

THE
Kensington
Society



Annual Report
1995

THE

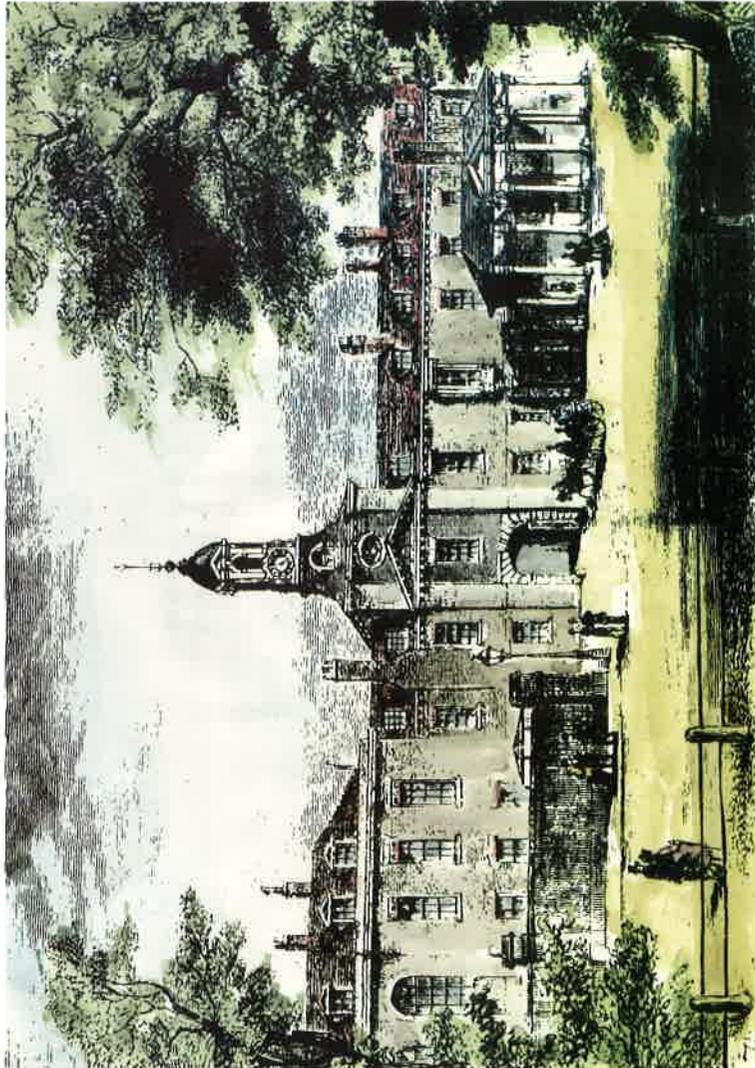
Kensington Society

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 1995

*Gore House, Kensington Gore (Thomas Hosmer Shepherd)
Was the home of Marguerite, Countess of Blessington.
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see page 55*



The Kensington Society

PATRON

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

PRESIDENT

SIR JOHN DRUMMOND, C.B.E.

VICE-PRESIDENTS

**THE RT. HON. THE EARL OF SNOWDON, G.C.V.O.
MRS GAY CHRISTIANSEN**

COUNCIL

Sir Ronald Arculus
Barnabas Brunner
Peter de Vere Hunt
Ian Grant
Antony Jabez-Smith
Robert Martin
Dr. Peter Nathan

Sir Duncan Oppenheim
Dr Stephen Pasmore
The Hon. Laura Ponsoby
Martin Starkie
Jack Single
R.T. Wilmot
Michael Winner

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Michael Bach
Barnabas Brunner
Philip English
Arthur Farrand Radley M.B.E.
Robert Meadowes
Robin Price

Michael Middleton, C.B.E.
Harry Morgan
Robert Milne-Tyte
Mrs E. Rudd
Mrs Susan Walker
Robert Vigars

CHAIRMAN: R. Vigars

VICE-CHAIRMAN R. Meadowes

HON. TREASURER: B. Brunner

HON. SECRETARY: Mrs E. Rudd

EDITOR OF ANNUAL REPORT: Mrs Gay Christiansen

HON. AUDITOR: Andrew Snelling, Barclays Bank PLC

Foreword

THIS is the tenth Foreword that I have written for the Annual Report of The Kensington Society since being invited to become President following the death of my predecessor and close friend Alec Clifton-Taylor. Over the years I have devoted this space to a variety of topics from parked cars to the state of the pavements, from street furniture to litter. I have tried each year to find some aspect of conditions in the Royal Borough that make it harder to enjoy life in what is still, despite everything, one of the more attractive parts of this huge city.

This year, however, I feel I have to change tack. For in a very real sense the Society is at a turning point. Part of this is the retirement of Gay Christiansen who has devoted so much time and energy to the pursuit of inappropriate planning proposals and to fighting for recognition for the Society, not only at the Town Hall, but in many other areas of local life. Part is my own anxiety about the future of all groups that depend on voluntary effort at a time when so many calls are made on the goodwill and resources of those relative few who feel a wider responsibility than just for their own immediate surroundings.

The simple fact is that, for a Society of our importance, the Membership is too small. This has implications of the funding of the Society, but also on its potential significance. I certainly recognise the vitality of many of the smaller subsidiary groups in various parts of the Borough. But the collective importance of the parent body, as it were, must be in relation to the extent to which its membership reflects the diversity of the range of the Borough's population. We need more Members, and we need a wider trawl, both of age, experience and location.

Each year at the Annual General Meeting, I suggest politely that Members should seek to recruit someone they know in the Borough to join the Society. There is no evidence that anyone takes any notice. I truly believe that, unless this is addressed, there may not be a Kensington Society for which to write an Annual Foreword in ten year's time. We are all so well-mannered that we do not like to put pressure on our friends or our neighbours, but if we really believe in what the Society stands for – and why should we be members if we do not? – then we must get on with it, have a real drive to increase our numbers, beat the drum and explain why we believe in it.

The level of subscription is not extortionate, the cause excellent. What appears to be lacking is the will to do it. We owe it to Mrs Christiansen and to the others who carry on her good work. Over to you.

J.D.

Annual General Meeting 1995

THE 42nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Kensington Society was held at 6.30 pm on 4th May 1995 in the main Hall of the Convent of the Assumption, 23 Kensington Square W8. John Drummond CBE, President of the Society, was in the Chair.

The business of the meeting was conducted after a talk given by Mr Dudley Fishburn, M.P. for the Royal Borough, entitled: "Kensington, cosmopolitan yet quintessentially English. Can the balancing act go on?"

Mr Fishburn said that the Royal Borough was now the cosmopolitan centre of London. It had some 50 diplomatic residences and over 5000 diplomats within its borders. There were over 30,000 international businessmen, and their numbers would increase with the development of free trade within the E.U. and elsewhere. The number of permanent immigrant residents, from abroad and elsewhere in the U.K., was even greater. In a local primary only 100 children out of 330 pupils were born in England. But foreign immigration to the U.K. had virtually ended; he wished to concentrate on the increasing number of cosmopolitan residents.

Cosmopolitan residents come and go; by their nature they are the elite, they have skills, money, enterprise, and produce wealth. They are English as well as foreign. The fact that they find Kensington the most sought after address in the world is something to be welcomed, despite the pressures it puts upon us. To be cosmopolitan is essentially to be modern. We must want our Society to be modern, but we wish also to remain English with our traditions and history: to retain the trappings of Wimbledon even though no Englishman is any longer in the finals.

But there were also costs for the Royal Borough in being cosmopolitan, particularly in regard to housing and to politics. Housing was the largest cost that we as individuals had to bear in our lives. Prices in Kensington had held up through this last recession more than in any other part of London. This had been good for many; but there were others, particularly statutory tenants, who were being forced out of their homes when leases ended and their incomes could not compete with amounts that international firms could pay for their London-based staff. There was also a problem of absentee owners and empty flats, and the fact that a community which was wholly international would have few children in its schools and on its streets and would become very dead.

The second cost was political. The population of Kensington had been falling steadily for past ten years, a fall primarily among the

English-born population; and as large numbers of the cosmopolitan residents were not on the electoral role they were not included in the Census. The Parliamentary constituency of Kensington would change at the next General Election because of the fall in population. And there could be a similar effect on the Royal Borough when it next became subject to a boundary review.

We had to do all we could to make sure that central Government realised that we play host to a large and thriving international community. Citizens of the E.U. were eligible to vote in local authority elections, and we must encourage them to do so. We must also encourage the involvement of cosmopolitan residents in our local organisations and activities.

Other problems that arose from being cosmopolitan included those of some diplomats being bad neighbours in regard to planning laws and to meeting bills, and others encouraging, as well as being the victims of, international terrorism. Foreign residents were able to bring in on their passports their own indentured servants, and a number of cases of cruel abuse and mistreatment had been made public.

We were rightly proud of being such a cosmopolitan Borough, and we should express that pride by being quintessentially English – open, self-confident, liberal. The appearance of the Royal Borough was overwhelmingly English. We had many conservation areas. Our garden squares were uniquely English. We had over 130 quiet, leafy, green squares to give us open spaces, greenness and quietness something to be immensely proud of.

We must remain confident in our quintessential Englishness as we become more and more cosmopolitan. We were fortunate in having many amenity societies and above all the Kensington Society to help to safeguard our great Victorian heritage.

John Drummond thanked Mr Fishburn for his very stimulating talk on matters of particular relevance and interest to members of the Society.

MINUTES of the meeting held on 28th April 1994, printed in the Annual Report 1994, circulated prior to the meeting, were taken as read, adopted by the meeting and signed by the President.

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS for the year ended 31st December 1994. Mr Arthur Farrand Radley M.B.E. referred members to the Accounts printed in the Report, and noted that the Society's Hon. Auditor, Andrew Snelling, had kindly arranged with Barclays Bank for the Society to hold a community affairs account which much reduced bank charges.

In contrast to the previous year, the income and expenditure account showed a surplus of £756.93 compared with the deficit in the previous year of £1132. Subscriptions had held up, and much less expenditure had been incurred in regard to the Unitary

Development Plan. Receipts from visits were down, and those from advertising in the Annual Report were up by nearly a half on last year. The Princess Alice Memorial Fund showed a surplus of £821.63 compared with the previous year's small deficit.

Mr Farrand Radley pointed out, however, that despite the satisfactory results shown in the balance sheet, the Society would face additional expenditure next year following the retirement of Mrs Christiansen who had made so many hidden contributions, giving most generously so much of her time and providing accommodation for the Society.

It was formally proposed, seconded and agreed that the Accounts should be adopted and that Mr Andrew Snelling should be re-appointed as Honorary Auditor.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Mr Vigars' proposal of the re-election of John Drummond as President of the Society was seconded and warmly agreed.

Members had noted with appreciation that the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Snowdon had honoured the Society by becoming a Vice-President, and his election was formally agreed.

Mr Robert Vigars reported that efforts to find three honorary Officers to replace Mrs Christiansen as Hon. Secretary – a General Secretary, Planning Secretary, and Visits Secretary – had failed. The executive committee had suggested that Mr Barnabas Brunner should take over the duties of Hon. Treasurer and also look after membership matters. Mr Farrand Radley had offered to be responsible for arranging visits. But it had not been possible to find a General Secretary or a Planning Secretary. Mr Vigars urged members to come forward to fill these vacancies if the Society were to continue along the lines Mrs Christiansen had so successfully established, and indeed if it were to be able to continue at all.

It was proposed and agreed that the existing members of the executive committee be re-elected, Mr Farrand Radley be appointed Visits Secretary, Mr Brunner be elected a member of the executive committee and be appointed Hon. Treasurer, and that Mr Robin Price be elected a member of the committee.

CHANGE TO THE CONSTITUTION: A Resolution that Rule 4 of the Society's Constitution be replaced by the following: "Subscriptions shall be payable on 1st January each year and shall be such sum or sums as shall be determined from time to time by the Executive Committee." was considered.

Mr Vigars explained that flexibility was sought for the executive committee to make changes to levels of subscriptions in the light of changing circumstances. The committee would be considering an increase from 1st January 1996 in the rate of subscription from affiliated societies to whom proper advance notice would be given. It was not presently in mind to consider changing the rate of

subscription from ordinary members. The Resolution was formally proposed, seconded and agreed.

The President suggested that it would help the Society if members would pay more than the minimum subscription if they felt so inclined and were able to afford to do so.

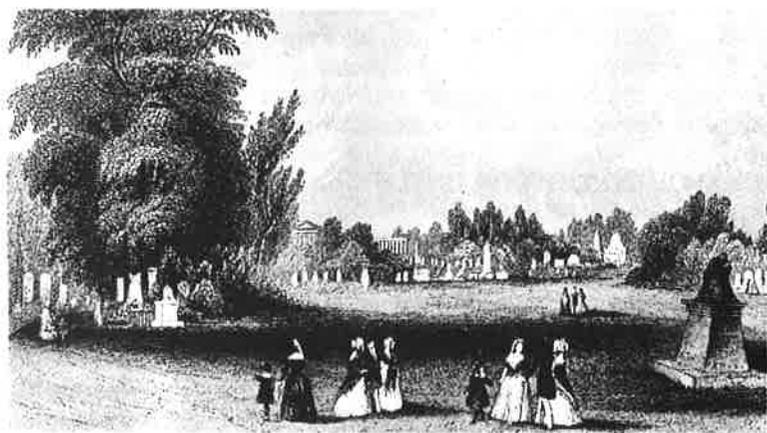
ANY OTHER BUSINESS: A member sought information about whether the finds from the archaeological dig at the site of St Mary Abbots' Hospital would be publicly displayed, and another member said he would speak to the Museum of London Service to find out. It was understood that the finds were at present with English Heritage.

