at inquiry.

59, 61-79 Cromwell Road

Application for demolition. Officers recommended planning permission. Letter was sent to Councillor Fane, Chairman of Planning Committee. Society opposed the application. Planning permission refused. Society supported Council's refusal with letter to the Department of the Environment.

23 Kensington Gate

Application for the erection of a third-floor rear extension opposed by the Society. Planning consent has been refused.

23/25 Kensington High Street

Application for demolition and redevelopment to provide retail and office development. Opposed by the Society.

18 Hogarth Place

Application before the Council for the erection of an extension at third-floor level opposed by the Society. Planning consent has been refused.

2 Queen's Gate Terrace

Application before the Council for change for use of the basement and first floor from residential to Class B1 office use. Opposed by the Society. Planning consent has been refused.

29/31 Nevern Square

Application for additional storey opposed by the Society.

16 Collingham Place

Application for extension opposed by the Society. Planning permission given.

25 The Boltons

Application for 2-storey rear extension opposed by the Society. Planning permission refused.

60 Knightsbridge

And yet another hotel—Royal Thames Yacht Club demolition of the Club for a structure of far greater bulk, incorporating 2 Albert Gate for a 10-storey hotel of 163 rooms. Letter sent to Westminster City Council opposing application.

55/57 Melbury Road

Halsey Ricardo house. The Society has supported Mr. Michael Winner in his continuous efforts to press for the trellis work to be removed from between the Victorian Gothic arches. Letters have been sent to English Heritage and the Victorian Society. In spite of their support, the trellis has not been removed.

Former Eden Hotel at the corner of Ashburn Place and Harrington Gardens

The building has been allowed by its owners to become completely derelict. Letter sent to the Council asking for a repair notice to be served on the owners.

117a/122 Queen's Gate

Letter from Norman & Dawbarn to Council requesting a variation of Condition 2 attached to building consent in 1990 and 1991, to allow for the demolition of existing buildings prior to contract for the development of the site being entered into by the applicant. The Society sent 'no objection' letter to the Council.

13 Sumner Place and Sydney Street

The Society objected to the Council's transfer of change of use to hotel from Sydney Street to 13 Sumner Place.

Waitrose Building

Three years since closure, the Society has been informed by the Council that no proposal has been put forward for the site. The building is now partially boarded up and disfigured by fly-posters.

169 Earls Court Road

An application for an Amusement Centre was opposed by many residents, by three Residents Associations and by the Kensington Society. We very much regret that the Council gave planning consent.

12 Cornwall Mews South

Application for a conservatory and roof terrace. Residents in the area much concerned; supported by the Society. Planning permission given.

15/17 Collingham Gardens

Buildings at risk, considerable deterioration over the years. Letter sent to English Heritage requesting that 15 and 17 Collingham Gardens should be added to their register of Buildings at Risk. Letter also sent to the Council.

27a Nevern Square and 1-12 Nevern Mansions

Application for multiple occupancy by English Church Housing Group. Nevern Square Residents Association asked for the Kensington Society's support. Letter sent to the Council.

15 Eardley Crescent

Planning consent for change of use to hotel given by the Council, in spite of considerable local concern.

61-79 Cromwell Road

Application before the Council for change of use from residential to office. Opposed by the Society.

92 Elgin Crescent

Society supported the Ladbroke Residents Association and residents in opposing a two-storey extension. Planning consent given.

Traffic Improvement Scheme

Cromwell Road—Thurlow Place to Borough boundary pedestrian safety and traffic management scheme, received from Mr. Davies, Director of Highways and Traffic. The report was studied by the Executive Committee and a letter was sent to the Director, supporting the scheme.

Unitary Development Plan

In 1989 the Secretary of State for the Environment issued the Strategic Planning Guidance for London and instructed the London boroughs to prepare Unitary Development Plans to update the existing District Plan.

A rough Draft Unitary Development document was published in December 1991. The first three draft chapters—Housing, Hotels, Conservation and Development—were published in March 1990. The Council brought out a further three draft chapters: Shopping, Transportation and Office and Industry in July 1990. The latest chapters at present being considered are Social and Community Services, Leisure and Recreation, Public Services.

The Society has commented on various issues and has studied the plan as a whole. The Council has said, in its report: 'If you want a say in the way your area is shaped, now is the time to be heard.'

5-25 Harrington Gardens

The Society and residents were much concerned that planning permission was given for a 200-bedroom hotel in the area, already over-provided with hotels.

St. Stephen's Precinct, Southwell Gardens, S.W.7

The Society is glad to report that this planning application for an exhibition hall, leisure centre, swimming pool and gymnasium, as an extension to the adjoining hotel, has been dismissed by the Department of the Environment.

1-8 South End

The Society thought that the news that the Property Services Agency was offering 1-8 South End to rent at £123,500 a year, for the remaining 4-year lease, was likely to attract developers. It is a large site of 8646 square metres. The Society asked Miss Dent, the Executive Director of Planning and Conservation, for a prepared brief for the area.

4-14 Prince of Wales Terrace

Empty and derelict for some years. An application was before the Council last June for partial demolition and rebuilding the existing hotel and residential accommodation as six town houses. Planning permission was given. The Terrace remains empty and in a poor state of repair.

The Odeon Cinema Site, Kensington High Street

The Kensington Society, the High Street Study Group, Earls Terrace Residents Association and Edwardes Square Garden Committee, continued to urge the Council to reject the latest plans by Rank Cinemas to demolish and redevelop the Odeon Cinema site. The plans are basically the same as those refused planning consent in 1989, and dismissed on appeal in April 1990. The Society and the Associations are opposed to the scheme as a predominantly major office scheme. The Council has been reminded of its own clearly stated presentation to the Appeal inquiry in January 1990: 'This is not the right location for a major office use—and is contrary to the Council's fully expressed policies.' Planning permission was given at the Planning Committee on January 15th.

30 Kensington Square

An application before the Council for an extra storey and a studio building in the garden was examined by the Society's Executive Committee. The plan was strongly opposed by the Society and by residents in the Square.

The Society was much concerned about the supporting evidence given to the Planning Committee by the officers, in their recommendation for approval. It was stated that there were two objectors, that an

extra storey should be allowed because an extra storey was allowed on No. 28 in 1986. Planning permission was given.

A letter was immediately sent to Councillor Sir Anthony Coates, Chairman of the Planning Committee, pointing out the errors in the officers' recommendation for approval. There were 15 objections—the letters were in the Council's file. An extra storey was not erected on No.28 in 1986—the roof was renewed. The studio building in the garden, at the meeting, was termed a pavilion, in spite of a kitchen and bath-room.

Square Gardens

Early in 1991 a proposal in the Council's draft Unitary Development Plan that private gardens should be open to the public created a great uproar. The Society was inundated with letters from members. Letter was sent to the Council seeking confirmation that the wording in the Unitary Development Plan regarding wider use of Square Gardens should be amended, this has been agreed by the Council.

Other cases dealt with

21 Earls Court Gardens; 11 Aubrey Road; 43 Rosary Gardens and 3 Wetherby Place; 10 Victoria Road; 11 Petersham House, Harrington Road; 9 Emperor's Gate; 128 Holland Road; 8a Clareville Grove; 47 Redcliffe Gardens, Tudor Court Hotel; 5a Napier Road; 4 Clareville Street; 8 Elvaston Place; 53 Abingdon Road; 12 Southwell Gardens; 156 Cromwell Road; 131-133 Queen's Gate; 8 Elvaston Place; 29 Pembroke Road; 23 Pelham Place, 4 Thackeray Street.



The Bandstand Kensington Gardens

Other Activities and Future Arrangements

Visits were made in 1991 and early 1992 to Blue Cross Animal Hospital; 44 Berkeley Square; Shulbrede Priory; Stonor Park; Spencer House; Hyde Park Nurseries; A Kensington Society Sale; National Army Museum; Trinity House; The Painters Hall.

April 8th, 2 p.m.

The Ismaili Centre, 1 Cromwell Gardens

Fully booked.

April 22nd, 2.30 p.m.

English Heritage Stone Carvers' Studio, 110 Vauxhall Walk

Fully booked.

April 27th, 6.15 p.m.

The 39th Annual General Meeting will take place at the Convent of the Assumption Hall, Kensington Square, in the presence of the Patron of the Society, H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester G.C.V.O.

The meeting will be followed by talks by H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester and Dame Jennifer Jenkins, Chairman of the Royal Parks Review. Slides will be shown by Mr Arthur F. Radley M.B.E. of Autumn and Spring in Kensington Gardens. Chairman: Mr John Drummond C.B.E.

May 6th, 2.30 p.m.

Chelsea Physic Gardens 66 Royal Hospital Road S.W.3

The second oldest Botanic Garden in the country, founded 1673. Comprises four acres densely packed with 5,000 plants, many unusual and rare. Guide provided. Tickets required £4.

June 9th

Chiswick House, Chiswick. English Heritage

The third Earl of Burlington, architect and patron of the Arts, set a fashion with the Italian-style villa which was built to house his library and art collection. The garden was originally landscaped by William Kent. Coach leaves Kensington Square 2 pm. Tickets £8.50 including coach and entrance fee.

July 9th

London University Botanic Gardens, Egham

The oldest part of the College is one of the most remarkable structures of the Victorian age; an 800 room French Renaissance chateau-style fantasy. It is a Grade I listed building. The Picture Gallery contains a col-

lection of 19th Century paintings. The Chapel designed by Ceccado Fucigna is richly decorated. The Botanic Gardens occupies land adjacent to the college and contains 5,000 plant species. Unusual plants available for sale. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1 pm. Tickets £12, inclusive of coach and entrance fee.

July 20th

Shulbrede Priory, Lynchmere, Sussex, by kind invitation of the Hon. Laura Ponsonby

This is a private house dating back to the 12th century, with wall paintings, vaulted undercroft. Musical memorabilia of Hubert Parry. Coach fee, entrance and tea £14. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1.00 p.m.

September 9th

Basildon Park (National Trust) Berkshire

Classical House built in 1776, fine plaster work, important paintings and furniture. Tea room in the house. Coach will leave Kensington Square at 1 pm. Tickets £12 (£10 for National Trust members).



Kensington Palace and Kensington Gardens

Kensington Palace, Kensington Gore and the whole of Kensington Gardens were part of the parish of Westminster until 1899, when as part of the London Government Act Kensington Palace and Part of Kensington Gardens were transferred to the newly created Borough of Kensington.

The Kensington boundary since 1899 has included the Broad Walk, so a large part of the Garden is still in Westminster. Mr. George Saunders, F.R.S.; F.S.A. gave the result of an Inquiry dated December



Published by the Society of Antiquaries of London: April 23rd, 1835.