RETIREMENT OF MRS CHRISTIANSEN AS HONORARY SECRETARY: The President said he had great pleasure in presenting Mrs Christiansen with a large bouquet of flowers and a book (entitled "The Thames", by T. R. Way and W. G. Bell) with the great appreciation of members for the unique service she had given the Society from 1953 to 1995. She would be sorely missed as Hon. Secretary, but her continuing link with the Society as a Vice-President would be greatly welcomed.

In expressing her thanks to the President and to members, Mrs Christiansen said how very rewarding she had found her work for the Society and how sorry she would be if it were not continued by others.

Mr Vigars thanked the Deputy Mayor of the Royal Borough for his presence, and also the new Chairman of the Planning Committee and the Director of Planning and Conservation.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.45 pm.



"Kensal Green Cemetery" about 1845.

Kensington Society's News

The Society was delighted that our President received a Knighthood this year, for his good services to this Country. Previously as Director of the Edinburgh Festival, and latterly for his service to music, as the former controller of Radio 3, and, the driving force behind the success of the B.B.C.'s Annual Albert Hall Promenade Concerts. We offer him special congratulations.

Mr Michael Middleton, a member of the Executive Committee, represented the Society on the panel of assessors for the Borough Council's Annual Environmental Awards. See page 17.

Acknowledgements

Mr Robert Vigars, Mr Robert Meadows and Mr Michael Bach have attended Council Meetings, Mr Meadows has examined and reported on planning applications before the Borough Council.

The Society is indebted to Mr Andrew Snelling for acting as Hon. Auditor, and to Mr Antony Jabez-Smith for, as usual, reading the proof copy of this Report.

Officers of the Society

During the last year there has been considerable changes in the general running of the Society. Miss Barbara Crispin was elected Honorary Secretary at the last Annual General Meeting. Unfortunately, owing to illness, she was unable to continue, she has however, been able to give considerable help with typing since.

Mrs E. Rudd of 15 Kensington Square W8 5HH offered her services in September as Honorary Secretary. We are delighted to welcome her and hope that she will enjoy the work.

As stated in the last Report, the work of the Society has been divided between three voluntary workers. Apart from Mrs Rudd, Mr Barnabas Brunner has taken over as Honorary Treasurer, Mr Farrand Radley with help from Mr Robin Price has become the Visit Secretary.

I am still looking after the Princess Alice Memorial Garden, with the help of John Bickel. The Garden has again this year been awarded a Certificate of Excellence. The Garden is dependant on donations. I hope that members will occasionally look at it.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on April 24th at 6 pm in the small Town Hall, Hornton Street W8.

Chairman and Speaker Sir John Drummond, C.B.E. President, whose talk will be entitled 'Living in Kensington'.

Donations

We are 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 Society's thanks are also due to Mr Barrie Hills of Streets, the Printers, for his considerable help.

Lord Leighton 1830-1896

In 1996 The Royal Academy of Arts, the Victoria and Albert Museum and Leighton House will be celebrating the centenary of the death of Lord Leighton. At Leighton House the Centenary Trust, are creating the appearance and atmosphere of the artist's house as it was during his lifetime. The 'At Home' tours will take place daily between February 16th and April 21st tickets £3.50.

Further particulars from Leighton House, 12 Holland Park Road, W14. Tel. 0171 6023316.

Subscriptions

The Annual Subscription of £10 for single membership and £25 for Corporate membership was due on January 1st.

Sending out reminders not only increases the expenditure of the Society but entails extra work for the Honorary Secretary – so please be a punctual subscriber.

Obituary

It is with sadness that we report the deaths of the following members: Mr R. J. Allen, Mr F. Oppe, Mr John Williams, Mr Ronald Ryall and Sir Trenchard Cox.

Mr John Williams was a member of the Society's Council, he joined the Society in 1970. He died after the 1994 Annual Report was printed and his death was not included in our last Report. He had shown great interest in the Princess Alice Memorial Garden and had given a number of special plants to the Garden. He was Vice-President of the Friends of Holland Park who have planted a Cedar of Lebanon in memory of him.

Mr Ronald Ryall died on April 29th 1995, age 88. He joined the Society in 1959. Over the years he had contributed to the Annual Report and had given lectures using his wonderful collection of slides. Ronnie was the son of a Harley Street surgeon, and although not becoming a doctor he was involved with hospitals for many years. He was Vice-Chairman of Westminster Medical School, and President of the Hospital's Boat Club. He was Liveryman of two Companies, the Merchant Taylors and the Makers of Playing Cards. He was a member of the London Society's Executive Committee in the 1960s. I served on that Committee at the same time and saw a great deal of him, which was of enormous benefit to the Kensington Society. He was a steward at Westminster Abbey. A memorial service was held at the Abbey on Sept. 25th.

Sir Trenchard Cox died on December 21st. He became a life member of the Kensington Society in 1957. He was the Director and Secretary of the Victoria and Albert Museum from 1956-1966.

From Eton he went to Kings College Cambridge, where he took a first-class degree in the Modern Language Tripos. He was an accomplished linguist, with a variety of European languages at his command. After his graduation he worked for a time as an unpaid attache at the National Gallery. In 1931 he published the important book on the study of the French Renaissance manuscript painter and portrait artist, Jehan Foucquet, Native of Tours. Following the publication he was appointed as assistant to the Director of the Wallace Collection. At the outbreak of the second world war the Keeper of the Wallace Collection was abroad and it fell to the lot of Trenchard Cox to supervise the evacuation of the Wallace Collection contents out of London.

In 1944 he was appointed as Director of the City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. His success at Birmingham led to his appointment as Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum in 1956.

Sir Trenchard was a very good friend to the Kensington Society, he gave a number of lectures to members of the Society in the V&A lecture theatre and on several occasions chaired lectures given by Charles Gibbs-Smith.

Mr A. F. Oppé died on October 16th age 84, he was a member of the Kensington Society for many years. He was treasurer of the Boltons Association. Fred Oppé attended many of the Kensington Society's functions and always the Annual General Meeting. He was educated at Sherborne School and Reading Agricultural College. He joined the Army in 1939 and served on General Slim's staff in Iraq and India, he was demobilised as Major.

Fred enjoyed a wide circle of friends, he will be sadly missed.

RECORDS OF KENSINGTON SQUARE

by

ARTHUR PONSONBY
(Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede)

PRICE £3

Obtainable 18 Kensington Square W8

Planning Matters and a Selection of Cases dealt with

Adoption of the Unitary Development Plan U.D.P.

The preparation of a U.D.P. has been a legal requirement for all Metropolitan Boroughs. It will provide the statutory planning framework for the local planning authority for the next ten years. It replaces the 1982 District Plan.

Conservation Areas

The Borough Council is committed by its Unitary Development Plan to preserve, enhance and where possible to extend Conservation Areas. The Society welcomes the extension to Kensington Palace Conservation Area. By the designation and inclusion of 152-188 Kensington Church Street, Carlyle Mansions and Campden Mansions, Kensington Mall, Broadwalk Court, 79 Palace Gardens Terrace and 1-5 Rabbit Row.

The Society is pleased that Lexham has been made a Conservation Area. The houses were constructed between 1871 and 1882; the Garden Square which forms the centre-piece to the eastern section of the street, has been greatly improved over the last few years and has won several first prizes for the best square garden.

The Council has recommended that Hornton Court, Troy Court and Phillimore Garden Close should be included in the Kensington Conservation Area. Hans Town Conservation area has also been extended.

Reading the report of the Planning and Conservation Committee in the Council's Agenda for the 18th October meeting, one might have expected a little more consideration for a conservation area, where a major development was proposed.

2-8 South End Row.

Redevelopment involving the erection of 4 town houses 15 flats, basement car parking for 26 vehicles with one external parking place. (Demolition of Government Office buildings.) This application was opposed by the Kensington Society, by the Kensington Court Residents Association, by the Victoria Road Area Residents Association and by the residents in South End.

Revised plans were available in October these were considered by the Society and the other objectors to be minimal and totally insignificant within the overall conception of the proposed development.

At the planning Committee in October the application was deferred and a site plan meeting was arranged for November 2nd,

most of the residents attended, which the Council members appeared to resent.

Professor Philip Cannon a long time member of the Society and an inhabitant of South End was allowed 5 minutes at the Meeting on November 7th to put forward the Society's and resident's point of view. Planning consent was given on November 7th.

It appears that traffic management involving South End, has been entirely ignored by the Planning Department.

South Kensington Station

A major development. See report on page 16 by Mr Robert Meadows.

College House Wrights Lane

A major development involving erection of building of ground, part 7 storey, part 8 storey, accommodating 137 dwelling units with associated car parking, within 4 basement levels, providing 186 parking spaces. This application was opposed by the Society as an over development. A traffic management scheme was said by the Society to be essential. Planning consent has been given.

Cromwell Hospital

A major development. An application for the construction of underground hospital accommodation, and, associated works to the hospital forecourt and part of Pennant Mews; to rationalise car parking provision. Opposed by the Society.

Natural History Museum

A planning application for the erection of two new buildings, a nine storey structure for the Zoology dept., and a second linking the first to the main body of the Museum. The Council has been asked to provide an indicative plan of the whole site.

Fenelon Place and the Unitary Development Plan is dealt with on page 22.

Holiday Inn

The Society supported the Grenville Housing Association's objections to an application by the Holiday Inn, Cromwell Road for a full on licence to include the Garden and patio. The application has been withdrawn.

The Sunday Observance and Licencing Act

The Society supported the Borough Council's proposed amendments to the Sunday Observance Act and the Licencing Act with a letter to the Home Secretary.

67-69 Drayton Gardens

Application for demolition and redevelopment opposed by the Society as an over development.

15 Pembridge Villas

The Society supported the Council's planning refusal for the formation of an off street parking space in the front garden space.

Sainsbury's Home Base

Planning application for the removal of condition 13 of the original planning consent (1989) which prohibited the sale of furniture, bedding and food goods,² opposed by the Society.

No 4 and 6 Kensington Court

The Society supported the Kensington Court Residents Association in their objections to No 4 in January, and, No 6 in July for use by Embassies, with a letter to the Council.

Prince of Wales Terrace

Many letters have been sent to the Borough Council over the years about the condition of the Terrace. We have, I think, Lord Snowdon, Vice President of the Society, to thank that at last work is underway. His photographs and statement in the Evening Standard resulted in a Compulsory Purchase Order being threatened, in September 1994, unless work started within six months. This year Lord Snowdon telephoned and asked if we would see that the Prince of Wales Feathers on the façade of the building were preserved. The Borough Council was alerted also the District Surveyor.

The Society has supported the Borough Council's refusal of a number of planning applications for Advertising on certain commercial buildings. The Society regretted that consent was given for the large illuminated sign at the Shell Garage Clareville Grove.

35 Hyde Park Gate

A planning application before the Borough Council for the erection of an additional storey to 7th floor level, opposed by the Society.

26 Queens Gate Mews

Demolition of major part of the existing building behind the front façade. Opposed by the Society. Planning consent refused.

95, 97, 99. Ladbroke Grove

Partial demolition of existing rear extensions and front elevation. Seen and dealt with by Mr Vigars, Chairman of Executive Committee.

Other cases Dealt with

32 Roland Gardens, French Lycee, 8 Dukes Lane, 43 Scarsdale Villas, 50 The Little Boltons, 5/7 Young Street, 14 St Albans Grove, 14 Kensington Square, 4-5 Hogarth Place, Queens Gate Mews, 23 Hereford Square. Campbell Court, 30 Launceston Place, Furse House, 23 Ansdell Terrace.

We are at all times pleased to receive information from Associations of local planning applications, which they consider are likely to effect their area, to enable the Society to support them.

APPEALS

We have supported the Borough Council's refusal of planning consent with letters to the Secretary of State on a number of occasions.

South Kensington Station



Perspective view looking east along Harrington Road – minus the traffic



Perspective view looking north-east from Old Brompton Road – minus the traffic

The proposals for re-building South Kensington Station and the surrounding area are still under consideration. This is one of the most important projects in the Borough.

South Kensington Station

Last year we wrote about the scheme for re-developing the Station and the site in Pelham Street. This is a most important project needing a lot of study and investigation and, as we go to press, no decision has yet been made on the Planning Application. In the meantime various relatively minor amendments have been made. In addition to a new station, the scheme includes substantial areas of shops, restaurants, offices and a residential block on Pelham Street with a mews behind it.

The scheme will be carried out in partnership with a developer and will be commercially-driven. This determines the nature of the proposals and puts the emphasis on their economic viability rather than on their quality as public building and urban design. This is a sad departure from the tradition of earlier London Transport buildings which, especially in the era of Frank Pick, made a significant contribution to the urban scene. This must be one of London Transport's most important stations and traffic inter-change. It is used by vast numbers of people on their way to and from the Museums, the Royal Albert Hall and the colleges in the vicinity.

The Albertopolis proposals, which were hoping to attract lottery money, recognised the importance of the station and proposed to develop and strengthen the existing pedestrian subway linking the station with the museums area. Surprisingly, the present station scheme actually weakens this link by not providing a direct connection to the station at subway level.

The scheme makes no attempt to ease the pedestrian congestion on the narrow pavement round the building where there is a number of bus stops. Traffic problems are likely to be made worse by the large service entrance on Pelham Street. The Council's officers are making proposals to deal with these problems and we look forward to full, public consultation on them.

The existing buildings contain many relatively small 'convenience' shops. There is no apparent provision for any of them in the new development.

The architectural character of the scheme is a disappointing mixture of contemporary design and historical pastiche. The Kensington Society, along with the Brompton Association, has commented on the proposals and urged the Council to call for a scheme which is more appropriate to this very important site and is conceived as a landmark public building rather than a routine piece of commercial development.

R.R.M.

Borough Environment Awards 1995

The nineteenth round of the Royal Borough's Environment Awards scheme followed what is now well established precedent. Submissions were invited, as usual, in five categories: new buildings, restoration and conversion, commercial development, general environmental improvement, and access for the disabled. The panel of six assessors was chaired by Councillor Desmond Harney; the Kensington and Chelsea Societies were again represented on it, as was Action Disability. Following a preliminary study of the photographic evidence, by which the panel could begin to familiarise themselves with the general nature of the entries, we set off on a four hour tour of the schemes themselves before spending some further hours in detailed consideration and debate.

The number of submissions received was noticeably smaller than for some years – in particular, works of restoration and conversion were markedly fewer – but the standards of the award winners was as high as ever. Categorisation, intended to clarify the problems of judgement, nearly always leads to a certain amount of nail-biting in practice. Does this scheme qualify as new building, conversion, commercial development, or environmental improvement? It may well partake of all of these. The Panel took a pragmatic line in these cases and gave weight to what seemed to them the predominant quality of the scheme, whatever category it had been entered in.

Two major projects in particular highlighted this dilemma: the development of No 60 Sloane Avenue (Clearings 3) and the work on Observatory Gardens. In the case of the former, though the retention of the old repository gives the completed development much of its character, it was felt that, on balance, the new elements are of such significance that the scheme should be regarded as new building. The marriage of old and new has been done with great conviction and flair, and makes a marked contribution to the character of Sloane Avenue.

Conversely, though a substantial part of the Observatory Gardens scheme is newly built to replicate the façades of the remainder, and although indeed the entire scheme is an example of 'façadism' on the grand scale, the conservation of this important piece of Kensington townscape – the future of which has for so long been a matter of concern to the Kensington Society – put it, in the Panel's view, into the Conversion category.

Attention to detail has been impeccable – including very high quality roadworks and tree planting – and the area has re-emerged

triumphantly from its lengthy vicissitudes. Both these schemes received Awards.

The other main Awards went to what I know as the Shepherd's Bush roundabout, but which for this purpose should apparently be the Holland Road roundabout; to a revitalised backwater off the Portobello Road, formally the Park telephone exchange; to National Westminster's reinstatement of the ground floor elevation of its 55 Kensington High Street premises; and to the substantial landscaping and environmental improvement of the Delgarno Estate in north Kensington.

London Water's new ring main – completed on time and on budget – has received general acclamation. The Shepherd's Bush roundabout was one of the access points for the construction work (initially proposed for Holland Park itself) and has now been redesigned and landscaped. In particular the glass 'barometric tower', with its fluctuating levels of blue, is one of the most striking new London landmarks of recent years though remaining a tease for most of those who pass it since few have any idea of what it is or does. Fun though, and beautiful.

Nat West's improvements to 55 Kensington High Street were generally praised. And the low key work at Delgarno Gardens Estate has transformed the whole ambience by its intelligent and sensitive handling of ground surfaces, levels and planting. In particular the thought given to circulation by wheelchair users was considered exemplary. The revitalisation of the old telephone exchange backwater, now turned into attractive apartments, provides a splendid example of imaginative darning of the urban fabric which would have been unthinkable a few decades ago. The work has been well planned and is embellished in its common parts by the display of BT archive material.

Space does not permit detailed comment on all the schemes which were highly commended. A personal trio – No 31 Phillimore Gardens, a rather grand Victorian villa that had been extensively tinkered with over the years, has been convincingly pulled together, amongst other things with the addition of a new wing. A textbook example. Nos 14 to 18 St Leonard's Terrace have had their balconies and elevations admirably restored through the co-operative efforts of the householders concerned. If only communal teamwork of this kind were more common. The Lexham Gardens central garden is of interest for its very radical approach. In contrast to the more traditional garden square, the burgeoning greenery of this elongated site has been used to create a lively sequence of outdoor rooms of differing character. Some found the result inappropriate, as too greatly screening the architecture of the square, but it has been done convincingly and is well worthy of study.

By the time these notes appear in print the machinery for the next round of awards will be beginning to roll. They will mark the

twentieth year of the scheme. How appropriate and how valuable it would be if the Council could mount some twentieth birthday celebration of the fact. A substantial exhibition? An authoritative booklet? A series of lectures? A video? There are all sorts of possibilities. A selective roundup of award winners and commended schemes, with a commentary by a critic of calibre from outside the Royal Borough, could provide useful guidance to developers and property owners, interest and encouragement to residents, and splendid publicity for the Royal Borough and its Council – further afield.

Michael Middleton



Observatory Gardens.

24 Cope Place, London, W8 6AA
071-937 2434

8-12-95.

Dear Gay,

You must please find
room for this in full.

Yours,

B Se



Tower House, Melbury Road.

Chairman's Report

The retirement of Mrs Christiansen

Although Mrs Christiansen announced her wish to retire as Hon. Secretary in January 1994, she very kindly continued to act in that capacity until her successor took over in September 1995. Moreover she continued to allow the Executive Committee to meet at her house throughout 1995 and she has edited this Annual Report.

The Society's debt to Mrs Christiansen is incalculable. The first meeting of those interested in founding the Society was held in her house on 17th March 1953 with Dr Stephen Pasmore in the chair, and at the first formal meeting of the Society on 9th June 1953 she was elected Hon. Secretary, a position which she held for the next 42 years. But in truth she has been Executive Director as well as Honorary Secretary, and all of this in an entirely voluntary capacity. The headquarters of the Society has been her house at No 18 Kensington Square.

Mrs. Christiansen spear-headed many campaigns to preserve individual buildings and to conserve whole areas of the Borough. Through her editorship of the Annual Report she has contributed greatly to the architectural history of the Borough. She planned and carried out with her own hands the creation and planting of the Princess Alice Memorial Garden, and she intends to continue to supervise the maintenance of this Garden and to raise funds for this purpose. She maintained the membership of the Society and its day-to-day accounts and raised funds for its work. She kept a watch on every planning application submitted week by week to the Planning Department at the Town Hall and made appropriate comments or objections. Year by year she organised and led an exciting programme of visits to historic properties in London and the Home Counties.

The Executive Committee have presented to Mrs Christiansen a historical volume, skillfully inscribed by Mrs Meadows on behalf of the Committee; and we were delighted that the Mayor of the Royal Borough hosted a reception in her honour in the Mayor's Parlour to mark her retirement. Both the Mayor and the Leader of the Council paid noteworthy tributes to Mrs Christiansen and to her work. We cannot thank her enough.

R. Vigars
Chairman

UDP: Adopted at Last

The last Annual Report confidently expected that the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) would be formally adopted in March 1995, the culmination of five years' effort. The Council had published its proposed modifications, but these had been the subject of a considerable number of objections, including a substantive set of proposals from the Society in conjunction with West London Traffic Reform and the Chelsea Society.

After putting considerable effort into suggesting further improvements to the UDP, the Society was extremely disappointed by the minimal changes proposed by the Council in response to these suggestions. The Society considers that the Council missed a major opportunity to update and improve the Plan, and now looks to the first review in two years time to make the necessary changes.

The adoption of the UDP was held up, however, by proposed changes to the Council's policy for including affordable housing as an element of major housing schemes. This was eventually approved in July and the Plan was adopted in September. The long-awaited UDP has now been published. The next job is to keep it up to date. It took nearly 15 years from the adoption of the District Plan in 1991 to the adoption of the UDP. The Government's new Strategic Guidance for London will be published in 1996 and, with other recent guidance from the Department of the Environment, will trigger the need to update the Plan. If we want it to remain credible it must be monitored and the Plan kept up to date.

FENELON PLACE:

Last year's Annual Report chronicled the proposals for developing one of the last major sites in Kensington – the land between Warwick Road and the West London Railway north of West Cromwell Road. Proposals by Tesco had been approved by the Council subject to a legal agreement to ensure that all parts of the development actually happened, whilst the competing proposals from Safeway were the subject of a planning appeal awaiting a result from the Secretary of State for the Environment.

A year has passed, but not much has happened. The legal agreement with Tesco has still not been signed and therefore no permission exists for a scheme to proceed. The Safeway proposals have now been dismissed: the Secretary of State has refused a scheme for a free-standing superstore as well as a large comprehensive scheme including a superstore, office block and housing.

At the moment there is still the prospect of all the schemes falling through, since no legal agreement has been signed. The Society would welcome this result, as it would allow a reassessment to be made of the most appropriate use for the site. The Society would support a reversion to the proposals in the Council's planning brief – mainly housing, with a strong element of affordable housing, a coach park and an access road to Earl's Court Exhibition Centre.

The Old Brompton Hospital

There is a major Planning Application on this important site on Fulham Road. The buildings on the site are all disused. They consist of the large 19th century Tudoresque brick and stone listed hospital building, the listed stone-built 'gothic' chapel, and a collection of more recent additions and extensions. The site has a great many trees and shrubs. The proposal is to demolish the more recent buildings – this will be a great improvement – and to convert the listed hospital into flats. It is suggested that the chapel could become a health and fitness centre!

There would also be two new L-shaped blocks of flats on the north-easterly and north-westerly portions of the site, with frontages on to Sumner Place and Foulis Terrace. There would be underground car-parks below both these blocks, approached by ramp from the side streets. The front portion of the site would be suitably landscaped, incorporating most of the existing trees and shrubs.

The existing building is 2½ storeys high above ground level, with a further storey with dormer windows in the pitched roof. The new buildings would be 3½ storeys high above ground level with a further storey with dormer windows in the pitched roof. But the roof ridge would be a little lower than the ridge of the existing building. The new buildings are designed in the Tudoresque style of the existing buildings. However, because the storey heights are so different, the scale of the new buildings is quite different from the existing. In our view, this copying of the existing, albeit on a much smaller scale, is a questionable treatment, and is, arguably, not the best way to complement the existing building.

The close proximity of the proposed new buildings to the existing buildings on or near the site has caused some problems in relation to daylight and sunlight, and already the scheme has been modified.

R.R.M.



Brompton Hospital, Grade II Listed building.

Notting Hill Gate Improvements

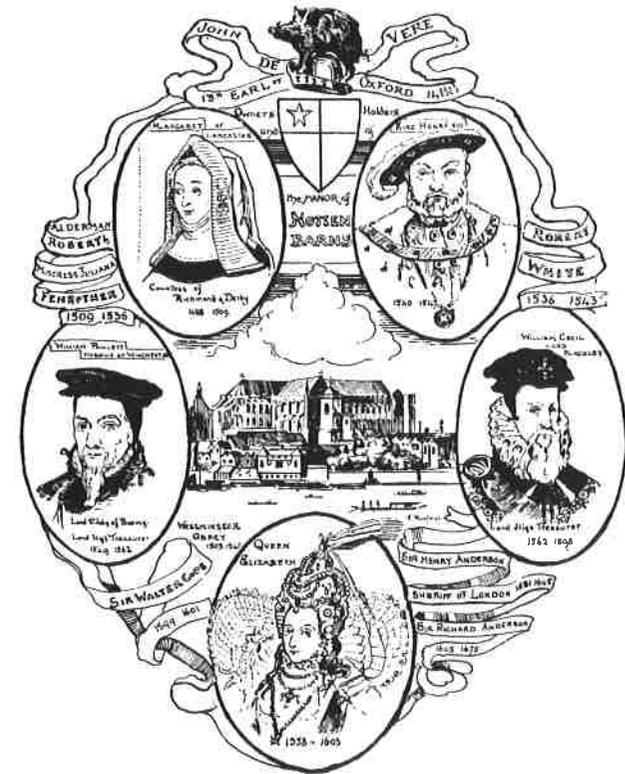
Notting Hill Gate is one of the main shopping and transport centres in the Borough. In the late 1950s there were proposals to re-develop large parts of Notting Hill Gate. The Kensington Society Annual Report for 1957-58 gave a full and colourful account of a public meeting held to discuss these proposals. This meeting was chaired by Sir Hugh Casson and attended by many distinguished people. A number of resolutions were passed including the following 'That this meeting is profoundly dissatisfied with the scheme as it stands and suggests that further action be taken to extend and improve the scheme.' 'Nevertheless the scheme which we now know was carried out in the sterile style which was prevalent at the time. About two years ago, based largely on the initiative and enthusiasm of some members of the Pembridge Association, The Notting Hill Gate Improvement Group was formed. The membership consisted of representatives of local amenity societies, local councillors, tradespeople and freeholders. From the start the Group has worked with the full and generous support of the Borough Council who appointed an architectural/planning consultant to generate and co-ordinate ideas for improvement.

The aims of the Group were to create a more attractive urban environment through an extensive tree planting programme; develop consistency of street architecture and paving; upgrade the quality of the streetscape, particularly shop-fronts and signs; focus on specific areas needing improvement, including the Underground Station; create an identity for the area. It is quite remarkable to see what has been done in the last two years. So much so that the Group was recently given an award by the Brighter Kensington & Chelsea Scheme.

Perhaps the most dramatic thing is the planting of over 100 street trees which, in time, will 'green the Gate'. There have been improvements in street furniture – pedestrian railings, bollards, seats; in the quality and consistency of the paving; in the entrances to the Underground Station. Some buildings have been given a face-lift, the most notable example being Waterstones bookshop where the bare concrete surfaces have been given a Mondrian type colour design. There is a small Japanese-type garden planned for the west end of the Czech Centre at the corner of Palace Gardens Terrace. A competition is being held for ideas for 'gateway' features at the east and west ends of Notting Hill Gate, and for the treatment of some of the large concrete wall surfaces. But perhaps the most difficult tasks lie ahead, in the restoration of some of the distinguished older buildings, and especially in replacing the ugly and shabby shop-fronts which are such an eyesore.