1899



Gore House Kensington Gore

19th 1883 concerning the situation and extent of Westminster at various periods.

Saunders provided three plans:- The plans show the extent of the City and Liberties of Westminster at three different dates AD 951, AD 1222, AD 1604. Kensington Gardens, Kensington Palace and Kensington Gore are shown within the AD 1222 boundary Saunders says 'for terminating the dispute between the Abbey and the See of London respecting the ecclesiastical franchise of the conventual church of St. Peter (ie Westminster Abbey) this decree of AD 1222 declares the manor of Knightsbridge, Westburn and Paddington, all of which were distant from the AD 951 described boundary of Westminster, to belong to the parish of St. Margaret'.

A house on the site of the Palace was originally the seat of Sir Heneage Finch, Earl of Nottingham and Lord Chancellor of England; his son the second Earl sold the house and parkland to King William III in 1699 for £18,000. Sir Christopher Wren was commissioned to enlarge the building, he also designed the Orangery. The building was again enlarged during George II reign by William Kent.

Queen Anne added thirty acres to the Garden, this was from part of the parkland belonging to the property. These acres were laid out by the Royal Gardener Henry Wise.

Queen Carolyn, the Consort of George II employed Henry Wise's successor Charles Bridgeman who was responsible for the Broad Walk, and for the octagonal basin—the round pond.

The Serpentine was created by Queen Carolyn in 1730. She had the bed of the Westburne stream enlarged together with several ponds into a wide canal. Queen Carolyn was responsible for much change in Kensington Gardens. She is said to have cast an envious eye on Hyde Park meaning to annexe it for her own use. She asked Sir Robert Walpole how much it would cost; three crowns he replied England, Scotland and Wales!

The charm of Kensington Gardens laid out so many years ago, with the large sweeping vistas and shaded walks and an infinite variety of beautiful trees. The Keepers lodges fit most harmoniously into the rural setting. May Kensington Gardens long remain the large calm open spaces where Kensington residents and visitors can enjoy their leisure away from the bustle of a hectic and overcrowded city.

May we hope that when the Chelsea and Westminster boundaries change that the whole of Kensington Gardens will be part of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

SURVEY OF LONDON

Monograph No. 17: *County Hall*



County Hall from Westminster in 1923

This volume reviews the history and architecture of the splendid Edwardian building which served the County of London for 60 years as an *Hôtel de Ville*. It discusses the contentious competition to find an architect - won by a young outsider, Ralph Knott - and describes the planning and decoration of the building, and the progress of the work. Archive and modern photographs are combined to give a very full picture of the magnificent but often little-known Principal Offices and Committee Rooms.

176 pp of Text: 48 pp of Plates: 55 figs: frontispiece

ISBN 0 485 48417 X: £28

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The Cleaner Royal Borough Group

This Group was established in October 1984 by the Society jointly with the Kensington and Chelsea Chamber of Trade and Commerce and the Kensington High Street Association in response to widespread public concern and indignation over the low standard of cleanliness of the litter strewn streets of the Royal Borough. Mr. George Pole, then a vice-president of the Chamber of Trade and a member of the executive committee of this society was elected Chairman of the Group, membership of which was increased by the addition of the Brighter Kensington & Chelsea Scheme, the West London Inter-Hotels Sales Association, the Beauchamp Place, Knightsbridge and Walton Street Associations, the Chelsea Society and the Golborne Traders Association and, a little later, by the Ladbroke Association. The Society was represented on the committee of the Group initially by Mrs. Christiansen and Mr. Jabez-Smith. This committee met frequently in the general manager's room at Marks & Spencer by courtesy of Mr. Nigel Weber, chairman of Kensington High Street Association and a member of the Group's committee.

The committee set to work immediately to obtain all the information available from bodies such as the 'Keep Britain Tidy' Group and Westminster's 'Keep the City Tidy' Campaign; they also examined the Litter Act, 1983 in order to establish the responsibilities of the Council and the Police. The committee having prepared a list of matters to be raised at a meeting with the Leader of the Council, Mr. Pole obtained Councillor Nicholas Freeman's agreement to meet the Group's representatives at the Town Hall on January 18th 1985.

The meeting with the Leader was very productive and resulted in the setting-up of a Joint Working Party consisting of Cllr. Doreen Weatherhead, Cllr. Nickols, Cllr. Cox, Messrs. George Pole, Antony Jabez-Smith, Nigel Weber, David Collenette and John Morrison. This joint committee of Councillors and representatives of the Cleaner Royal Borough Group to be named the 'Joint Street Cleansing Working Party' was to have a life of six months and to meet four times during that period. By the time the Working Party held its last meeting in December 1985 the Council had made available an additional £230,000 for more street sweepers and vehicles to be used and more frequent emptying of litter bins. The Council had also agreed to spend £100,000 on general environmental improvements. The last meeting of the first session of the Cleaner Royal Borough Group took place in 1986 having met in committee nine times since its inception. It was agreed that the Group would continue in being to monitor the litter problem and would make representations to the Borough Leader at any time it felt necessary to do so.

The Group's committee was reconvened in May 1989 with an enlarged membership, principally to monitor the work of BFI Wastecare Ltd, the private company to whom the Royal Borough had recently awarded the contract for waste collection, street cleansing and public convenience service in Kensington. Mr. Peter Johnson of Oscar & Peter Johnson Ltd. was the new chairman and meetings of the committee were held at his Gallery in 27 Lowndes Street S.W.1.; the Gallery's secretary undertook the committee's secretarial work and the Group owe a debt of gratitude to Oscar & Peter Johnson Ltd. for the use of their Gallery for meetings and of the attendance of their secretary, both after office hours. Five meetings were held during 1989 and the year's work was concluded with a meeting at the Town Hall with Mrs. Hanham, the Leader of the Council, and Cllr. Paul Warrick at which a full discussion took place about the Group's conclusions and recommendations which included satisfaction with the work of BFI Wastecare Ltd. and the co-operation of their directors and managers with the Group, necessity for a new and stronger type of wastebin, provision of bottle and newspaper banks, means of combating the nuisance and litter caused by advertisement leaflets handed out at the entrance to the High Street Underground station and the elimination of 'rubbish black spots' reported to the Group's committee by constituent members. Since that meeting at the Town Hall a better and stronger type of wastebin has been introduced, bottle and newspaper banks both contained in single mobile units have appeared throughout the Royal Borough (they are stationed in different sites each day of the week as pre-advertised) and it is understood that the Council are taking steps to counter the nuisance caused by handbills at the High Street station.

Five more meetings were held at Lowndes Street and a special meeting took place at 102 Warwick Road, the Headquarters and depot of BFI Wastecare Ltd. where the committee had a guided tour of the various vehicles employed in rubbish collection. The meeting in May 1991 was attended by Cllr. Mrs. Frances Taylor then chairman of Public Health and Works who gave a report on the mechanised cleaning of the Borough, but was unreceptive to Mr. Jabez-Smith's proposal that more effective means should be devised to educate the public from unthinking litter creation.

Mr. Johnson, owing to other commitments, retired as chairman at the May meeting and Mr. J. W. Collingridge has succeeded him as chairman.

The Society has been represented at all meetings of the Group (other than two or three) by Mr. Jabez-Smith, chairman of the executive committee in 1984 and now a member of the Society's Council. It is his opinion that the Group inaugurated in 18 Kensington Square by the Chamber of Commerce, the High Street Association and this Society has worked well and has, with the co-operation of the Royal Borough's Council and the private waste collecting contractors, greatly improved the cleanliness of Kensington's streets.

A. R. Jabez-Smith

Environment Award Scheme

RECOGNITION FOR ENHANCEMENT

Nineteen ninety one saw the fifteenth year of the Royal Borough's environmental awards scheme, started in 1977 to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations. Many members will have seen the leaflet and/or exhibition, put out by the Council, covering the main results. Michael Middleton, a member of the Society's Executive Committee, represented the Society on the Panel of Assessors and writes here about the scheme.

How greatly public opinion has moved over thirty years. When the Civic Trust initiated its environmental awards scheme in 1959, it was the only one of its kind anywhere. Today, in Britain, there are scores of them—national, local, some very specific in intent (for particular building types, for example, or the use of particular materials), some generalised to the point of woolliness. The Royal Borough's are very much on Civic Trust lines; they are intended to draw attention to, and pay tribute to, development of any kind which positively enhances its surroundings—whether in the form of new construction, restoration and conversion, or general improvements to the urban landscape. Interwoven is a requirement (and a separate category) for proper provision for access and use by the physically handicapped (an element which proved decisive in some cases in 1991).

Thirty four submissions were received in all, covering five categories. It might seem that the comparable assessment of such wildly diverse schemes would be well-nigh impossible. In practice they tend to sort themselves out fairly clearly and, last year anyway, the Panel of Assessors were in broad agreement at all stages of the judging.

We were six in number (both the Kensington and Chelsea Societies being represented on the Panel). After a brief preliminary look at photographs and plans (and a clarification of the rules of the game), we set off by minibus on a four-hour-plus tour of every site. Inevitably there were surprises. Here was a scheme which had looked good in the photographs; face to face with the reality, the carelessness of its detailing was clearly going to put it out of court. Here was another which unquestionably gave a big boost to the neighbourhood—but offered daunting hurdles to the disabled. And so on. Back, eventually, at the Town Hall, the detailed selection process took several hours more. A draft report, circulated some days later, gave assessors a final opportunity to add to, delete and generally knock around the Panel's formal views on the submissions.

It seems a pity that the factors highlighted in the panel's report to the Council cannot be more generally publicised, for they would illuminate, for the general public, what may otherwise seem rather arbitrary decisions, and would spell out, cumulatively through the years,

an elementary grammar of good manners. To take a handful of examples from 1991 . . . Rooflines are an important element in tying new buildings into their context; one of the excellent features of St. Clements Court in Stoneleigh Street is the way it picks up the exact angles of the adjoining church (hardly visible in the leaflet photograph). An important plus in the Kensington Palace Barracks redevelopment in Church Street is the way the main exit from the pedestrian courtyard has been contrived on the axis of, and therefore, affords a rewarding view of, St. Mary Abbot's spire. Two schemes, 84 Pembroke Road and 14-15 St. Mark's Road, were commended primarily for the skill with which their *link* buildings had been handled. This is a problem so frequently met with that it would have been valuable to draw specific attention to these two solutions. However, in neither leaflet nor exhibition, does space permit such detailed comment—consideration might perhaps be given to this in future years. No less valuable could it be, in some cases, to state the reasons why awards or commendations were *not* given (for example, that such and such an entry was considered excellent of its kind but was disallowed because it offers no access to the general public).