The work is being financed jointly by the Borough Council, local residents, tradespeople and free-holders.

R.R.M.



*The owners and holders of the manor of Notten Barns.
(Drawing by Miss Woolmer)*



*Notting Hill Gate ~ 1855
Which stood 100 yds. west of Church St. (Old Engraving)*

Kensington High Street: The Last Chance?

Kensington High Street once had the largest concentration of department stores outside Oxford Street. People used to come from all over the Home Counties on special promotional day-return rail tickets. It was the smart place to shop. Today the department stores have all but vanished, apart from a much-reduced Barkers. Derry and Toms and Pontings disappeared in the 1970s and, while replaced by British Home Stores and Marks and Spencer on the lower floors, the upper floors were all turned over to offices. About 400,000 square feet of shopping floorspace, the equivalent of a major shopping centre, changed from shopping to office use in the 1970s.

Today the threat is of a different kind. With the revival of the property market has come the resurrection of major schemes of the 1980s, including proposals for a new major shopping development at White City – the biggest shopping development in London since Brent Cross was built in the mid 1970s. This poses a major threat to the High Street. The question is whether the High Street and the local community has the capacity to rise to the challenge.

The news of this latest development has led to the revival of the Kensington High Street Working Party. This is the fourth time that this has been tried. The first two, in the 1970s, came to nothing. The third, which deliberated from 1986 to 1990, produced some improvements. But the Council then ran out of interest. Now, with the threat of the White City proposal, the Working Party has been revived.

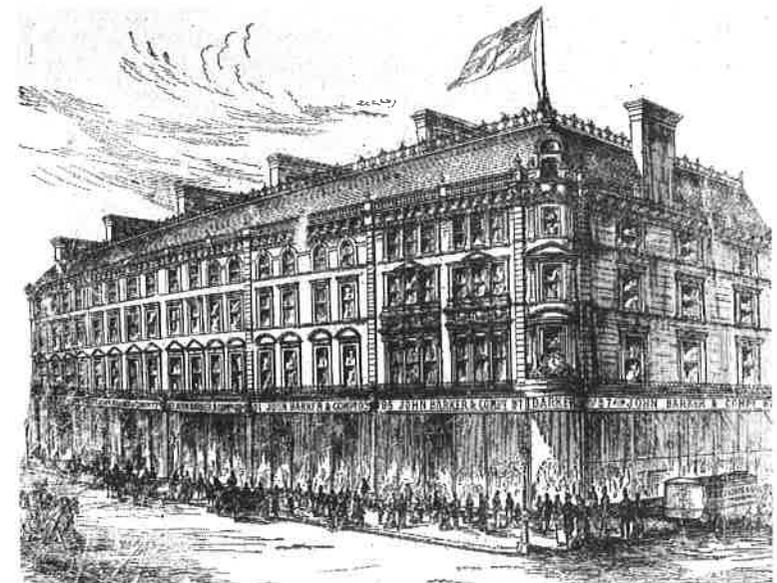
A meeting of the Working Party was held in July, including the High Street Association, the Edwardes Square and Scarsdale Association and the Society. It was agreed that a new study should be undertaken. The High Street Association, representing the businesses in the High Street, stressed the need for urgency. A brief for the study was to have been produced by September, but was not ready for consultation until November. It is hoped that the study will start early in 1996.

The new study is designed to help develop an effective strategy for maintaining and enhancing the retail character and vitality and viability of the High Street. It will look at the vitality of the shopping centre and its ability to face the challenge of the White City proposal. It will also assess the character of the centre, its potential attractiveness for all users and impact of traffic on the pedestrian environment. It will assess the options for enhancement, including physical improvements and improvements to pedestrian and traffic arrangements.

The Society welcomes the revival of the Working Party and the proposed study which should lead to a strategy for the future of the High Street. Like the High Street Association, the Society is concerned about the need for urgency and for greater priority to be given to this exercise. What is needed is recognition that there is an urgent need to establish a working partnership between the Council, the business community and local residents. This must produce a vision for the High Street for the year 2000 and a strategy and action plan for implementing it. This means a working committee to produce this over the next six months and to implement it over the next two years.

So far the prospects do not look good. The next meeting of the Working Party is not until early 1996 – six months after the first meeting. If we do not act quickly our last chance for saving the High Street could slip through our fingers. We must realise that the High Street is a major asset both to the business and the local community. We cannot afford to be complacent. We must grasp the opportunity – we have two years to rise to the challenge. Let's do it!

M. Bach



Kensington High Street.

Other Activities and Future Arrangements

Visits were made in 1995 to Fulham Palace, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Westminster School, Coutts Bank The Strand, The Royal Society, Savill Gardens, Windsor Great Park, Syon House, De Morgan Foundation, London Search Room National Monuments Record, St Bartholomew's Hospital.

FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

Tuesday 23rd January, 2.30 pm (meet in the Entrance Hall)

APSLEY HOUSE, Hyde Park Corner

'No. 1 London' - an Adam House of 1771-8 revamped by two of the Wyatt family (James and Benjamin Dean) and bought by the Iron Duke from his impoverished elder brother in 1817.

The V & A, who will now administer it for the Department of National Heritage, will provide a special guide and we shall see it in all the gleam of a £6 million refit. Tickets £5: closing date 9th January 1998

**Wednesday 14th February, 2.30 pm a double bill:
(meet at the Bank)**

HOARE'S BANK, 37 Fleet Street (opposite Fetter Lane)

This complements our earlier visit to Coutts Bank in the Strand: Hoare's is the original building of 1829 by Charles Parker. Then a 300 yard walk (or even a bus ride!) to the...

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE, Strand.

The architect was G. E. Street, who beat 11 competitors in 1866 for the commission. We are privileged to enter parts normally denied to the public, even when on business there. Tickets £5: closing date 31 January.

**Wednesday 13th March, 1.30 rpt 1.30 pm
(coach at 18 Kensington Square)**

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, GREENWICH

Another controversial site, since the College, which has been here since 1875 when it moved from the Dockyard at Portsmouth, leaves again in 1997 for Camberley. Our visit will be under RN patronage and will continue to the Queen's House, whose Palladian exterior - now splendidly cleaned - must have seemed very Post-modern in 1616. We can also speculate how the Park will look for Millennium with its re-created main Allée as originally laid down by Louis XIV's gardener Le Nôtre. Tickets £12: closing date 28th February.

April 24th, Annual General Meeting, Small Town Hall, Hornton Street, 6 pm.

Chairman and Speaker: Sir John Drummond CBE. Talk entitled "Living in Kensington".

May 18th, Hawksmoor Churches

The Friends of Christchurch Spitalfields have kindly offered us seats on their all-day coach tour of all the London churches with which Wren's pupil, Nicholas Hawksmoor (1661-1736) is connected.: St George's Bloomsbury, St Mary Woolnoth, St Luke's Old Street, Christchurch Spitalfields, St George's-in-the-East, St. Anne's Limehouse, St Alfege Greenwich. Please meet 9.30 am at Christchurch Spitalfields Commercial Street E1. Cheques required £30 made out to The Friends of Christchurch Spitalfield by the end of March.

June 12th, Swanton Mill, Kent

A visit to Swanton Mill 16th century working water mill, 3 acre garden. Mill recently upgraded to Grade II*. Mrs Christiansen will provide tea. £15. Coach leaves Kensington Square 1.30 pm.

July 10th, Eccleston Square SW1

The expert on London Garden Squares, Roger Phillips, will lead an in-depth visit to this excellent example of the problems involved. Meet at the main Gate 2.30 pm. Tickets £5.

September 4th, Two Historic Friends Meeting Houses

Of all early non-conformist places of worship those of the Quakers stand out for their simplicity and charm. Brentford & Isleworth (1785) has a unique long Burial Ground with a yew tree avenue and Jordans (1688) was called by Pevsner the most famous of all Quaker Meeting Houses. Coach leaves Kensington Square 2 pm. Tickets £12.50 including tea.

October 3rd, Down House, Downe, Farnborough, Kent

Sue Weir, who showed us St Bartholomew's last November, will be our host on this coach tour to what John Newman, in the Pevsner series, describes as the large, gaunt home of Charles Darwin. Coach leaves Kensington Square 2 pm. Tickets £15 including tea.

November 14th, Westminster Abbey

This is a connoisseurs tour with a special guide. Meet 2.30 pm West door. Tickets £10 including all entry charges.

All application for tickets - apply to Mrs A. Du Cane, Hanover Lodge, 14 Lansdowne Road W11 3LW with SAE and cheque made out to the Society.

Arthur Farrand Radley and Robin Price

Alec Clifton-Taylor's 1983 Annual Report Foreword

The news that the Greater London Council is to be abolished is likely to have been greeted enthusiastically by many members of the Kensington Society. It is widely recognised that the G.L.C. is, compared with most local authorities, a very big spender, and that their, as some would say, extravagance has been largely responsible for the immense increase in the local rates. When I acquired my own little house in 1955 the annual rate (and sewerage was then included) was £73 9s 4d; 20 years later it was still only £386 8s; last year it was £1,306 3s 6d.

I have no objection to a relatively wealthy Borough like ours making a reasonable contribution to the expenses of less affluent London Boroughs. But, although I have been concerned with one aspect of education throughout most of my adult life, I have long felt it difficult to justify the huge sums spent on education (in the neighbourhood of 50 per cent of the total rate) in relation to all other services. 'By their newspapers shall ye judge them' is not a bad rule-of-thumb precept, and how many read the three or four so-called quality daily newspapers? Do a great many young people derive much benefit even from having to stay at school until they are 16? I am all in favour of those who can benefit from it staying on until 17 or 18, but it seems to me evident that there are many children, and some highly talented, whose gifts are quite unacademic, and for whom the last year at school is largely a waste of time. This is a big subject upon which a great deal more could be said, and perhaps I am not the one who should be saying it. It is, however, my belief that for many young people something much more like the old apprenticeship system might be not only more valuable but more self-fulfilling. In a word, from the age of 15, no later, I would say, 'Let young people get on with what they are good at'. And there are very few who are not good at something.

Nevertheless, I am becoming increasingly doubtful about the wisdom of abolishing the G.L.C. So many of the services which it provides cannot, one feels, be satisfactorily placed under local administration. The Metropolitan Police and the Fire Service are two obvious examples. Another body which has made an outstanding contribution to London as a whole is the Historic Buildings Division, which embraces, as well as a Works section which has on many occasions been very helpful to our Society, the entire staff of *The Survey of London*. This is an astonishing and universally admired achievement of which, since 1900, 41 large volumes have appeared and the future of which could be in jeopardy

if the G.L.C. is abolished and no alternative arrangements are made. The Council is also the owner of about 1,000 listed buildings of many different dates, for which the Historic Buildings Division carries the professional responsibility, while on many occasions, where buildings of architectural or historic importance are threatened – as was, recently, the Natural History Museum – the Division has been a tower of strength at public enquiries.

I feel therefore that I can probably speak for every member of our Society in declaring that, whatever is to be the ultimate fate of the G.L.C. as a whole, we would strongly deplore the break-up of the Historic Buildings Division and the dispersal of its staff. A well-informed leader on this subject in *The Times* of January 4th bore the title 'Much Too Good to Discard'. I only hope that by the time that this plea has been printed it will have become unnecessary.

Alec Clifton-Taylor
President 1983



Alec Clifton-Taylor's Memorial Garden.

LONDON
in
Bloom
1995

This certificate was presented by the
LONDON IN BLOOM COMMITTEE
in recognition of the efforts made by

*The Kensington Society
Princess Alice Memorial Garden*

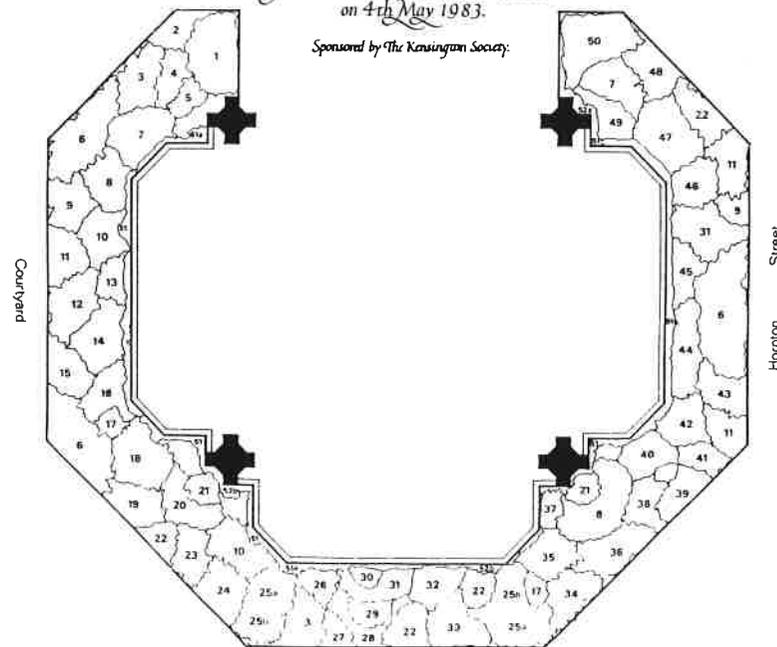
in encouraging excellence of
floral display in London

London First, The Royal Horticultural Society,
the Worshipful Company of Gardeners
and the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association.

This was the original planting scheme. Many of these plants eventually objected to the conditions and over the years many have been changed. It has to be remembered that the soil is less than three feet deep. Leaf mould is added yearly.

Princess Alice  Countess of Athlone
Memorial Garden
This tablet was unveiled by
H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester G.C.V.O.
on 4th May 1983.

Sponsored by The Kensington Society.



- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Cotoneaster x "Corrubia" | 21. Amelanchier laevis | 39. Pernettya mirronator |
| 2. Weigela florida "Variegata" | 22. Spiraea japonica "Gold Flame" | 40. Pieris farrestii |
| 3. Rhododendron "Cilpinense" | 23. Rhododendron x "Impeditum" | 41. Euonymus fortunei "Emerald 'N Gold" |
| 4. Prunus "Cistena" | 24. Daphne x "Somerset" | 42. Rhododendron russatum |
| 5. Hibiscus syriacus "Blue Bird" | 25A. Shrub Rose "Ballerina" | 43. Skimmia japonica |
| 6. Rose "Silver Jubilee" | 25B. Shrub Rose "Maxima" | 44. Camellia "Elsie Jury" |
| 7. Azalea x mollis | 26. Camellia japonica "Kumasaka" | 45. Ceanothus |
| 8. Camellia japonica x "Debbie" | 27. Skimmia japonica "Rubella" | 46. Rhododendron x "Blue Diamond" |
| 9. Otentilla | 28. Rhododendron "Curlwe" | 47. Azalea x "Homebush" |
| 10. Pieris faroea "Wakehurst" | 29. Myrtus communis | 48. Viburnum davidii |
| 11. Berberis thunbergii "Atropurpurea Nana" | 30. Ceanothus x "Cascade" | 49. Camellia japonica "Purity" |
| 12. Olearia x haastii | 31. Pieris x "Forest Flame" | 50. Cotoneaster x "John Waterer" |
| 13. Ceanothus impressus | 32. Camellia japonica "Eximica" | 51A. Clematis "Ernest Markham" |
| 14. Kalmia latifolia "Rubra" | 33. Azalea x "Beethoven" | 51B. Clematis "Ville de Lyon" |
| 15. Rhododendron x "Praecox" | 34. Ceratostigma willmottianum | 51C. Clematis "Mme Le Coultre" |
| 16. Camellia japonica "Lallarook" | 35. Photinia x fraseri "Red Robin" | 52A. Climbing rose "White Cockade" |
| 17. Magnolia stellata | 36. Azalea x "Iro-hayama" | 52B. Climbing Rose "New Dawn" |
| 18. Azalea x "Litany" | 37. Pyracantha | |
| 19. Rhododendron "Sela" | 38. Bypericum x inodorum "Elstead" | |
| 20. Camellia x williamsii "Donation" | | |

Kensington Square Gardens

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea contains 46 of London's 450 Garden squares, and the majority of these are in Kensington itself. This constitutes an inheritance of green and quiet spaces that is unique not just in London but to any capital city in the world. It is an inheritance that we owe to our Victorian ancestors. These squares came about in between 1820–1880 because it was what "the market demanded" and building speculators therefore provided – not because of a grand piece of Town planning.

And their preservation and nurturing is exactly what is demanded now. In June of 1995 I chaired the London Garden Squares' Conference at which Kensington was well represented. We decided then to link up with English Heritage to study what can be done to put our squares back into good shape and conserve them for the next generation. A number of Kensington's squares are indeed already well maintained and, importantly, provide examples that others seek to emulate. But many have fallen into disrepair.

There are two immediate problems. First and worst, is that many of the trees in our squares – mostly London planes – were planted at the time the squares were laid out. They are now in the peak of their maturity, over one hundred years old. Magnificent, yes, but too little thought has gone into planting new young trees to take their place in the next century. Having all been planted at the same time, they will all die at the same time, leaving our grandchildren with the certainty (not the probability) that our squares will look a lot less green and leafy as they grow up. The difficulty is, of course, that few garden square committees are willing to cut down or thin out a glorious tree in its last years: that's a decision they would rather leave to their successors. But unless this is done, new planting is difficult. The London plane casts such a broad shadow that saplings cannot be planted nearby to take their place. There is, of course, the more general question about the best gardening practice for these urban patches of green. Here Kensington leads the way with many imaginative and well financed schemes that set the example for London's other squares, many of which are in poor and run-down areas of the city.

The second big problem facing our squares is the need to replace the railings around them. Cheap chain-link fencing is still standard in many squares – Pembridge, Royal Crescent, Powis Square to give three examples. This, of course, is the result of the old fine cast-iron railings having been melted down as part of the 1939-45 war effort (very foolishly, since the metal produced turned out to be no good for armaments). Fifty years later little has been done to replace them. Why? Because to put back proper railings is expensive; the cost runs to several hundreds of thousands of pounds for a typical square. Some

community associations have made brave – and successful – efforts, to meet this cost but many are understandably daunted.

The London Garden Squares Conference is now working with English Heritage to address both these problems: to work out a code of best practice for planting and upkeep and to decide which squares need new investment in railings. Our intention is then to put together a bid to the National Heritage Lottery Fund, probably in the summer of 1996, that would encompass all London Squares.

A number of squares, sponsored by local authorities, have approached the Lottery Fund already – and been turned down. This is not out of ill will, but because it is impractical for the Lottery fund to deal with each of London's 430 Squares on a one-off basis. Our intention is to make a bid on behalf of all the squares. That means working out a plan in great detail for, say, a dozen squares; getting the acceptance on the strength of these plans that public money deserves to go into the project; and then have a certain sum – say £5m – earmarked by the Lottery Fund available for individual squares to pull down individually, if they fit the general pattern.

Kensington's squares fit both well and ill into this opportunity. Well, because we have active Community Associations, a responsible Borough and access to the funds that are required to "match" any Lottery contribution. Ill, because many of our squares are private garden squares belonging to the residents whose homes surround them. This is a problem: public money can only be spent where there is a public good. But it is not insurmountable. We hope to show that things such as good railings and sensible planting benefits the whole public area, far wider than the specific grounds themselves. Indeed railings, for example, are more often appreciated by the public passing outside than by those within. Squares, even private squares, have always been part of London's townscape. We shall therefore be saying that London Squares should be taken as a single widely diverse package, worthy of support not just individually but because of what they collectively contribute to London.

Whether the bid succeeds or fails, there is now a head of steam up most of it stoked in Kensington – for us to underwrite the future of our squares as a vital part of the urban landscape. The first register of London Squares since 1928 is now being drawn up by English Heritage in conjunction with the London Squares' Conference, together with notes on their present condition, their planning status and their proposed improvements. In the 50 years since the war we have taken these great assets for granted. But unless we grasp the need for urgent replanting, new railings, a new code of best gardening practice and a new law to protect them from such things as underground car parks, we will find that our great-grandparents' inheritance will have been squandered by the time our great-grandchildren are living in our homes. They would not thank us for it.

Dudley Fishburn MP

Kensington and the Invention of the Tank 1914-15

At the start of the Great War, The Germans moved swiftly into Belgium but had no time to consolidate and so were open to guerrilla attacks. The Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, which contained some engineers, stationed at Dunkirk and other ports rapidly produced mobile warfare. They fixed machine guns in the side cars of motor cycles and persuaded the authorities back home to experiment with machine guns on cars. This produced some 600 Armoured Cars with help from Talbots, Rolls Royce and Napiers of Acton. There was much research into steel that could resist shells. Soon, however, it became a static war and although the armoured cars were useful in other spheres of war, they were not able to cross trenches, even if the cars carried planks. Something else was needed. One important thing the armoured cars produced was special shot resistant metals.

The R.N.V.R. put up a design for a push-me-pull-you object involving two steam rollers joined on caterpillar tracks. Someone then remembered the Scott Antarctic expedition had tractors on caterpillar tracks. That reminded someone else of the agricultural machines produced for sale to the U.S.A. – a large wagon on caterpillars pulled by a small petrol driven tractor. Experiments began with such a device (see picture). They had to be done secretly. The chosen site was an open area in Barlby Road, W10. It was bounded by the G.W.R. embankment to the north, the West London Railway embankment to the west, the Clement and Talbot Motor Works to the east and a ten foot fence in Barlby Road. This area was in the Royal Borough of Kensington. Much of the work on armoured cars had already been done there.

The Clement and Talbot Motor Works had been opened in 1903 with funds from the Marquess of Shrewsbury (a Talbot) and provided the engineering back-up.

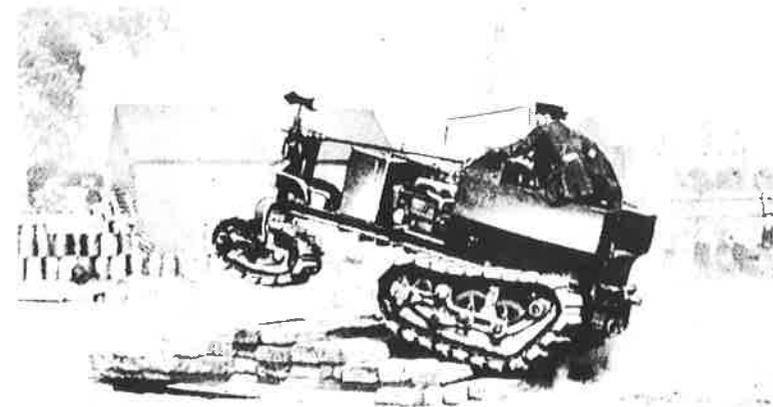
On this site the new vehicle was tried out on specially dug trenches. It soon became obvious that the small Tractor in front became stuck in the trench. What was needed was one armoured vehicle on caterpillar tracks powered by a petrol engine. The main difficulty was that of making long lengths of track. This was overcome and at last the Navy had a prototype. This had to be tested, across trenches, against barbed wire entanglements, over rough and muddy ground, up slopes, against piles of bricks and railway sleepers. It worked! There are many photographs of these experiments, with, in the background, Kensal Green Gas Works, or the railway embankments, or Marylebone Infirmary (St. Charles Hospital) or the Talbot works.

Now, of course, the tests had to continue in open country at Barton Park, Lincoln, where the turret of the tank was shrouded in tarpaulins so only the caterpillars were visible. The design of the "Caterpillar Landship" was modified and the Rhomboid shape arrived at but it was still essentially the tank produced at the Tank Proving Ground in Barlby Road, now covered in flats, Sutton Dwellings and Peabody Buildings. Even Talbots (later Rootes) has become a housing estate except for the Grade II listed main building designed by William Walker in 1903.

T. Harper Smith



The double tractor gets stuck. Stuck in the trench!



The first experiments, June 1915. Marylebone Infirmary in the background.

Kensington High Street Association

Introduction

Kensington High Street Association was founded in 1978. It is a broadly-based Business Association representative of, and representing, the Kensington High Street business community.

Membership

Any person or firm in business or a profession or owning property in Kensington High Street and the adjoining streets is eligible to be a member. At present the Association has close on 100 members; about half are retailers and nearly all the rest are drawn equally from financial services firms, hotels and restaurants and professional firms, plus such as Associated Newspapers and the Commonwealth Institute. Subscriptions are based on the number of full-time employees.

Objectives

The Association provides a service to and for its members. It has three principal objectives:-

- (a) To promote Kensington High Street
- (b) To provide opportunities for contact between members
- (c) To improve the environment

In the Association's context, 'the environment' includes:-

Cleanliness	Security
Parking	Street furniture and pavements
Planning	Traffic and pedestrians
Rates	Transport

The Association acknowledges the valuable work done by the Society in environmental matters, particularly in the field of planning.

THE FUTURE

Kensington High Street is a principal shopping centre. It provides a service to the community, a substantial and important proportion of which consists of local residents.

The major problem facing the Association in the future is maintaining the quality of that service. The vitality and viability of the centre (the official description, 'competitiveness and

attractiveness' is much the same thing) is under threat from two major new comprehensive developments which are in prospect.

The larger and more threatening of these developments is the White City Centre north of Shepherds Bush Green and just inside the Hammersmith and Fulham Council boundary. It is less than one mile from Kensington High Street as the crow flies. A comprehensive redevelopment of the 35-acre site is in prospect, to include 600,000 sq. ft. of retail space (two thirds the size of Brent Cross).

The other re-development is that of the nearer but smaller Fenelon Place site. This is the land on the west side of Warwick Road between Sainsbury's Homebase car park and West Cromwell Road; the re-development would include a retail foodstore and coffee shop.

The most significant feature of these developments from the Association's point of view, however, is the extensive car parking to be provided with both. Car parking space is a commodity in short supply in the Kensington High Street area, affordable car parking even more so. The developments offer the attraction of one-stop shopping, with on-site parking, for the car-borne shopper. The diversion of trade from the Kensington High Street shopping centre (and also the Notting Hill shopping centre) that these developments could bring about is obvious enough.

The initial negotiations for both developments are at a late stage and it is likely that work on both will begin in 1996, with completion well before the millennium.

The planning process in the case of the Fenelon Place site included two appeals by Flaxyard/Safeway against the Council's refusal to grant them planning permission. The Society and the Association effectively joined forces and made submissions opposing the appeal, albeit from different points of view.

Recognising the threat outlined above to the vitality and viability of 'your' shopping centre the Council convened a Working Party in July 1995 with the intention of developing proposals for enhancing Kensington High Street and improving its competitiveness. The Working Party is representative of the Council, the Association, The Society and the residents.

It was decided to retain consultants to advise on the form and cost of an effective strategy for enhancing 'your' shopping centre. A brief was prepared for the purpose and by the time of The Society's AGM one or more firms of consultants should have been appointed. The work can then begin in earnest.

George Sivewright
Secretary

South End...the walk to the paradise garden

The rather curiously named 'South End', the cul-de-sac which lies behind Kensington Square, and the approaches to it, are not only among the few surviving remnants of 17th century Kensington but could be described romantically as 'the walk to the paradise garden' which was part of the dream of Thomas Young, a woodcarver in the tradition of Grinling Gibbons, to create a beautiful residential square in the fields surrounding the old parish church of St Mary Abbots.