General environmental improvement entries were rather thin on the ground but it was a pleasure to see an increase in the number of submissions in the 'new buildings' category (both housing and commercial). Overall, some excellent schemes were thrown up, in all parts of the Borough, and the Borough can take pride in the standards achieved by the best. Entries for each year close on 31st March. Projects can be nominated by any member of the public, as well as owners, designers, residents associations and so on; entry forms can be obtained from public libraries or from the Director of Planning and Conservation at the Town Hall. The closing date is March 31st every year.

Michael Middleton



Alec Clifton-Taylor Garden

We are delighted that at last the Alec Clifton-Taylor Garden has been completed. The opening ceremony was on November 28th. For members who were disappointed not to be at the opening, the original time given for the opening ceremony was 2.30 p.m. as was printed in the Programme sent out at the beginning of November—to send out another notice would have cost of the Society over £300, it was decided not to involve the Society in that expense.



Alec Clifton-Taylor

In the opening ceremony the Mayor, Councillor Mrs. Frank Taylor summarized Mr. Clifton-Taylor's wide interests and achievements, he was she said a well-known lecturer, author and broadcaster. He went on a number of world tour lectures for the British Council and the English Speaking Union. He was the author of 9 well known and important books on English architecture, his most important book *The Pattern of English Building* was published in 1972 and became a classic work on building materials.

The Mayor continued 'Alec Clifton-Taylor's life was a crusade to open people's eyes to the beauty and delights of English architecture and to conserve it. He was a great scholar who communicated his enthusiasm to ordinary people—he was a much loved figure.'

As reported in previous Annual Reports, Philip Burkett a friend and beneficiary of Alec Clifton-Taylor wrote to the Society in 1986 asking if a small plot of land could be found in Kensington where he could plant a small rose garden in memory of his friend.

The derelict site in Church Walk seemed the obvious site, Mr. Burkett was put in touch with the Borough Council and he and the Society have had many meetings since 1986.

Mr. Burkett at the opening ceremony said:

This is a very happy and long awaited day for me and I am so pleased that so many of Alec's friends are here to share it with me. For five years it has been my ambition to create a rose garden in memory of my great friend, mentor and benefactor, in his own Royal Borough of Kensington where he lived for over fifty years. He was a member of the Kensington Society for 30 years and its President for seven years until his death. Alec cared passionately about the environment, he loved gardens, I am sure nothing would have delighted him more and been a more fitting memorial than the transformation of this ugly patch of waste ground into a small public garden.

I would like to thank all those who have made possible the creation of this garden and who have contributed to it. First I would like to thank the Associated Press for their contribution, to Serco, who have carried out the work and who have agreed to maintain the Garden for two years at their own expense.

Then the Kensington Society, and in particular Mrs. Christiansen, who has been my close ally in achieving this garden and who has campaigned tirelessly on behalf of the site and garden for years. I am grateful to the Kensington Society for the beautiful sundial which forms the centre-piece of the garden. I would also like to thank Mr. Simmons and Mr. Mordin of the English Heritage Stone Carvers' Studio, who have carved the sundial and memorial plaque using the beautiful Clipsham stone, but not least I have to thank the Kensington Borough Council who have devoted time, trouble and money in buying the land back and creating the garden. I would also like to thank Mrs. Killian, the Director of General Services for taking this project under her wing; and finally Mrs. Carol Gilbert, the landscape architect, who has produced so many designs over the years and has produced this very attractive garden.

I hope that this garden will be an asset to the residents and workers of Kensington and from time to time a thought may be spared for the one who inspired it and who opened men's eyes to the delights of English architecture.

Philip Burkett



Kensington United Reformed Church, Allen Street, Kensington, W.8.

The name of this Church is a mystery to many. It expresses an important development in Church relationships in Britain, and also in Kensington. In 1972 the Congregational Church in England and Wales united with the Presbyterian Church in England to form the United Reformed Church in England and Wales. The name of the new Church was carefully chosen. 'United' because it united two strands of Churchmanship which had persisted from the 17th century, and this was the first union of any national churches since the Reformation. . . 'Reformed' because both the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches stemmed from the Reformation, which in England saw the emergence of the Church of England, separated from the Roman Church, with the King, Henry VIII as the nominal head of the Church, replacing the role of the Catholic Pope. The 'puritan reformers' could not accept this arrangement, and ultimately were ejected from their livings in 1662. They set up their own fellowships and meeting places and suffered great harassment. Some eventually escaped to Holland, and later sailed to America, they were part of the Pilgrim Fathers, who established the constitution of New England and freedom of worship. 'Reformed' therefore recalls this important historical factor.

In Kensington the emergence of a Reformed congregation occurred in quieter times. It was in 1794 that the first Congregational Church was built in Hornton Street, to the north of the High Street, and not until 1863 that the Scottish Presbyterian Church was established in Allen Street.

Those were times when church going was popular and the chapels were filled both morning and evening. By 1853 the decision had been taken to build a bigger Chapel in Allen Street, and this was completed and opened in 1855. It was, and still remains a fine and handsome building. It has a tall Corinthian frontispiece with a pedimented portico, with four columns on high bases, two at either end of the central steps. The new building was clad in dressed Bath stone all round, and made a fitting ornament to the developing Kensington. The Rev. Silvester Horne was one of its famous ministers, whom crowds flocked to hear. He later became a Member of Parliament. Among its lay members were men of literary eminence and professional distinction. One of the earlier members was the Royal Gardener, William Forsyth, who introduced to England, and propagated the oleaceous shrub, a native of China and Japan, which now bears his name FORSYTHIA.



Bomb damage destroyed the hall and the Organ loft at the rear of the Church in 1940 and it was deemed unsafe and was closed until 1952. During this difficult and dangerous period, the remnant of the congregation worshipped with the Presbyterians in their Church, about 400 yards down Allen Street. This contact enforced by war conditions laid the foundation for the later local union of the churches. The Roman Catholic Church, Our Lady of Victories had also been destroyed and during its reconstruction, from 1952 to 1958 they used the recently restored Congregational Chapel. Another happy ecumenical experience arising out of our common suffering.

In 1958 the congregation returned to its restored Chapel, or partially restored, for nothing had been done to the exterior, which was pitted by bomb fragments and corroded by the smoke of London, so that the beautiful cream bath stone was smothered in entrusted black carbon deposits. In some parts of the building the stone had begun to disintegrate and pieces had fallen away from the building. The first priority had been given to equipping and decorating the interior and to providing a new organ, which was an expensive undertaking, but the dirty and dangerous facade remained a challenge. It was essential to save the Chapel from further corrosion and so external repairs and cleaning were put in hand. This expensive operation is still underway, and has revealed more disintegration, and the need for widespread repairs to the stone work. It is reckoned that the work so far envisaged will cost the congregation more than £50,000. We are seeking help from all who appreciate the restoration of this Classical Kensington building to its former beautiful condition.

The building will be officially reopened (although it has never been closed) on Sunday, March 29th 1992 at 11 a.m. All readers of this publication are invited to join the congregation in an act of Thanksgiving and Rededication.

Rev Peter Loveitt

The Favil Press of Kensington

The first printers of the Kensington Society's Annual Report were the Favill Press of Kensington. Mr. Geoffrey Culliford (now aged 92) who joined the staff of the Press in 1934, has told us about the work of the press from its earliest days, about his own experiences there and its connections with public personalities. Mr. Culliford writes:

First founded in the early twenties by Geoffrey Sainsbury and Charles Birnstringl in Peel Street, the Favil Press moved to larger premises (152 Kensington Church Street) in later years, and the famous frontage was an indication of the quality the Press achieved in all its varied output.

I joined the small staff in 1934 as a traveller or representative-cum-typographer. The staff was minimal; the Managing Director, Albert Lowy, with the Secretary/Book-keeper, Ruth Collins, coped with all the paper work and clients, while I was out 'pavement-pounding' in search of orders. The other directors were Adele Lowy, Ruth and Victor Gollancz. Victor's daughter Livia occupied for some time one of the flats over the Press and since we shared the entrance to the building we met quite often. A fortunate facility for producing ideas and layouts for the needs of the many private art galleries gained us a fairly large number of customers among the more discerning.

The Favil Press published a range of greeting cards with designs by contemporary artists, including many by Ursula Birnstringl, wife of Charles. These were so different from the conventional 'Robins and Snow' that their appeal was only to the more sophisticated; I remember that Fortnum and Mason, and Truslove & Hanson's shops in Clifford Street W.1 and Sloane Street S.W.1 were also able to appreciate their unusual appeal.

The musical world came to the Press—again because of its good taste and understanding of their special needs. These artists and their impresarios eagerly sought new approaches to publicity. Because we worked for Ibbs & Tillet, perhaps the most famous of them all, I was brought into contact with many and privileged to become friends with some.

During World War II, Myra Hess was able to persuade the National Gallery to allow a series of lunchtime concerts daily to be given there. Her fame as a pianist ensured support, and she and Edwin Worman of Ibbs & Tillet planned to get all the copy for these recitals to me at the Favil Press days in advance. Wartime conditions played havoc often with these good intentions; for instance, I remember one occasion when I was rung up about 10 o'clock one morning with the news that the copy for that day's programme had only just arrived; could we do anything about it? I said that if the details were only short—perhaps a piano recital with only two or three pieces, then we might. It was. I took the details down over the telephone, rushed them into the workshop; craftsmen set the type and I had a machine waiting to print on the wartime single sheet of very absorbent paper used for this sort of work (no

smudging!). I packed them and put them in my saddle bag (I was a keen cyclist) and in the absence of traffic in those days I did the trip from Notting Hill Gate to the National Gallery in 18 minutes. The head attendant was waiting on the portico; I tossed them up to him and they were on sale by 12.45.

I know of two books which give in detail the history of the National Gallery lunch-time concerts and something of their progenitor Myra Hess. Stories and anecdotes about famous people seem to accumulate of their own volition, but this is no place to air my own; I would like to pay tribute to an amazing woman, not, in this context, for her pianistic mastery but for her outstanding capacity for human kindness, particularly to those privileged to serve her and the concerts. This was demonstrated on the first and later anniversaries of the concerts, when she sent small but very special gifts to those involved in their production. In her letter to me (see . . .) the reference to 'rabbits out of a hat' was that she knew my hobby to be magic. The gift which accompanied this note was a tin of my favourite tobacco. Wartime conditions made tobacco extremely rare and the finding of this item proved how much she thought about the recipient.

William Russell Flint had a very lovely house and a studio at the top of Peel Street. He was a treasured customer of the Favil and eventually I was honoured by his friendship and by gifts of the various magnificent books he wrote and had privately printed to his own exact specifications. He had started his commercial life as an artist attached to a printer and so knew precisely what he wanted.

I felt extremely proud when he asked me to call at the Studio; he had given in to the insistent demands of his many friends and had at last written and completed his *magnum opus*—his autobiography—and wanted the Favil Press to handle all the letterpress text, the captions to the three sections of colour reproductions (which were to be printed by a firm of colour specialists under the control of their managing director who was a fervent admirer of Flint and his work). Type setting, colour work all took time; by the time I had assembled a complete mock-up of the work, WRF was in hospital. His grand-daughter called at the Press one day and said: 'I'm going up to see Willie (as everyone called him), is there any message?'. I explained about the proofs and she took them along with her. It is gratifying to know that each page was read and approved before he parted with the proofs. Tragically, he died before the book was printed. His handwritten tributes to those who had contributed to the work were on the final page of an extremely unusual volume, and it is a matter of great pride that the Favil Press was able to satisfy this meticulous client.

Before Livia Gollancz took over the flat above the Press, it was occupied by Leslie Butler, a commercial artist with a most valuable facility for adapting his work to the requirements of the customer. He was more of a cartoonist than the usual 'commercial' artist and used to submit work to *Punch*; should it be rejected he would re-draw the idea and submit elsewhere.

SPEEDWELL 6524

48, WILDWOOD ROAD,
N.W. 11.October 9th 1942

Dear Mr. Culliford

We owe so much to you, & on this third Anniversary of our concerts I feel I must write you this line with my personal gratitude.

I can never thank you enough for your unfailing interest in our well-being & I only wish that every member of our public could know & therefore appreciate what you do for us.

You seem to bring "rabbits out of the hat" in any emergency & time & again you have produced programmes which we have thought it quite impossible!

Please accept this little war-time birthday present with my warmest gratitude & very kindest wishes

Yours ever sincerely,

Myra Hess

The English Heritage Carvers at Vauxhall

The Studio's connection with the Kensington Society, established in 1983 with the cutting of an inscription for the Princess Alice Memorial garden, and continued with the conservation of the memorial tablet to Henry Dawson in St. Mary Abbots Church, is happily maintained this year with a sun dial and commemorative inscription for the garden being designed in memory of the Society's last President, Alec Clifton-Taylor.

Since the last report on the Studio in 1986 several changes have taken place. Three of our carvers have left, including one of the apprentices, and are now working successfully on their own account, and in their place we have taken on just one new member of staff—a fully trained conservator.

The Studio itself has been sub-divided in order to provide separate, and as far as it is possible in such an environment, dust free premises for our conservation work. This new studio at present houses one of the most interesting and certainly the most valuable items of work on which we are engaged at present. Three of the life size statues of Saxon Kings from Westminster Hall are undergoing careful removal of many layers of limewash, misguidedly applied over many years in an effort to protect them. The original and beautiful 14th century carving, and also evidence of previous painting and gilding is slowly and painstakingly being revealed.

Protection of a different kind has been given to 3, 8ft high Roman marble statues from Chiswick House. Replicas of the statues were made from rubber moulds and cast in a white marble substitute mix. These will be returned to Chiswick to stand in place of the originals which will be re-sited in a new specially prepared sculpture gallery. Similarly the 18th century statues of Inigo Jones and Palladio by Michael Rysbrack (also from Chiswick), will be moved inside to be replaced by carved replicas from our studio. In this instance because of the worn nature and general lack of detail on the figures, the moulding technique was not considered appropriate.

Regretfully, vandalism rather than natural erosion continues to provide us with a steady source of replacement carving and repair work. The head and arm of the white marble Boy Fountain from St. James' Park patiently await repair, as does one of the swan-neck urns from the Italian Gardens in Hyde Park (physically pushed off its pedestal into the lake). This last incident sparked off a review of the whole situation regarding the badly weathered urns in the Italian Gardens with the result that we have now been asked to recarve a number of the worst affected items over the period of the next five years.

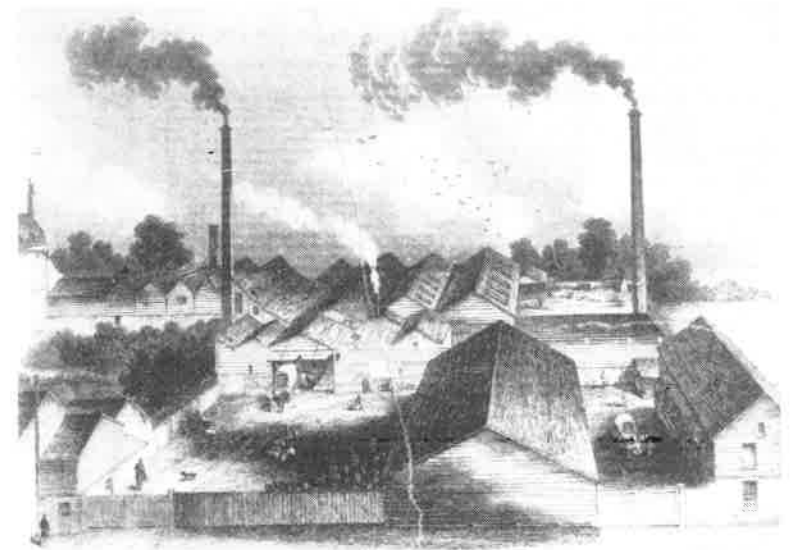
The life size statue of Neptune from Wrest Park in Bedfordshire at present in the studio has had a rather chequered history. Originally

sent to us to replace a broken arm, the whole statue was knocked off its pedestal by a falling tree during the gales of 1987. A completely new replacement statue was almost finished when the studio was broken into last December and once again Neptune was broken in pieces, this time with an axe! A second new statue is now nearing completion.

The highlight of this year's work has been the carving of Lepine stone of an over life size boar by Neil Simmons. This was a copy of the original in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence by Tacca, and it has now been fixed in position at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. The plaster model of this fierce beast has been left in the studio, hopefully to deter future would-be vandals!

In line with government policy English Heritage is due to move out of London to Nottingham in 1994/5 and so at the present time the studio faces an uncertain future. With restoration giving way to conservation it could be that a long tradition of quality carving fostered by the government over a period of over 60 years is about to be broken.

Philip Murdin



Candle Factory Kensington High Street area on east side of Railway Station 1858

From Workhouse to Hospital

By Revd. Bernard Hughes

The story of St. Mary Abbots Hospital, Kensington, London: St. Mary Abbots Hospital, 1991, 80 pp., obl. 8vo., (£7.95 + £2.00 postage and packing, from the Hospital Chaplain) (1000 copies only)

St. Mary Abbots will soon only be a memory. It is good therefore that its history has been recorded—and so eloquently—in word and picture, and that it is so well done.

The concise text and the captions to the highly graphic pictures place the hospital within the development of the Poor Law since 1601 and of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 which created so powerful and so justified a fear of the workhouse among the indigent. They trace its history from the joint use of the site by the Westminster out-parish workhouse and the Kensington workhouse to its amalgamation as St. Mary Abbots Hospital in 1880—ironically, in the light of the present transfer—on the move of the Westminster institution to St. Stephen's, Fulham Road.

Responding first to increasing patient needs following massive growth after 1880, the concurrent rise of the wellknown nursing school, higher nursing standards and improvements in medical care and patient hygiene, the increase in the number of medical specialities, and the relentless demands of the NHS since 1948, it is hardly surprising that the hospital developed the usual unsightly and uncoordinated maze of *ad hoc* pavilions, lean-tos, makeshift surgical units and dismal backyards.

Unightly as it became, the hospital performed its service and was well loved by staff and patients. The present property development allows at least for the preservation of the architecturally distinguished first workhouse building (now 'Stone Hall') by Thomas Allom of 1847, and for the improvement of its surroundings. It would be good if the characteristic workhouse bell and clock could be preserved, if all the diamond-paned neo-Jacobean windows could be restored, and the building returned to a community use in accord with presentday needs.

Readers will find the pictures—in colour and monochrome—well-chosen, fascinating and telling. The hospital kitchen of c. 1890, bare and tiled and mercilessly basic and efficient, is a symbol of its time and so too are the stern elder nurses—well-starched and unvanquished ladies—and their gentler probationers and successors. The brief, cogent and scholarly text adds greatly to the value of the record of the hospital and its place in its times. All those concerned in its production are to be thanked for preserving this worthy memorial of a vanishing and well regarded Kensington institution.