Thomas Young is a simple English name and it is good that it should be perpetuated by the naming of the street which leads to his Square 'of large and substantial houses fit for ye habitation of persons of good worth and quality', which he envisaged in 1685 in the last years of the unsettled reign of James II, and had first intended to call 'King's Square'.

To the west, he planned a Spring Garden and Bowling Green 'of great finish and perfection'. Spring Gardens were the height of fashionable fun in the latter half of the 17th century. We do not know to what length Thomas Young went to furnish his Spring Garden but without a doubt it was his pride and joy and it broke his heart when it was eventually 'quite digged up' by his creditors. The way to it can be seen in Rocques' map (1741-46), a walk which was eventually to be known as James Street and South End.

So, who was Thomas Young? He is believed to have been born in Devon, the son of William Young, a joiner, of Exeter, and, although sometimes described as a 'slater', was apprenticed to a joiner and wood carver, being admitted as a freeman of the Joiners Company in 1670 when he was probably about twenty. He was one of the wood carvers employed by Sir Christopher Wren.

From this one might surmise that he was artistic, a craftsman rather than a business man, and that, although he worked for speculators, Kensington Square was his first venture into speculative building; and this may explain his subsequent financial difficulties. Obviously he could not carry out so great an undertaking by himself and after having acquired the land, 114 acres of enclosed ground and a 'mansion house' (which he presumably demolished) for £1500, he would have offered most of the building sites to others for development, also wishing 'to complete the Square with all convenient expedience'.

About twenty builders took up the offer, many of whom were as equally skilled craftsmen as himself, and he reserved only six sites for his own use. But the Spring Garden and Bowling Green at the

south end were entirely his own venture. Here he built the twelve-roomed Bowling Green House where he dwelt with his wife and children, a substantial three-storey villa 'richly wainscoted and adorned and painted', which was also to provide 'a place for entertainment, eating and drinking'. It was surrounded by the garden with 'the level, bank and green-swarded in good order' and planted round with an evergreen hedge. Young considered all this to be not only an attraction for the inhabitants of the Square but also hoped it would provide him and his family with a living.

He was heavily in-debt. His main financial backer was Thomas Sutton, 'an India Gown Seller', of Buckingham Street, Strand, who must have been pressing for some return when in 1686 Young sold off a lot of land on the west side of the Square which was still undeveloped, as well as the freeholds of a number of house sites, but borrowed more money from Sutton to continue building. Within six months, however, he was arrested for debt and lodged in the Kings Bench Prison. While there he was persuaded by Sutton, 'pretending great love and kindness' to hand over to him the equity of redemption in the mortgages, to prevent his other creditors seizing it and leaving him to 'perish in prison and his family to come to ruin'.

This made over to Sutton not only the freehold of those parts of the Square he already held under mortgage but also the Bowling Green House and the Spring Garden.

Young went to work at Chatsworth from 1688 to 1691 but by the end of that year he found himself back in 'a close prison in the Fleet' where he remained for almost ten years, despite trying to raise a loan to repay Sutton, which he refused. Eventually Young brought a case against Sutton in Chancery. High in his list of complaints was the treatment of his bowling green and garden which he said Sutton had 'caused to be digged quite up, the turf removed and converted into barren and unprofitable garden'. Young's wife and children had been allowed to remain in the house while he was in prison but after the case in Chancery, which presumably failed, little more is heard of him or them.

Sutton had lived in the Square (at No. 22) as well as owning a number of other houses, but in 1705 he moved into a house at South End, probably into Young's Bowling Green House which even Young considered was 'too big for any gardener or other person of mean calling but unattractive to a person of quality or worth because it stood backwards behind the gardens, coach houses and stables of houses in the Square'.

Throughout the rest of the 18th century the site of the Spring Garden was let to market gardeners but a small piece of land, bounded on the north by South End and east by South End Row (which was then only a footpath), was the site of a house and garden occupied by Sir George Baker, the royal physician and a pioneer researcher into lead poisoning. It was later used as an academy for young gentlemen and survived until about 1840.

This land was acquired in 1794 by a wealthy haberdasher, John Vallotton, of Jermyn Street, who leased some of it to a local builder who erected six small houses there on the west side, predecessors of Nos. 18-26 South End Row. In 1805 these were increased by four more called Trafalgar Place (Nos. 10-16). Another four, known as South End Gardens, have disappeared. (In the 1950s Nos 18-26 South End Row were redeveloped as a row of Georgian-style houses.)

The remainder of Thomas Young's garden continued as a market garden, but in 1865 the coming of the Metropolitan Railway bisected it, the eastern part now being occupied by the garden of the Convent of the Assumption and the west eventually becoming the Tara Hotel.

The 'paradise garden' was no more but the walk to it remained as the cul-de-sac, South End, which until 1925 also included the corners of St Alban's Grove and Ansdell Street (formerly James Street).

In the early 20th century the north side of South End was still occupied by stables and outbuildings of the houses in Kensington Square; on the south was a rag-and-bone merchant and workmen's coffee house; and it was only after the installation of main drainage (with its visible sewer vent pipe) early in this century that more building was practicable, including workshops, studios such as the attractive St Alban's studios, designed by R. D. Douglas Wells, on the corner of South End Row, in 1911. No.15 South End was once the stabling of 19 Kensington Square until rebuilt as a 'motor garage' and two flats in 1912. No. 17, a stable block for 17 Kensington Square, built in 1881, might even have been designed for its owner, the bibliophile and connoisseur Alfred Henry Huth, by Norman Shaw who worked for him on his next home in Ennismore Gardens. No. 18 is a reconstruction of the former stable of 16 Kensington Square, built in 1875, used by a 'motor engineer' in the 1920s and refronted in recent times as an office. No. 20 was built in 1909 on the site of three small cottages.

In the 1890s Kensington Vestry was much concerned with the conditions in James (Ansdell) Street, where the walk to the 'paradise garden' had sadly deteriorated and nearly 400 people were living in slum conditions in a group of tumbled-down cottages. Closing orders were served and help sought from local property developers who were concerned about the value of their adjacent property; and the whole was redeveloped at the same time as the building of Thackeray Street, although the crooked line of the road remains. Similarly, in the cul-de-sac, Ansdell Terrace, ten houses were built in a curious manner by the local builder, Thomas Hussey, in the back garden of his house, No. 13 Kensington Square. This terrace, although appearing to be intended for single-family occupation, was internally constructed as tenements to allow a family to live on each floor.

Thus, some three hundred years since Thomas Young made at least part of his dream come true, this unique area survives as a fragile ghost of its past: The Square still keeps something of its air of tranquil elegance, the trees and flowers still bloom in its railed garden and behind its terraces, at least on the south side, and the walk to poor Tom's 'paradise garden' remains as a quiet cul-de-sac which even up to the end of the Second World War was still a village with a shop and the homely artefacts of craftsmen and artisans, its very inaccessibility saving it from the fears that it would be encroached upon by the building tide of the High Street nearby. May changing and more enlightened attitudes yet preserve it from being 'quite digged up'.

(I am greatly indebted for the factual information in this article to the Survey of London, Vol. XLII, Southern Kensington, Kensington Square to Earls Court, to which I would refer anyone requiring more detail.)

Barbara Denny



South End Village.

Forgotten Village, W.8.

JILL FENTON
discovers it and asks "Can this be London?"



"You can still buy bull's-eyes in the newspaper shop ..."

TIME hurries busily along Kensington High-street, strolls at leisure through Kensington-square and, in the little tangle of back streets at the square's south-east corner, seems to stop altogether.

The inhabitants call this part of Kensington behind the square "South End," meaning that it was once the boundary of the Court suburb of London. I have found an 1822 map where the square and these little streets appear as a compact village, clinging to the skirts of Kensington Palace, with a patchwork of fields east and south, and a footpath west to Earl's Court Farm.

A Country Burr

TODAY the fields have given way to brick cliff-faces, the stables where the great Lords of Kensington-square kept their horses are garages, but South End is still a village. You can buy bull's-eyes at the newspaper shop in Ansdell-street, the old cobbler in St. Alban's-grove wears a round knitted cap, and speaks with a country burr; outside the marine store, or junk shop, a second-hand hip bath waits hopefully for a buyer; in the paved space

With Pencil Sketches by
LUNT ROBERTS



"Like Nelson's Column without Nelson."

where the roads meet a knife-grinder suns himself, as he might on the village green.

If you don't like that new-fangled dial on the telephone in the newspaper shop, Mrs. Heard, who keeps it, will get your number. If you don't like the telephone, either, she will even deliver the message for you, as she was doing for Mrs. Smith when I called at the shop. I had to wait while she and Mrs. Smith talked over Mr. Smith's illness, and Mr. Heard sold Johnny a weekly comic, and Chris a bag of sweets. Mr. and Mrs. Heard know everyone, and everyone knows them. That, paradoxically, is why the name over the shop is not Heard, but Boddington.

"My father, Mr. Boddington, kept it before," said Mrs. Heard. "When I married, twelve years ago, we didn't like to change the name. They've always called it Boddington's."

"I've served here twenty-three years, and the shop hasn't changed much."

Standing at the door, Mr. Heard pointed to the tall, green-painted iron shaft in the middle of the paved space. It looked like Nelson's column without Nelson. "Something to do with the drains," said Mr. Heard. "It's not old; been here a matter of only twenty years."

Next to Boddington's there was once a fried fish-shop, where a local artist earned his own and his dog's dinners for the rest of their lives by painting Biblical pictures round its walls. But in spite of the new block of studios in St. Alban's-grove, there are few artists in the village. Local opinion is that artists are queer, unsociable folk; though when, as sometimes happens, a visiting painter sets up his easel by the marine store and its adjoining cottages, local pride runs high.

Turn to the left, enter the cobbler's low-ceilinged shop, and Mr. Albert Middleton of the knitted cap, the white



"Mr. Albert Middleton of the knitted cap ... has been here 46 years ..."

apron and spectacles will come blinking from his workshop.

The Modern Shoes!

MR MIDDLETON is seventy-five and has been here forty-six years, and things aren't what they were in the shoe trade.

"A lot of this high-heeled stuff makes me angry," he said. "When high heels first came in they were meant for Court functions; with no more walking than to and from a carriage. But look how they're worn to-day, even for walking in mud. Corns and bad tempers, that's what they give you."

"People are in such a hurry now. They want their shoes mended while they wait. It was different long ago. I've spent an hour turning a lady's shoe-heel to get it perfect."

"I came here from the Midlands. One of sixteen children I was, and I remember our mother gleaning the corn for our bread. My father threshed and winnowed it by hand, and the windmill ground it. We fetched the yeast in a jug from the brewery, my mother kneaded the dough, the bakehouse baked it, and it came out golden brown, the best I ever tasted."

"But there was no living to be made in the country. I was going to South Africa, but I happened to come along here, liked it and stayed."

His Little Joke

I LIKE to walk up to the Serpentine and have a dip; even at Christmas, when the wind was like a razor, I went in off the diving-board. I reckon I'm the oldest regular. People say 'Where are you from?' I say 'South End, I walked here in half an

hour.' 'Southend?' they say. 'You never walked all that way in half an hour.' Then I explain, I like to have my little joke.

"I used to live in a flat on that site," said Mr. Middleton, pointing to a cliff-face. "It cost me twelve-and-six a week; and it costs them hundreds of pounds a year!"

Next door, Mr. Frederick Perou has held the licence of the "Builders' Arms" for thirty-six years, helped for the last nine by his faithful dog, half Alsatian, half Airedale. The "Builders' Arms" is not architecturally old, but it has seen changes. When the garages at the back of the square were stables, when a livery yard faced Boddington's and the studios were a farrier's shop, the coachmen started their day with a three-halfpenny rum and coffee.

"Or rum and milk, same price," said Mr. Perou. "Or gin and ale; they'd be eightpence now. We opened at six a.m. and shut at midnight. We had all the private coachmen in at six; they worked pretty hard. But they could have a drink when they liked, whereas a chauffeur won't take much more than a glass of beer. It wouldn't be safe."

"Our customers change every ten years or so; I don't know why. We have our own names for them. There was a great character, Monocle Bill we called him who never came without his eyeglass, and Mexico Bill, who'd lived there. They're both dead, I believe. Most of the characters have gone."

Even a Bit of Thatch

CHANGE though the outsider would not notice it, is creeping over the village. The row of cottages behind Ansdell-street was built, they say, to take overflows of servants when William and Mary held court at Kensington Palace. They still stand, obstinately countrified, with their little front gardens and low porches. Some half-hearted thatch straggles under and over the roof tiles.

In one cottage, recently, died a woman of seventy who had been born there. For the last twenty-eight years her cottage, with the others, has been "about to be pulled down," but so long as she lived nothing happened.

But now, say the shopkeepers, who know all the local gossip, something is really being done. In a year or two the cottages will have vanished. The cliffs of the new Kensington will close in on the old South End.

But, for the present, South End is still very much of a village. Coming up into Kensington High-street, it gave me quite a shock to see the lipsticks and red motor-buses of London.

The Cromwellian Memorial Tablet in St Mary Abbots Church

The marble wall panel to Henry Dawson, after the skilful removal of extensive black encrustation by Mr Philip Murdin of English Heritage's Stone and Wood Carvers Studio, has recently been fixed, in the position chosen by the diocesan architect, on the inside west wall of the church. English Heritage, who have made a substantial grant towards the cost of their work on the panel, have emphasised the artistic, as well as the historical importance of the memorial; it is an early example of English Baroque and the purity of the lettering indicates that it was the work of a highly talented artist. The historical importance stems from the amount of biographical information conveyed in a few concise lines; we are told that Dawson was twice Mayor of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and a member of "the present Parliament" and that he died on August 2nd 1653 being buried "neere this piller". This tells us that his memorial was originally set up in the mediaeval church which survived until the 1690s. It was replaced in the William & Mary church which followed and was noticed in the latter church in 1866 by a correspondent to "Notes & Queries".