Robin Price

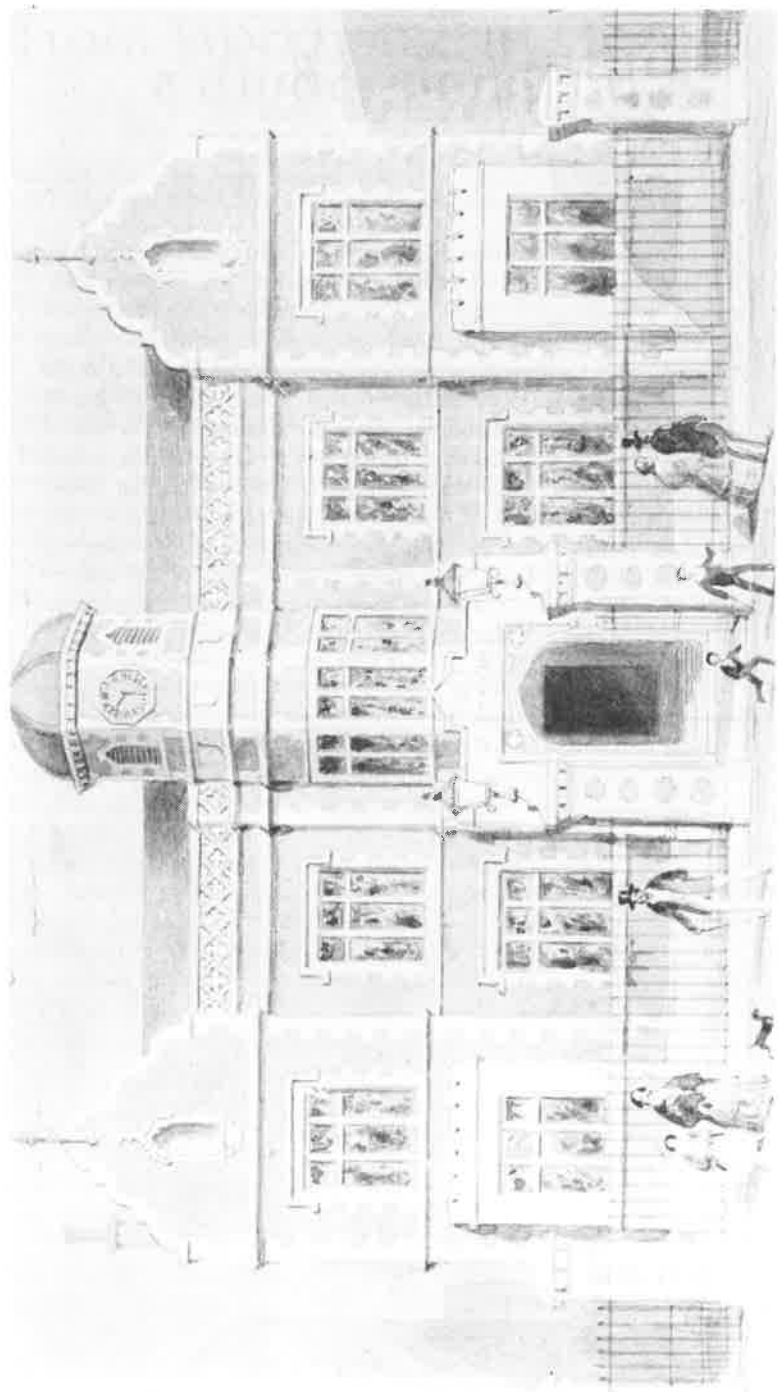
Sir James South's Observatory

To the west of Campden Hill was Lord Holland's Lane, now Holland Walk. 'As late as 1869 there was only one footway leading from Kensington Road to Uxbridge Road, west of Church Street . . . Campden Hill Road, formerly at its northern end called Plough Lane, was only opened for vehicles after the death of Sir James South . . . and the removal of his house.' Sir James South, the famous astronomer (he was a founder of The Royal Astronomical Society) built an observatory in 1826 and acquired Phillimore House from William Robert Phillimore. The house and observatory stood on the present site of Observatory Gardens. Sir James South's strenuous resistance to the opening-up of Campden Hill Road and to the construction of the underground railway was occasioned by his fear that traffic vibrations would interfere with accurate astronomical observations.

W.J. Loftie, *Kensington picturesque* . . . pp. 257-8.



Kensington Gardens



The Vestry Hall Central Library 1889-1960

From Vestry to Borough Council

Control of Parish affairs was entirely in the hands of the Lord of the Manor and his stewards until the control began to be exercised by Vestrymen in the 15th century.

The vestry was normally the 'town meeting' which met once a year to elect the people's churchwarden and to fix the church rate. It was a meeting at which everyone in the parish was entitled to attend. There was no delegation of power, but an open meeting, which was the only way the inhabitants could express themselves.

The officers nominally responsible for the actual work were the constable, to keep order; the surveyor of highways, to look after the roads; and the overseer of the poor, to look after the destitute. These were unpaid officers, and, generally speaking, all householders had the legal obligation in turn to fill these posts, though there was no competition to receive the honour.

The chief paid servant who did the real work was the vestry clerk, who was elected by the parishioners at a vestry meeting, and held the office for life.

The unpaid officers, not having desired the position, either shirked the duties or tried to turn them to profit. The poor were neglected, the highways filthy, unpaved, and infested with thieves.

The 'open' vestry was followed by the 'select' vestry, confining the rights of attending the parish meeting to a few, and produced even more appalling corruptions.

London was excluded from the scope of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, but the Royal Commission on Municipal Corporations investigated the problem of London, although little was done for London as a whole until the passing of the Metropolis Management Act in 1855. Kensington, however, had obtained a local Act in 1851. This Act was called the Kensington Improvement Act. During the four or five years this Act was in operation, a vast number of improvements were effected, such as repairing footways, which were in a bad and dilapidated condition, and paving others which were not then paved. The sanitary state of the Parish was greatly improved by the properly scavenging and repairing of roads. The Act consolidated the various Lighting Districts then existing.

The passing of the Metropolis Local Management Act 1855 brought about further improvements, such as the formation of the Parish into Wards. Parishes with more than two thousand rated householders were divided into Wards. It gave power to the Secretary of State to appoint persons to set out the wards and apportion to number of vestrymen to be elected. Kensington had three wards, namely,

St. Mary Abbots. Holy Trinity, Brompton.
St. John, Notting Hill and St. James Norland.

The passing of the Local Government Act 1894 marks an epoch in the history of Local Government in Kensington, the changes introduced by the measure affecting the qualification for the office of Vestryman, the Electorate and the mode of election. Hitherto, the qualification required of persons seeking to fill the office of Vestryman had been that they should be occupiers of houses, land, tenements or hereditaments in the Parish, rated to the relief of the poor upon a rateable value of not less than £40 per annum, whereas by the provisions of the Local Government Act, a person of either sex was eligible for the office if his or her name appears on the Register of Parochial Electors for the Parish.

As regards the Electorate, it may be pointed out that, formerly, only Parishioners who had been rated for one year next before the Election were entitled to take part in the Election of Vestrymen, whilst, by this Act, a new electorate on a wider basis was created.

The mode of Election as laid down in the Metropolis Management Act 1855 was superseded, the Act providing that Elections of Members of Vestries were to be conducted in accordance with the rules laid down by the Local Government Board.

It was in the same year as this Act was passed that the Kensington Vestry availed themselves of the powers conferred by the London County Council (General Powers) Act, 1893, by presenting a petition to the Council for a rearrangement of the Wards of the Parish. In May 1894 the Overseers presented a report to the Vestry, in which they drew attention to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1894, and to the difficulty in which they would be placed as regards the preparation of the Electoral Lists of the Parish unless the boundaries of the wards for Vestry and Guardians' purposes and the Parliamentary Polling Districts were adjusted. In June the Council gave an Order dividing the Parish into eight wards, namely,

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Golborne. | 5. Earls Court. |
| 2. Norland. | 6. Queens Gate. |
| 3. Pembridge. | 7. Redcliffe. |
| 4. Holland. | 8. Brompton. |

In May 1900 the London Government Act Commissioners agreed to the proposal of the Vestry that the Borough of Kensington should be divided into nine wards, St. Charles being the additional one.

The L.C.C. was set up in 1888 to manage the affairs of the newly created county of London. It took over the duties of the Metropolitan Board of Works. In 1899 Mr. Balfour introduced the London Government Bill which set up the Borough Councils. This amalgamated many of the old areas and divided London, outside of the City, into twenty-eight Municipalities, each with its Mayor, Aldermen and elected Councillors. The old Parish of St. Mary Abbots became the Borough of Kensington with much the same boundaries, but some adjustments were made by the Commissioner and confirmed by Privy Council in the Borough of Kensington Order in Council, 1900. The detached part

of Chelsea was divided between the parishes and boroughs of Kensington and Paddington. The Commissioner decided that Kensington Palace should be detached from Westminster and added to Kensington. Parts of Queen's Gate, the Imperial Institute and Brompton Road were transferred to Westminster. Parts of Brompton Road, and Sloane Street were transferred from Kensington to Chelsea, while Harrods' Store and parts of several other streets in this area were transferred to Kensington. In North Kensington parts of Dalgarno Gardens and Latimer Road were transferred from Hammersmith to Kensington, while several other streets in the Latimer Road area were transferred from Kensington to Hammersmith.

After 1900 the newly created Borough Council set to work to build flats, improve housing conditions and inaugurated a vigorous sanitary policy.

The Records of a Kensington Building Firm

Victor Belcher

Survey of London

The firm of C. A. Daw and Son Ltd. of 27 Palace Gate, Kensington, London, W.8, is now a small company which is primarily concerned with property management, but in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Charles Adams Daw and his son William Adams Daw (the C. A. Daw and Son of the firm's title) were important speculative builders in west London. A substantial archive from that period is kept in the firm's office in Palace Gate.

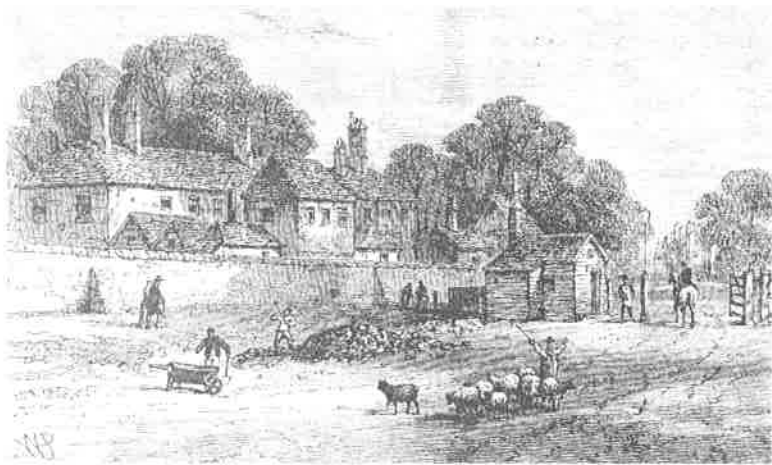
Charles Adams Daw came from south Devon, where the family name is quite common. In the early 1860s he migrated to London in company with an older brother, William Bennet Daw. There they joined a third brother, Nicholas Fabyan Daw, who had already established himself in the capital as a partner in a short-lived mercantile firm, Fabyan, Daw and Koch, which had an address in Crutched Friars in the City. All three brothers then engaged in speculative building, initially in the vicinity of Earl's Court, and later in other parts of Kensington and in Paddington and St. Marylebone. William Bennett Daw was listed as a builder in the trades section of the *London Post Office Directory* for 1864; in 1865 the entry was changed to Daw William B. and Brothers, and in 1866 and subsequent years up to 1871 to Daw Brothers.

The partnership was then broken up. Nicholas Fabyan Daw retired from active participation, although he assisted in subsequent building

ventures, chiefly as an investor, and took a close interest in the running of the business until his death in 1900. William Bennett Daw operated for a short while as a builder, seemingly independently, in the Lancaster Road area of Notting Hill, but by 1875 he had returned to Devon, living firstly at Torquay and then at Hele House, Ashburton.

The main building concern was left in the hands of Charles Adams Daw, and he was soon joined in the business by his son, William Adams Daw, who had been born in Torquay in 1856. W. A. Daw quickly took over the principal managerial role in the firm and it was under his direction that the business grew and prospered in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, although a formal partnership between father and son was not drawn up until 1886.

In the mid 1870s the firm embarked on a large undertaking in De Vere Gardens, Kensington, where William Bennett Daw had become the joint owner of a parcel of land shortly before retiring to Devon. He persuaded his brother to take most of the ground under a building agreement and erect some 28 very substantial houses in the Italianate style which was then still just about fashionable. The houses proved difficult to dispose of, however. Some were converted into flats immediately and others used as hotels, while some sites which had been intended for the erection of houses were utilised instead for blocks of flats. The problems encountered in De Vere Gardens eventually led to an acrimonious dispute between William Bennet Daw and his brother and nephew, the details of which are recorded at length in the firm's letter books. The difficulties in De Vere Gardens were eventually overcome and in the 1880s the firm turned to building houses and flats in neighbouring Palace Gate in the red-brick Queen Anne style which was to become increasingly popular and which it was to use in most of its subsequent developments. In 1884 it built a block of flats at No. 27 Palace Gate which incorporated a new office for the firm on the ground floor, where it has remained ever since.



The Old Turnpike, Kensington, in 1820.

From the mid 1880s, under W. A. Daw's impetus, the firm expanded its activities and over the next twenty years or so built over 150 large houses, chiefly in Kensington—in Evelyn Gardens, Hans Road, Sheffield Terrace, Kensington Church Street and Hornton Street—but also elsewhere, in Palace Court, Bayswater, and Park Street, Mayfair, for instance. It also erected several large blocks of flats including Campden House Chambers and Hornton Court in Kensington, and Eaton Mansions in Cliveden Place, Belgravia.

In 1894 C. A. Daw retired from the business and the partnership was dissolved, but the name C. A. Daw and Son was retained. The father lived to an advanced age, finally dying in 1913 when his effects were valued at the modest sum of £1,230. The firm suffered a severe blow in 1908, however, when William Adams Daw contracted pneumonia and died suddenly at the age of 51. He left a widow, a step-son by a former marriage of his wife, Hugh Roy Campbell, who had entered the firm as a manager, and four children under the age of 21. At the time of his death, W. A. Daw had achieved considerable prosperity. He had a large house in Ealing and another property in Hampshire with a resident gamekeeper. The rest of his numerous staff included a coachman and several gardeners. His effects were valued at £189,774, and by his will the bulk of his estate was left in trust for his children.

Some two months before his death W. A. Daw had entered into a building agreement to erect a large mansion block in St. James's Place, Westminster, on the Crown Estate. Such an undertaking required a substantial capital investment, and one loan had already been taken out from Barclay's Bank. The executors of W. A. Daw were concerned to protect the interests of his descendants while carrying out the contract, and in June 1909 they formed a small private company, C. A. Daw and Son Ltd., to take over the agreement and the business of a builder and contractor formerly carried out by W. A. Daw. Initially there were only two directors, Hugh Roy Campbell and Charles Bennett Daw, W. A. Daw's eldest son, who had just come of age, and for many years shareholding was restricted to members of the family. After completing the building in St. James's Place the firm wound down the scale of its operations and concerned itself largely with the management, repair and maintenance of the Daw family's properties, eventually taking on similar functions for other property owners. The present chairman of the company is a grandson of W. A. Daw.

The records held by the firm all date from after 1875 when Charles Adams Daw was left in sole charge of the Daw family's building concerns. They consist principally of the minute books of the limited liability company from its formation in 1909, various rent books, cash books and ledgers from c. 1876 (about 100 in all), registers of mortgages from 1878 to 1928, several tin boxes of deeds, some plans and many thousands of letters. It is these letters which in many ways constitute the most valuable part of the archive, for even in those rare instances where some records of building firms have survived they rarely include letters, and certainly not on this magnitude. It was the

practice of the firm to file in-letters under the name of the sender in a large wooden cabinet.

There are also eight volumes of copies of out-letters covering the years 1879 to 1919, before modern filing methods were introduced, but, for the number of in-letters, these volumes only contain a fraction of the return correspondence, and it is not clear on what basis copies were selected, many of them deal with financial matters—the arrangement of mortgages and the like—but there are also copies of quite intimate family letters with details of quarrels over money, as indicated earlier.

No letters have been found from the period before 1885—until, that is, the firm had settled in its present premises in Palace Gate—but for the next thirty years or so virtually every in-letter seems to have been kept, from begging letters and requests for employment to the virtually day-by-day correspondence with solicitors over the building, selling and letting of houses. There are letters from the suppliers of building materials, from sub-contractors such as electricians and decorators, from other building firms, from purchasers or prospective tenants of houses with instructions about the fitting-out of their homes, from tenants with complaints, and from architects who were providing designs for the firm, acting for the purchasers of houses, or sometimes enquiring whether Daws had a plot available on which they could build a house for a client. Some of the architects were famous—or became so—including Balfour and Turner, Ernest George and Peto, A. H. Mackmurdo, Aston Webb and C. F. A. Voysey. The latter, when asked to provide a sketch elevation for houses which Daws were planning to build in Swan Walk, Chelsea, referred rather disparagingly to the design as a 'shirt-front' arrangement, for the firm provided its own plans and internal arrangements to fit the elevation, thereby saving on architect's fees.

Some of the letters are from the very famous—Robert Browning and Henry James, for instance, who both lived in De Vere Gardens—although generally on fairly mundane matters. Others strike a familiar note, an archetypal major writing from the Cavalry Club about the completion of a house he was purchasing, commenting, 'I want to get into the house before Easter, and in 6 weeks time I shall be as anxious to get the workmen out of the house as I am now to get them in. The dilatoriness of the British Workman is proverbial amongst those who have had experience of him . . .' On being reassured by W. A. Daw that all would be completed on time he wrote, 'I am so pleased to hear from you that you are right and I am wrong, that your people are galloping when I thought they were trotting only . . .' W. A. Daw was not averse to adopting a brusque tone in his letters, even to people from whom he was borrowing, or hoping to borrow, money, tetchily commenting to one rather tiresome creditor who insisted on seeing receipts showing that ground rents had been paid, 'You are the only mortgagee in our experience which is a large one who has ever bothered us about ground rent receipts and when the ground rents are

nominal it is quite unnecessary, and we must say that you are the most nervous & fidgetty mortgagee we have ever had to deal with'.

A large proportion of the letters inevitably deal with the minutiae of arranging the necessary financial backing for building developments and provide *inter alia* information about the various sources of capital available to the speculative builder, and the means of tapping these. This is, however, only one of the many aspects of a builder's business which are covered in great detail in this remarkable collection.

Anyone wishing to consult the firm's records should contact the Secretary, Mr. C. J. P. Lindon, at No. 27 Palace Gate, London, W.8.

Sources

Records of C. A. Daw and Son Limited at 27 Palace Gate, London, W.8
Middlesex Deeds Register at Greater London Record Office, County Hall, London, S.E.1

Company House file no. 103661

Birth certificate of William Adams Daw

P.P.R. 1980, will of William Adams Daw and index entry

Interview with Major A. F. Daw

Post Office Directories



Old view of Kensington, about 1750.

Reports from Local Societies

THE BOLTONS ASSOCIATION

Our efforts to persuade the Borough's Planning Committee to accept our recommendations have shown the usual pattern—some loss, some gain. We have triumphed in three important cases which went to Appeal. One decision, related to The Cottage, Gilston Road, was exceptionally good and encouraging and could well set a precedent for future appeals. Our objections to a rear extension at 25 The Boltons and to the conversion of a shop into a restaurant in Old Brompton Road were also upheld.

Two objections in principle, to large scale development under a garden and to the substitution of artificial movable sections of wall for stretches of original garden have been only partially met or are in abeyance.

On traffic, the Association is strongly opposed to the abolition of residents' parking in Redcliffe Gardens should it, as expected, be designated a 'Red Route'. There is also objection to the designation of Drayton Gardens as a 'Secondary Road'.

The Borough's Tree Warden Scheme has been welcomed in a very practical way—a Committee member has enrolled as a Tree Warden.

The Association is supporting the Chelsea Society in its views on the proposed development of the University of London site.

Chairman: Mr. James Macnair, 29 Gilston Road, London S.W.10

Secretary: Miss Elizabeth Lowry-Corry, 60 Redcliffe Gardens, London S.W.10

THE BRAMHAM BOLTONS AND COLLINGHAM GARDENS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

On the planning front, largely at the instigation of the BBC RA, an enforcement order was served on a building in Bramham Gardens which was being used illegally for a back-packers hostel. The building has since been sold and converted to small studios to be let on assured tenancies. The Association expressed concern that despite the fact the Council had confirmed that the property was being used improperly as a hostel, it took over eighteen months before the head of enforcement served the order.

In concert with other associations nearby, objections were lodged to numerous applications for night cafe licences and late night music licences in the Earls Court Road, all to little effect and with little support from the Council. The incomers drawn by these attractions cause great nuisance—noise litter traffic affrays and worse—to residents in surrounding streets.

By mid-year, despite the recession, most of the new flats at 1-6 Bramham Gardens had been sold. The 'No Hotel' campaign to prevent these houses being turned into yet another hotel—eventually successful—was the cause which brought our association into being. We are delighted at this satisfactory outcome and that our efforts to conserve the area may have contributed to it.

Having watched with dismay for some years as the houses at 15-17 Collingham Gardens, listed Grade II starred, have been allowed to decay by their off-shore owners, we are pleased that English Heritage have now put them on their 'Buildings at Risk' register and that the Council are including them in their rotting buildings initiative. It would be scandalous if these buildings were allowed to get in the state of other neglected buildings of merit in the Borough or to fall prey to developers with no concern for some of the finest examples of late Victorian residential architecture in the Borough.

Chairman: L. A. Holt

BROMPTON ASSOCIATION

Terry Farrell & Co. have been appointed architects for the development of the South Kensington Station site, following the withdrawal of an application submitted by architects Scott, Brownrigg & Turner, which we vigorously opposed. This time, we have been involved in early consultation and we are encouraged by the preliminary proposals we have seen.

Proposals for the adjoining Brompton Cross site (architects SOM) appear dormant, no doubt a victim of recession but we know that the Council have insisted on the inclusion of a greater proportion of residential use and support this.

A third development, just outside our boundaries, but of significance to the whole area, is under discussion with Westminster City Council: known as the Rafael Street proposal, it envisages the replacement of the famously ugly Castrol House, between Launcelot Place and Knightsbridge Green, and includes a new entrance to the Underground.

Harrods continues to submit application for a variety of schemes: their carpark in Brompton Place was approved on Appeal last year and details of associated work to cottages 1-10 Brompton Place is under discussion; an Appeal is expected against refusal of consent for conversion of the Trevor Square repository as a hotel; the latest proposal is for development on the roof of the main building; we are pleased that both the Council and English Heritage are concerned to conserve the original buildings.

Otherwise, Egerton Crescent/Place has seen the greatest activity in a quiet year, with a reduced number of applications.

Chairman: Sir Donald Logan KCVO, 6 Thurloe Street S.W.7

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. Susan Walker RIBA, 15 Cromwell Road S.W.7

CORNWALL GARDENS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

The Association continues to monitor developments and activities in and around Cornwall Gardens and to make appropriate representations if they appear to be adverse to the local environment.