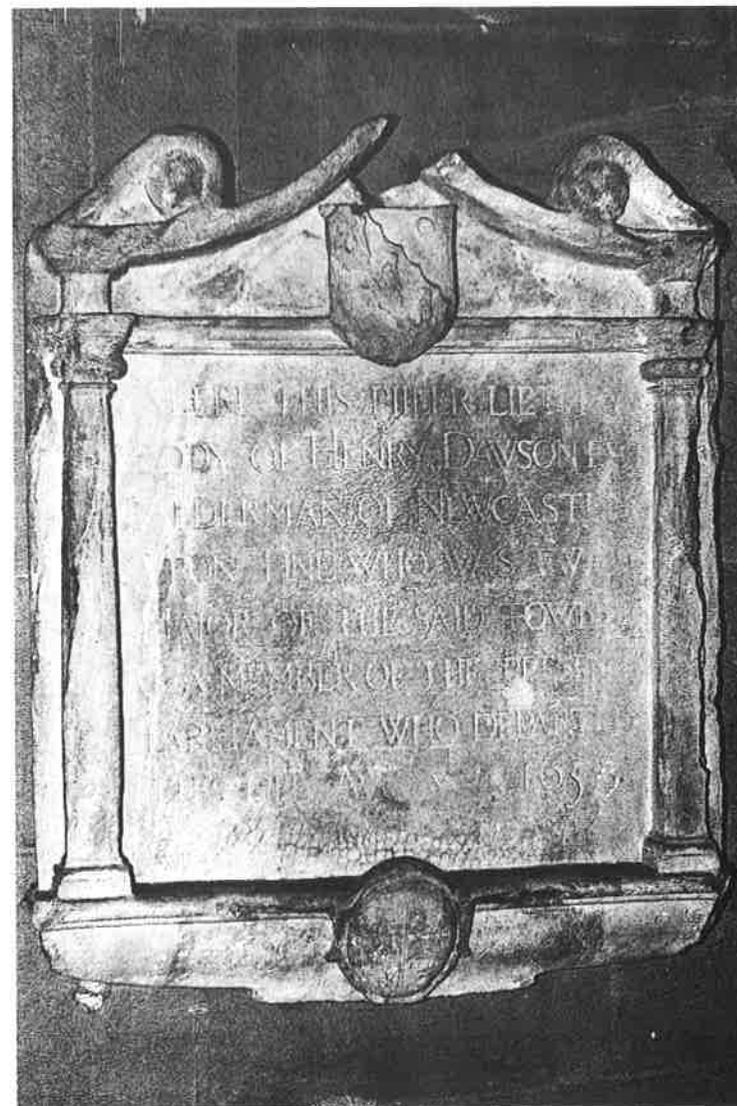
The "present Parliament" was the legislative body of 135 men selected and summoned by Cromwell to replace the Rump of the Long Parliament which he dissolved in April 1653 with the words "Remove that Bauble". This new assembly in which Dawson represented the county of Durham soon acquired the sobriquet "the Barebones Parliament" after its most vociferous member, Praise-God Berbon, a leather seller and anabaptist of Fleet Street.

Research has provided an answer to the question why was Dawson, an extreme puritan, buried in St Mary Abbots; the explanation is that Thomas Hodges, vicar of the parish from 1641 to 1672 and one of the Assembly of Divines in 1643, was highly regarded by the Commonwealth parliaments before whom he was a frequent preacher. But we shall probably never know who commissioned and paid for this fine memorial stone to a north country puritan general merchant. It is possibly a unique survival of a memorial to a member of the Barebones Parliament in an Anglican church. It is certainly the oldest memorial in the present church and probably the only surviving relic from the mediaeval building. George Gilbert Scott, considering that "it has no merit beyond history and is not suitable for a Gothic edifice", found no place for it in the present church and it came to rest, miserably, in

the wall opposite the north alley to the church. Here during the past 120 years the marble panel suffered severely from the weather and gradually became covered with a black encrustation.

The Kensington Society and the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne have contributed towards the cost of removal, cleansing and placing the memorial in its present position.

Tony Jabez-Smith



"...not suitable for a Gothic edifice". G. G. Scott

Kensington New Town

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

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

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

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

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

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

A further interesting fact known about our area in its rural days before Victoria came to the throne is that the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV, in 1804 inspected the Kensington Volunteers in a field behind where the College of Estate Management now stands. They were the Home Guard of that Napoleonic time. Their colours were worked by the Duchess of Gloucester and her daughter Princess Sophia Matilda. They were presented to the Corps in 1799, and are now in the parish church. Before the present house was

built in 1885 as the High School for Girls, a building on this site in St. Albans Grove had housed Richard Ansdell, R.A., an animal painter who rivalled Landseer in popularity, and apparently kept quite a zoo of animal models. (Presumably Ansdell Terrace was called after him.)

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

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

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

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

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

Canning Place, Nos. 1 to 10

Victoria Grove, Nos. 1 to 23. (Note the Bust of Prince Albert forming the keystone to the arch to the Mews.)

Launceston Place, Nos. 1 to 31. (Then called Sussex Place.)

Gloucester Terrace, Nos. 1 to 17. (West side of Gloucester Road between Canning Place and Victoria Grove.)

It would seem from this that the houses in Launceston Place were just being built because some were noted as still unoccupied,

Nos. 11, 12, 19, 20 are shown as "unfinished" and 23 and 24 are still "vacant ground".

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

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

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

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1837-42 | Canning Place, Victoria Grove, Gloucester Terrace. |
| | 1842 Launceston Place, St. George's Terrace. |
| 1842-52 | Victoria Road, Albert Place, Cambridge Place. |
| 1853 | St. Albans Grove, Cottesmore Gardens north side. |
| about 1855 | Cottesmore Gardens south side, Eldon Road
Stanford Road. |

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

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

"From this point to the town of Kensington we pass houses both old and new, some in rows, and some by themselves, enclosed in gardens. They are all more or less good; and the turnings out of them lead into a considerable district, which has lately been converted from nursery and garden-ground into more streets, and is called Kensington New Town. It is all very clean and neat, and astonishes visitors who a few years ago beheld scarcely a house on the spot. A pleasant hedge-lane paved in the middle, and looking towards the wooded grounds of Gloucester Lodge, where Canning lived, leads out of it into "Old Brompton. One street, which has no thoroughfare, is quite of a stately character, though deformed at the corner with one of those unmeaning rounded towers, whose tops look like pepper-boxes, or 'Trifles from Margate'. (This certainly refers to Kensington Gate). The smaller streets also partake of those improvements, both external and internal, which have succeeded to the unambitious, barrack-like streets of a former generation; nor in acquiring solidity, have they, for the most part,

been rendered heavy and dumpy the common fault of new buildings in the suburbs.

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

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

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

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

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

Edward Norman-Butler
Treasurer of the Society until his death in 1963.

Lady Beresford-Clark MBE, Hon.RCM.

On 11th July 1995, Lady Beresford-Clark celebrated her ninetieth birthday. The fact that the party given in her honour was held in the Drawing Room of Queen Alexandra's House is an indication of why the life of Margery, as she is known to her innumerable friends, should be recorded in an Annual Report devoted to Conservation. Much of her active life has been spent in the Royal Borough, at 105 Oakwood Court, together with her husband, Sir Beresford Clark, co-founder and subsequently Director of the Overseas Service of the BBC.

From the end of her school life she was always interested in voluntary social work: first with the Girl Guides and later, from 1938 and throughout the war, with the St John Ambulance Brigade in an administrative capacity; becoming Hon. Secretary of the Kensington Division in 1941. She then worked for the Friends of Queen Alexandra's House, an historic Hall of Residence for female students of the Arts and Sciences, founded by Queen Alexandra in 1884, being Hon. Sec. for nine years and Chairman for the Centenary Celebrations in 1984.

After the death of her husband in 1968 she continued to devote her talents to helping with one of the most important social impacts on post-war Britain: the enormous influx of Overseas Students. How they felt towards us after they returned home depended very much on how they had been treated over here.

Margery realised this from the start. The Kensington Committee of Friendship for Overseas students, which she helped to create with the help of the Mayor and initially of the British Council, was one of the first of many such Committees and has remained a model ever since. It was for this work that she was made MBE.

She understood and enjoyed the necessary attention to administrative detail. Alone and at first with very little secretarial help, she applied this gift to her Committee work. 105 Oakwood Court became 'Home' to many overseas students. Her example spread to members of her Committee, to other local residents and made an impact on organisations outside London.

Kensington will be remembered in the hearts of thousands of Overseas Students, some of whom are now important figures in their own countries. Hostesses were fired by Margery's enthusiasm and occasions like Lady Glenconner's Annual Party and Michael Sandwith's endless entertaining and organisational skills made it certain that Kensington would be a synonym for hospitality.

Everything was imbued with Margery's sense of fun. Her friends will remember her habit of pretending to be her own house-maid on the phone. At the same time she always set an example of good manners, which were increasingly a rare commodity in the "Swinging sixties". In retirement her flat in Chelsea remains a magnet for those she befriended. If there could be, as in Japan, a 'Living Treasure', surely Margery is one.

W. A. C. Baker



Daniel O'Connell Leigh Hunt James Smith

Miss L. E. Landon Thomas Moore Miss Jane Porter

W. M. Thackeray Hon. Mrs. Norton Rev. Dr. Lardner Bulwer Lytton Count D'Orsay

B. Disraeli Countess of Blessington D. Maclise R.A. Lord John Russell Charles Dickens

Women in politics: Lady Blessington's salon at Gore House, Kensington.

Gore House, Kensington Gore. (Thomas Hosmer Shepherd). The house stood on the site of the Royal Albert Hall and was the home of William Wilberforce between 1808 and 1821, and of Marguerite, Countess of Blessington between 1836 and 1849. During the ownership of the Countess of Blessington her 'salon' rivalled that of Lady Holland's at the other end of the High Street.



ST MARY ABBOTS HOSPITAL, MARLOES ROAD W8

Thank you for your phone call. May I propose the following wording for your annual report:

ST MARY ABBOTS HOSPITAL, MARLOES ROAD W8

An archaeological field evaluation carried out in 1994 by Robin Neilsen of the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) produced prehistoric and Roman finds, post-holes and pits, sealed under a layer of alluvium.

The discoveries were considered to be of sufficient importance for the Local Authority to require further investigation to be carried out. Subsequent excavation by MoLAS revealed more features, including a prehistoric and a Roman ditch, and a considerable amount of late Iron Age pottery.

Few prehistoric or Roman sites are known from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and thus the finds are of great significance. Clearly future developments in this part of the Borough must be accompanied by archaeological investigation, so that we can form a better understanding of the nature of prehistoric and Roman occupation in the area.

Robin Neilsen is currently preparing a report on the findings.

I hope this, and the photograph, are suitable.



Where would the Royal Borough be without its Residents' Associations?

Harry James, associate editor of the "London Weekly Times" series of newspapers and writer of the influential "Grapevine" column reflects on the Borough's past and future.

There are many people alive today who remember when Kensington and Chelsea had no residents' associations or amenity groups to speak of; when the public took little or no interest in what the Town Hall was up to so long as the roads and drains were maintained in working order, highways and pavements were kept clean and tidy, street lights functioned efficiently, and rates were collected; when there were plenty of job opportunities, and rented accommodation was inexpensive and plentiful; when every shopping area and high street included a fishmonger, greengrocer, fruiterer selling fresh produce; when on almost every corner there was a shoe repairer, haberdashers, local builders' yard, plumber and handymen of every description; when public transport was safe, cheap and reliable; when there were few, if any, environmental or traffic problems, and a typical planning applications list consisted of a handful of uncontentious items; when there were no hostels for social security claimants; when residents' parking permits, housing benefits, rent rebates, late-night licensing, and planning and conservation were not among the major pre-occupations of the local authority; when public officials conveyed the impression, outwardly at least, that the wishes of the electorate was paramount, and signed off their letters... 'I beg to remain your obedient servant...' to emphasise the fact.

As recently as 1965, when Kensington merged with its bohemian neighbour to the south, with a combined electorate of 150,000 and a total population of nearly 200,000 – down from the over 250,000 at the turn of the century – it was still possible to speak of the Royal Borough as an agreeable and uncomplicated place in which to live. Perceived by outsiders as built for, and peopled exclusively by, members of the upper and privileged classes – though in reality they were always populated by a mixture of the high-born, the artisan and the professional classes – the north and south continued, even at that late stage, to retain their quintessential Englishness, with a vitality drawn from a shared heritage, and a common inheritance deeply-rooted in the Anglican tradition. What set them apart from other London boroughs was

their unique collection of village-like communities as diverse in character from area to area, as they often were from street to street.