We are extremely disappointed that the proposed pedestrian access from the St. Mary Abbots site into Cornwall Gardens Walk is to go ahead. The majority of the Association's members are opposed to this and many made their views known to the authorities. However, the concerns of those most closely affected seem to have carried little weight.

We are also concerned at the continuing lack of activity at the old Waitrose site in Gloucester Road. The boarding on the building is unsightly and there is an increasing risk of damage to the public due to deterioration of the structure.

We do welcome and support the Royal Borough's pedestrian safety and traffic scheme for the Cromwell Road. In particular we look forward to the implementation of those aspects that will make pedestrian crossing safer at the notorious Gloucester Road junction and those that should calm the dangerous and disturbing 'Grenville Place rat-race.'

Chairman: Robin Balmer

Secretary: Miss U. Overbury

EARL'S COURT SQUARE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

We have continued to do our best to defend and promote the best environment for our residents.

The Chairman's report for 1991 presented at the Annual General Meeting in January reflected our interest concerning planning, the Earl's Court exhibitions, property, late night cafe licensing, parking, traffic, and the Urban Programme.

Our struggles against a proposed car park off adjacent, narrow Rich Lane, and an actual mini-cab business within the Square, were successful. Our opposition to the renewal of the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre's licence—for reasons well ventilated in the press—was not successful but the proposed access roads are welcomed.

In some properties colonnades supporting porticoes are in need of treatment and we have encouraged restoration work which may soon be carried out, backed by the Council's powers. Nearly all the properties conform to the Article IV Direction on colour; we hope the remainder will be persuaded to follow.

We have not been able to arrest the drift towards the very late licensing of cafes. We are seeking parking control extension until 7.45 pm to ease residents' parking. On traffic we have formulated, with others, schemes to avoid 'rat running'. We have been instrumental in pressing for Urban Programme funds for Earl's Court Road.

We publish newsletters twice yearly. In July there was a barbecue and in December a carol function around the newly lighted Christmas tree. These were both held in the Garden—beautifully kept by the Gar-

den Committee which also maintains hanging baskets on all lamp-posts throughout the Square.

Secretary: Mrs. May Holt

Chairman: Rodney Brangwyn

EDWARDES SQUARE SCARSDALE AND ABINGDON ASSOCIATION

The *St. Mary Abbots Hospital* appeal occupied much of our time in the first five months. During the enquiry, those acting for the developers seized on certain policies in the draft *Unitary Development Plan*, using them most effectively to the appellant's advantage—notably H11 (now H12) in the draft Housing chapter, which was quoted extensively, in their favour, in the Inspector's report. ESSA has pressed for the more 'developer-friendly' policies to be revised: we are concerned that the UDP, which will be the Borough's Planning 'Bible' for the foreseeable future, will not provide adequate protection for our environment.

Odeon Cinema. New plans were submitted to provide cinemas, offices and residential units. While these took note of the DoE Inspector's comments, ESSA had a number of objections, some of which were resolved in subsequent amendments. The application has now been granted and we feel that, in view of current planning regulations and the Inspector's report, objectors achieved as much as possible.

The epic battle over redevelopment of the old Dairy site behind 53, *Abingdon Road* continues. Two applications are being considered—for a health club and for an MOT centre. Neither of these uses is appropriate on a site bounded by residential properties.

Plans to implement a number of small *traffic schemes* are causing us concern, being introduced in an ad hoc fashion rather than as part of a coherent, cohesive scheme.

ESSA celebrated its 21st anniversary with a summer garden party, thanks to the generosity of two of our members who offered the use of their delightful garden.

Chairman: His Honour Judge Gordon, 7, Edwardes Square, W.8

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. Suzanne Anderson, 8, Phillimore Terrace, W.8

FRIENDS OF BROMPTON CEMETERY

Brompton Cemetery is unique as being the only public cemetery that has been nationalised—in 1852. It is managed by the Department of the Environment through their Royal Parks Division. The Friends have, therefore, been concerned about the possible effect of the heralded changes in that Division. The only reasonable certainty at present is that the maintenance will be carried out by a private contractor, though under the direct control and supervision of the Division's remaining staff.

The Friends remain committed to the Cemetery being left in a natural state as far as practicable. We consider that the broadcast application of chemical weedkillers would produce a desert, depriving us of many beautiful and interesting wild (or introduced) plants with a consequen-

tial reduction in the insect and bird population. However, certain rampaging plants must be kept down in order to allow others to survive and so as not to cover the gravestones completely. The Friends therefore accept, with some reluctance, that a very limited use of selective weedkillers must be allowed in the absence of a much larger workforce than can be hoped for.

The Friends continue to press for permanent police patrolling to reduce nuisances and undesirables and to give confidence to those genuinely wanting to enjoy the peaceful atmosphere. We also seek a realistic increase in the hours of opening on summer evenings.

Chairman: B. Selwyn, 3 Hogarth Road, S.W.5

KENSINGTON COURT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

We continue to co-operate with the Society and with neighbouring Associations. To get things done one needs (a) effective lobbying by Associations and (b) supporting action by individual residents. Sometimes expert advice is needed which the larger Associations are better able to provide. We seek to secure the support of our Councillors. We keep in touch with our members by means of 'building representatives' who distribute information in their blocks or streets.

Our main preoccupations during the year have been (i) rowdiness at closing times of pubs and night clubs; (ii) litter, especially in the passage from the High Street into Kensington Court; and (iii) planning applications involving change of use or abuse of regulations. It is not easy to screw the authorities up to the point of resisting firmly plans which threaten our peace and quiet or contravene their own Unitary Development Plan, which is full of admirable principles.

Persistence is needed as proceedings can be long drawn out. For example, the St. Mary Abbots Hospital development case still awaits a final decision by Mr. Heseltine, following the lengthy public enquiry in which several Associations took part. Unfortunately they did not all take the same view on the important question of east/west access.

So it is a constant battle i.e. to keep out rowdy elements, counter theft and burglary by vigilance (a Neighbourhood Watch responsibility, but planning decisions can also affect our security), and to prevent our part of Kensington from becoming a car park for shoppers, and from having too many fast food outlets (mess) and nightclubs (noise and parking). Nor do we want the right kind of retail outlets, offering useful services, to be replaced by the wrong kind. This is where residents can play a part as well as Associations, by deliberately choosing to patronise small shops etc. which they would miss if they closed down or changed use.

In short, the Associations need active support by Residents.
Chairman: Sir Ronald Arculus

KENSINGTON HIGH STREET STUDY GROUP

Two protracted planning conflicts have been finally resolved during the year, both of which will serve as case studies for students of local

planning. The addition of an open space to be incorporated into St. Mary Abbot's Garden was originally proposed as a planning condition for the redevelopment of the old Town Hall site. The idea was simple and attractive to everybody. But it took many years of acrimonious negotiations, public funding and generous voluntary contributions before the memorial rose garden to Alec Clifton-Taylor was formally opened in November, 1991. The intimate charm of the old Garden may inevitably have been lost: but here Kensington can cherish the memory of a great conservationist.

It will, alas, have nothing left to cherish with the granting of the application to redevelop the Odeon Cinema site. In 1989 the Planning Committee refused the original application because the proposed redevelopment would be contrary to the Council's declared planning policies for the High Street, as laid down in the District Plan and the High Street Action Plan. The subsequent Appeal Inspector's Report did not endorse them. But if ever there was a test case of the Council's credibility as a Planning Authority, this was it. That the Planning Committee no longer felt able to defend its own policies has not only dismayed local people: it has disturbing implications for the implementation of the Unitary Development Plan.

Convenor: Richard Newcombe, 3 Earls Terrace. W8 6LP

THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION

Our miniature garden city, with its 15 communal gardens half hidden behind terrace and crescent, continues to be eroded from above and below.

This year there have been over 30 applications for extra storeys, or extra side extensions. We have strenuously opposed most of these. They would intrude on the sky-line, block the leafy glimpses of the gardens, vandalise the stucco. With the help of Dr. John Parker, the distinguished planning expert whom we have hired again this year, we have managed to persuade the Borough planners to oppose some of the most damaging proposals. Inexplicably, however, they abandoned the commitments of their own Draft Unitary Development Plan and Conservation Area Proposal Statement in several cases, including that of a rear extension at 92 Elgin Crescent—a terrace with unified stucco fronts on both street and communal garden.

The issue on which we have concentrated most time and money of all has been the plan by the Church authorities to excavate a vast undercroft under the Church of St. John's, Ladbroke Grove, in order to create a new parish centre. The church (John Hargrave Stevens; 1845; Grade 2) occupies one of the most spectacular sites in London, crowning Notting Hill, and dominating the squares and crescents around it. It is the Gothic hub of our neo-classical garden city.

The first plan proposed by the vicar would have been immensely destructive: it would have wrecked both west and north facades. Fortunately there was a general outcry. Backed by most of the neighbour-

hood, and with the help of Dr. Parker, and the support of English Heritage, we succeeded in persuading the vicar and the Borough planners (who had originally recommended the first plan for acceptance) that the scheme must be redesigned. As we go to press, there is hope that the new scheme will leave the external appearance of the church relatively unaltered.

Chairman: Thomas Pakenham, 111 Elgin Crescent W11 2JF

LEXHAM GARDENS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

The end of 1991 has seen the virtual completion of the Kensington Village development which bounds Lexham Gardens to the north. We welcome the cessation of construction noise and dirt but the high density of the development continues to worry residents. We will be pressing for traffic alleviation measures.

The newly laid Garden in Lexham Gardens continues to give pleasure to all. The Garden was awarded second place in the Brighter Kensington Scheme in 1991—down from first in 1990. However, we hope to regain first prize in 1992. Nearly every building in Lexham Gardens has now been refurbished. This has improved our appearance. We are pleased to report no particular environmental problems in our area except for the continued increase in traffic along the southern side of the Square.

Chairman: Sir Cyril Taylor

THE NEVERN SQUARE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

It has been a dismal year for the Nevern Square Conservation area. The Hotel George in Templeton Place was granted permission, on appeal, to build a massive extension in its garden. Next, the government's three-year initiative to house the homeless has resulted in three NEW properties used for this purpose—despite massive opposition from the residents. This brings the total in and around Nevern Square to 22, disturbing even further the balance between permanent and transient populations. The Association battles on to try to have one of the properties closed down when it is heard on appeal.

Chairman: Mrs. A. Berne, 16 Nevern Square, S.W.5

NORLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

A major concern this year has been the proposed development of the Portland Arms at Clarendon Cross to a Joe Allen Restaurant. It represents serious over development in a small, physically restricted part of the conservation area, where existing restaurants already cause problems.

Although it is in a neighbouring conservation area, we are supporting objections to a night cafe licence at Pumperninks on Holland Park Avenue.

Planning permission is sought to redevelop the Inland Revenue's office site next to the Kensington Hilton on Holland Park Avenue. We are assured that the development will not be higher than the Hilton and that parking provision will be minimal to discourage cars in an

area well served by public transport. This is a prominent site and we hope the opportunity will be taken to produce a quality building sympathetic to its mid-nineteenth century neighbours in Royal Crescent.

Annual Lecture Tuesday 19th May—The Restoration and Conservation of Spencer House at Leighton House at 7.00 p.m. The lecturer is Stephen Jones, Director of Spencer House; he is a writer, art historian and past curator of Leighton House. He has written, *Power and Glory, Five Centuries of Taste and Collecting in the Royal Houses of Europe*, and is a regular contributor to *Country Life* and *The Sunday Telegraph*. He was head of publications for the National Art Collection's Fund.

Tickets for lecture and drinks are £5 (concessions £3) from Angela Fenhalls 071 603 3227/15 St. James's Gardens, W11 4RE.

Chairman: Mrs. A. Fenhalls, 15 St. James's Gardens, W11 4RE

ONSLow NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

Our problem sites are still with us. The Brompton Cross project has been shelved for the time being because of the recession, but no doubt will crop up again. The South Kensington Station site promised much because of the appointment of new architects in Tony Farrell and Co. Ltd., whose preliminary designs suggested an ingenious solution for this awkward site, but again has also been delayed. Again we are grateful to the Brompton Association and the Thurlow Estate for their support.

The Brompton Hospital north site has mostly been vacated following the opening of the new hospital in Sydney Street. It will be for sale but again the timing is dependant upon an improvement in the property market.

This year saw a new venue for the A.G.M., the premises of Christies of South Kensington, and we are most indebted to the Directors for their hospitality. The highlight of the meeting was a most interesting talk given by Mr. Neil Chalmers, Director of the Natural History Museum. In early July our annual garden party was held, once again, back in Onslow Square West, following the extensive and successful redesign of the landscaping carried out by Smiths Charity Estate. The weather was fine, the turnout a record, the music delightful and the food and wine delicious, the latter thanks to Fileric of South Kensington.

We, too, are being invaded by Cable TV. This will mean more pavement clutter in spite of the most reasonable possible siting of the equipment boxes by Videotron Communications Ltd.

Chairman: Hugh Brady, 16 Selwood Terrace, London S.W.7

THE PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Traffic management is again at issue, and was addressed at a meeting of the West London Traffic Reform chaired by Cllr. Andrew Fane. Coach traffic is perceived as a nuisance but is hard to restrict safely. Westminster Council has completed a survey of traffic in Bayswater, and it is hoped this may lead to an alleviation of the problems of

Ossington Street, on the border between two Boroughs and increasingly used as a 'rat run'.

Cable TV has now been installed, though some pavements have yet to be satisfactorily reinstated. Various planning matters have been raised with the Council; these include the need to ensure that elevational drawings accurately represent the relationship between existing and proposed buildings so that the public is not misled, and the question of enforcement. We hope that the new administrative arrangements will lead to more effective follow-up.

The Association has planted trees in Pembridge Gardens and its plans for new lavatories at Westbourne Grove, commissioned from Piers Gough, have been presented to the Council. It is hoped that funds can be found for this; the landscaping element of the scheme will be funded separately and could be in hand soon.

A Trust has been set up to collect money for the reinstatement of the garden railings in Pembridge Square, one of London's showpieces of Victorian architecture. The gardens will again be the location for the annual garden party, to be held at 8 p.m. on Saturday, 20th June, and which all are welcome to attend.

Chairman: William Clarke

VICTORIA ROAD AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Like 1990, 1991 has been dominated by events immediately outside our area—St. Mary Abbots Hospital, Waitrose and traffic. It also saw the end of parking sign poles.

The St. Mary Abbots appeal dominated the first half of 1991. The Council, having almost given up fighting the big issue—density, concentrated on the detail, such as the issue of access from Kelso Place. We found ourselves fighting the Council rather than the developer, which we find particularly difficult to understand. Why should the Council be so persistent in forcing on us 'benefits' which we do not want? Nobody—councillors, residents or the developers—can be very happy with the outcome of this case. Something went terribly wrong—an independent inquiry is needed to find out what happened.

Waitrose remains derelict, and three years since its closure there is still no proposal. Gloucester Road shopping centre is dying!

The block at the top of Victoria Road, remains an eyesore, awaiting

The Council's proposals for the Cromwell Road/Gloucester Road junction look like a major disaster for pedestrians going to Gloucester Road Station. An additional slip road and a filter lane will make crossing Cromwell Road more of a nightmare than now. It is supposed to make things better.

Finally the good news! After 3 years preparation, 90% of all the residents' parking signs are now on lampposts, railings or walls: the poles are gone. This has greatly improved the street scene. Anyone interested in how to do it should contact Michael Bach (937 3825).

Chairman: Kenneth Woodward-Fisher

Hon. Secretary: Anne Woodward-Fisher

14 Albert Place, W.8.

Statement of Accounts for the year 1991

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET
as at December 31st 1991

1990		£	1991		£
	Assets				
	Office Equipment at cost				
9	(less depreciation)		6.00		
	Bank Balances—Current A/Cs				
2266	General Fund	2736.06			
1310	Princess Alice Memorial Fund	1236.64			
			3972.70		
	—Deposit A/Cs				
6959	General Fund	7602.44			
2487	National Savings Bank Inv Fund	2797.21	10399.65		
13031			14378.35		
(142)	Sundry Liabilities		(7.87)		
12889			14370.48		
	Accumulated Funds + Assets				
8900	Balances at January 1st 1991	11578.82			
2689	Surplus (Deficit) from Income and Expenditure A/C	1555.02			
11589			13133.84		
	Princess Alice Memorial Fund				
1688	Balances at January 1st 1991	1310.19			
(388)	Surplus (Deficit) from Income and Expenditure A/C	(73.55)			
1300			1236.64		
12889			14370.48		

RICHARD NEWCOMBE Hon Treasurer
G CHRISTIANSEN Hon Secretary

In accordance with instructions given, the foregoing Accounts have been prepared from the accounting records of the Kensington Society and from information and explanations supplied.

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Private Banking Suite
276 280 Kensington High St
London W8 6NG

A. J. SNELLING
Private Banking Manager
17 January 1992

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
PRINCESS ALICE MEMORIAL FUND
for the year ended December 31st 1991

1990		£	1991		£
	Income				
315	Donations Received		483.00		
84	Interest Received		0.00		
	Sale Proceeds		645.50		
399			1128.50		
	Expenditure				
	Cost of Memorial Garden				
525	Plants, Fertilisers		464.98		
185	Garden Help		331.00		
	Repairs to Irrigation		10.50		
77	Sundry Items		115.45		
	Sale Expenditure		175.42		
	Telephone		104.70		
787			1202.05		
(388)	Surplus (Deficit) to Balance Sheet.		(73.55)		

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
for the year ended December 31st 1991

1990 £		1991 £
Income		
3466	Subscriptions	3263.70
728	Interest Received	954.05
625	Receipts from Visits	1124.50
1195	Advertising in Annual Report	1230.00
1400	Donations	1780.00
189	Income Tax Refund	0.00
<u>7603</u>		<u>8352.25</u>
Expenditure		
812	Printing, Typing and Stationary	984.62
944	Postage and Telephone	1020.65
2286	Producing Annual Report	2614.50
66	Sundry Expenses	38.77
180	Subscriptions and Donations	13.44
418	Coach Visits, etc	673.22
0	Wren Press	439.50
205	Meeting Expenses and Presentations	69.96
0	Alex Clifton-Taylor Memorial	939.57
0	Sale Expenditure	0.00
3	Depreciation	3.00
<u>4914</u>		<u>6797.23</u>
2689	Surplus (Deficit) to Balance Sheet	1555.02

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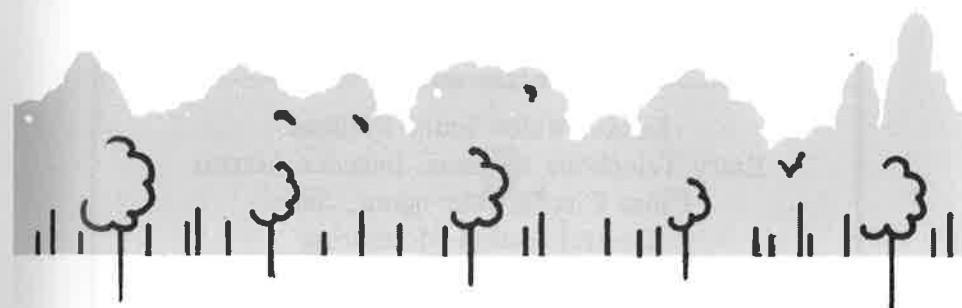
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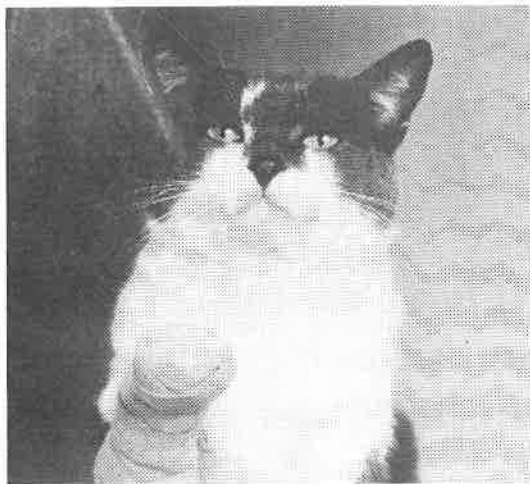
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Old Brompton
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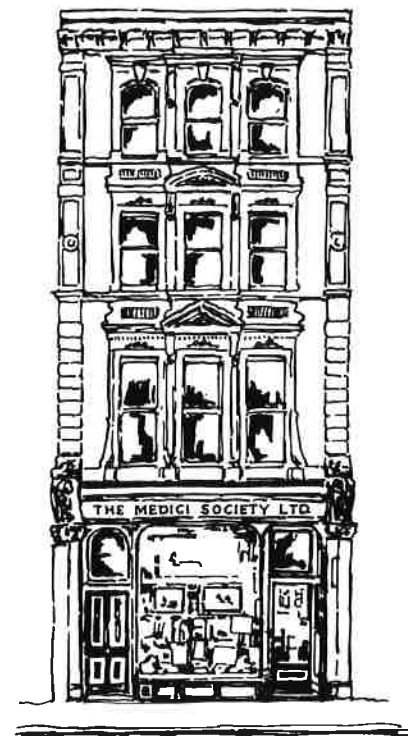
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