Unfortunately, much of that inheritance has been allowed to vanish, and it is only a matter of time before what's left disappears altogether. That it has not done so already is due entirely, in my opinion, to the efforts of the Royal Borough's close on 200 residents' associations and amenity groups, varying in size and influence from those with a handful of members and limited objectives – the overwhelming majority – to a significant number whose ostensible purpose is to provide its members with a collective voice on a wide range of issues affecting their immediate environment and the quality of life of the residents who live in them. The Royal Borough, as ever a microcosm for the rest of London, and a principle sufferer in the government's plans to turn it into a major tourist city, has taken the brunt of the headlong rush into property speculation of recent years, and one shudders to think what it would now look like had it not been for its residents' associations, and "umbrella" groups such as the Kensington Society, and Chelsea Society. They have played a crucial role in minimising and holding back the tide of unwelcome developments which threatened, and continue to threaten, so many areas of the Borough. Their efforts on behalf of their local communities, and ultimately the Royal Borough as a whole, has been immense, and cannot be underestimated. The volunteers who run them, and the time they devote to the task, is often as great, if not greater than that of many an elected ward councillor, involving close scrutiny of all planning and licensing applications, regular attendance at meetings and planning appeals, site inspections and dealing with the volumes of correspondence entailed. With residential areas facing pressures from tourism, intensified demand for 'luxury' residential accommodation, food and drink outlets with late-night licences, not to mention the government's plans to deregulate all laws designed to afford the citizen a measure of protection, and the fact that all European Community nationals resident in Britain are now entitled to vote and stand for election to local councils, there is still a great deal, to be done. As the Council's powers to influence events continue to be diminished, the future of local democracy may yet rest in the hands of its residents' associations and amenity groups. They deserve to be cherished and supported.

Constitution of The Kensington Society

- 1 The name of the Society shall be The Kensington Society.
- 2 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.
- 3 **MEMBERSHIP.** The membership shall comprise Ordinary Members, Corporate Members and Affiliated Societies, i.e. amenity societies for areas within Kensington who apply for affiliation with the Society and are accepted by the Executive Committee.
- 4 **SUBSCRIPTIONS.** Corporate members shall pay a minimum annual subscription of £25. Ordinary members shall pay a minimum annual subscription of £10. Affiliated Amenity Societies shall pay an annual subscription of £10. The minimum annual subscription for different classes of members (ordinary, corporate, affiliated amenity societies) shall be such sums as may be determined by the Executive Committee from time to time. Subscriptions are payable on January 1st each year.
- 5 **THE OFFICERS** The officers of the Society shall be the President, one or more Vice-Presidents, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, the Hon. Secretary, the Hon. Treasurer and such further honorary officers as the Executive Committee may from time to time appoint.
- 6 **THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** The Executive Committee shall consist of not more than twelve members including the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.
- 7 (a) The Executive Committee shall be the governing body of the Society. It shall have power to (i) Make bye-laws; (ii) Co-opt members and fill vacancies on the Executive Committee or among the officers of the Society that may arise for the current year; (iii) Take any steps they may consider desirable to further the interests and objects of the Society.
(b) A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of not less than five members.
(c) Not less than three Executive Committee Meetings shall be convened in any one year.
- 8 **THE COUNCIL.** The Council shall consist of not more than thirty members. They shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The function of the Council shall be to support the

Executive Committee in any matters relevant to the objects of the Society.

9 GENERAL MEETINGS.

- (a) An Annual General Meeting of members of the Society, of which not less than 28 days' notice shall be given to members, shall be held in each calendar year at which the Executive Committee shall submit a Report and an audited Statement of Account for the year to the previous 31st December.
- (b) Other General Meetings of members may be convened from time to time by the Executive Committee on not less than 14 days' notice to members.
- (c) The date, time and place of each General Meeting shall be fixed by the Executive Committee, and the Chair shall be taken by the President or in his absence by some other Officer of the Society nominated by the Executive Committee.
- (d) Twenty persons present, being Ordinary Members or authorised representatives of Corporate Members or Affiliated Societies, shall form a quorum at a General Meeting.
- (e) Resolutions of the members in General Meeting shall (except where otherwise stated in these Rules) be passed by a simple majority of members present and voting on a show of hands, each members having one vote. Corporate members and Affiliated Societies must notify the Hon. Secretary of the Society in writing or the persons authorised to receive notice, attend and vote on their behalf, failing which they shall not be so entitled.

10 ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

- (a) The election of Officers of the Society (other than the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee) and of members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by resolution of the Members of the Society at the Annual General Meeting, and the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee shall be effected by resolution of the Executive Committee at its first meeting after the Annual General Meeting.
- (b) Subject to paragraphs (c) and (d) below, any Ordinary Member shall be eligible for election as an Officer of the Society or as a member of the Executive Committee.
- (c) Candidates for such election, other than those standing for re-election under paragraph (e) below, must be supported by nominations signed by two other Members, which nominations must reach the Hon. Secretary not less than fourteen days before the Annual General Meeting.
- (d) In the case of election as an Officer, the candidates must

also be approved by the Executive Committee, which approval may be conferred either before the Annual General Meeting or at the first meeting of the Executive Committee thereafter. If such approval be withheld the Office in question may be filled by the Executive Committee for the current year.

- (e) Unless curtailed by death or resignation or under paragraph (i) below, the tenure of office of the persons elected shall be—
 - (i) in the case of the President, until the third Annual General Meeting after his election;
 - (ii) in the cases of the Vice-President(s), the Hon Secretary and the Hon Treasurer, indefinite;
 - (iii) in all other cases, until the next Annual General Meeting after their election; but in cases (i) and (iii) those vacating Office shall be eligible for re-election
 - (f) The tenure of office of any Officer of the Society other than President may be terminated at any time by resolution of the Executive Committee.
- 11 ALTERATION OF THE RULES. No rule shall be altered or revoked except by a resolution of the members in General Meeting passed by a majority consisting of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting.
- 12 DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY. The Society shall not be dissolved unless a majority of two-thirds of the subscribing members signify their approval of such a course by means of a postal ballot taken after receipt by the said members of a statement by the Executive Committee, whom failing by not less than ten Ordinary Members or the President of the Society, setting forth a summary of the arguments for and against such a course and their or his views thereon.
- 13 SURPLUS ASSETS. In the event of such dissolution the surplus funds (if any) of the Society may be transferred to such one or more charitable bodies, having objects similar to or reasonably consistent with those of the Society, as may be chosen by the Executive Committee and approved by the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales

4th February 1991

Reports From Local Societies

THE BOLTONS ASSOCIATION

The most important planning matter to arise during 1995 was the application by MGM Cinemas to demolish the (now unused) Squash Club building adjoining the cinema in Drayton Gardens and use the site for an extension to the cinema, increasing the number of auditoria from 5 to 8 and the number of seats from 1,450 to 2,186. Architecturally the scheme was an improvement, but as it contained no on-site parking the prospect of a massive addition to the number of cars competing for space in the nearby residential streets was extremely daunting. The application was therefore strongly opposed by the Boltons Association (among others). The Council's Planning Committee was "minded to refuse", and MGM took a deemed refusal and appealed to the Secretary of State. This resulted in a 3 day public inquiry before a D.o.E. Inspector who has dismissed the appeal.

This decision should form a valuable precedent, reinforcing the provision of the U.D.P. about on-street parking. Whether it has thwarted the ambitions of MGM (now part of Mr Richard Branson's empire) remains to be seen; they claim to be able to achieve very nearly the same result within the envelope of the existing building without the need for planning permission.

Other cases that have occupied us include the redevelopment (as flats) of a very fine house at the corner of the Old Brompton Road and the road leading to the Boltons, once the home of Jenny Lind the "Swedish Nightingale", and the renaming of that stretch of road as "Boltons Place" at our suggestion and in preference to several much less appropriate names proposed by the Council officers. The proposed replacement of the "Len Street" garage in Drayton Gardens by a large block of flats also gave us concern but the application has now been withdrawn.

Sadly, we have to record the death on October 16th of Fred Oppé; our Treasurer of many years standing.

Chairman: James Macnair, 29 Gilston Road, SW10
Secretary: Barbara Schürer, 10 Gledhow Gardens, SW5

BROMPTON ASSOCIATION

The proposals submitted to the Council in May 1993 by London Underground Ltd (LUL) to redevelop South Kensington Station remains our major concern and we have been grateful for the support of the Kensington Society in pressing for improvements. The architects, Farrell & Co., have modified their original scheme

in response to consultation but we are still disappointed by its scale and appearance. We would like to see a reduction in the height of the residential element along Pelham Street and a uniformly high standard of design throughout to reflect the importance of the site at the hub of the Conservation Area. The effect of traffic generated by the scheme has also been a main concern. The Council is undertaking a traffic study of the South Kensington area to address the impact of the development of the station site but we feel the problems are still not being adequately addressed. The retention of the existing terrace along the south side of Thurloe Street has exacerbated the problem of achieving adequate pavement widths for pedestrians and satisfactory arrangements for bus stops. We also feel there is a serious flaw in LUL's proposals in not providing for a more direct link from the station into the existing underground tunnel to the Museums on Exhibition Road. Under the present scheme, all passengers will be brought to street level and many – especially visitors unacquainted with the risks of crossing Cromwell Road ahead – will be tempted to avoid going down again into the tunnel. The Council are awaiting further information from the developers on traffic matters and viability and it seems likely that a decision will not be made until the New Year.

Chairman: Sir Donald Logan
Hon. Secretary: Susan Walker

CAMPDEN HILL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

1995 has been a year of change for the Campden Hill Residents' Association. A vote revealed that three-quarters of the members who replied were in favour of an annual subscription which was duly introduced. Further to this, the Association has over 350 subscribing households. Most of our membership is through word of mouth but we hope to eventually send invitations to all households in our area. Changes to the Committee have increased our activity and we now produce regular Newsletters, which we hope will become a forum for members views.

Earlier this year we repeated the questionnaire regarding local facilities. The response was similar to the 1993 survey with traffic and parking remaining causes for concern. Members of the Committee recently met Mrs Hanham, leader of the Council, together with Councillors responsible for the CHRA area, to discuss these and other issues raised in response to the survey. Planning matters have been an important issue over the last year and it has been encouraging to see the completion of Observatory Gardens. Of recent concern is the possible redevelopment of the Thames Water site on Campden Hill, affecting the Campden Hill Lawn Tennis Club. The Association will strive to retain the Club and reduce the impact of any proposed development schemes.

The Association continues to hold strong links with Holland Park School since the arrival of the new head, Mary Marsh.

Members of the Association will be invited to an 'open' day or evening at the school, early next year.

1996 heralds the 25th anniversary of the Campden Hill Residents' Association. We hope you will join in our celebrations and wish us ongoing success for a further twenty-five years.

Mrs Anne Margaronis
Honorary Secretary

EDWARDES SQUARE, SCARSDALE & ABINGDON ASSOCIATION 1995 REPORT

Plans for the refurbishment and development of Earls Terrace have been a major concern for ESSA and local residents during much of the year. While we welcomed the proposals to restore a once fine terrace of houses, plans for sub-basement development extending under the rear gardens posed a serious risk to the many mature trees which are a valuable feature of the area. Temporary vehicular access was granted by the Highways department which led to large vehicles manoeuvring in the rear gardens at the eastern end and a number of trees suffered. After a number of meetings with the developers, residents and ESSA a compromise solution was reached allowing access to large vehicles via a designated route along which trees would be fenced off for safety and a concrete roadway laid to protect their root systems from damage.

Traffic continued to cause major problems for many residents who were able to air their grievances to the Chairman of the Environmental Services Committee, Cllr Paget-Brown, at our AGM.

Among the numerous planning applications during the last year, the scale and bulk of the proposed development at 4, St Mary Abbots Place caused particular concern. Several amended plans failed to address these concerns and the scheme was eventually passed by the Planning Committee on the Chairman's casting vote.

The Association is grateful to the support we have received from our members over the past year and look forward to an active 1996.

Chairman: His Honour Judge Gordon, 7 Edwardes Square, W.8.
Secretary: Mrs. Suzanne Anderson, 8 Phillimore Terrace, W.8.

KENSINGTON COURT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

First the bad news.

At our AGM in March were reported 58 recorded crimes in the past year including 25 burglaries and 31 vehicle crimes of which 12 were cars stolen, and two robberies (with one arrest). One mugging took place inside a mansion flat and security has been intensified. (Others are hereby warned ...).

Our problems with the rowdiness of Richmond College students and the Builders Arms pub remain acute at times. The publicans will not discourage these high-spending students. The College will

not control them. The Police will intervene only in cases of near riot. The nightclubs in the High Street aggravate the problem as students and others return noisily through our streets in the small hours. (Has any other neighbourhood Association found an effective remedy to this serious nuisance?).

We had various brushes with the Planning Committee who are there to preserve this conservation area, though you would not guess it from the decisions they take. We failed to stop the Azerbaijan and Belarus Embassies from setting up in our Court – that makes eight diplomatic missions in a tiny area, which is far too many. The FCO appear to have conceded that enough is enough and we will not have any more, but we shall doubtless have to fight again to keep this stable door shut.

We joined with others concerned, and the Kensington Society itself, to try to cut down the proposed over-development of 2-8 South End Row, and attended a hearing in November with dozens of angry citizens. But the Committee gave way to the developers. We shall now have to fight to limit the damage caused by construction traffic, noise etc. and traffic congestion thereafter.

We welcome the revised Unitary Development Plan – but wonder how much it will help in practice to persuade the authorities to resist the degradation of our area to which their own decisions contribute.

Now for the good news. On the planning and licensing side, precious little. But we do welcome Councillor Daniel Moylan to our area, where he now resides.

Sir Ronald Arculus
Chairman, Kensington Court Residents Association
November 1995

THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION

1995 has been a year of quiet progress for Ladbroke. Our Tree Subcommittee has made an excellent start. Our meeting for representatives of garden squares on 25th June was a great success, with all but one of our fifteen squares represented, and it is hoped to make this an annual event so that garden committees have a forum for matters of common interest. On the following day two representatives attended the English Heritage London Squares Conference and were elected to the committee.

In the summer the government finally produced its long-heralded amendments to the General Development Order. I cannot believe that the response to their consultation papers can have been in favour of the amendments which finally emerged and can only suppose that they are fonder of double-glazing salesmen than they are of people who care about the appearance of conservation areas. We are trying to get together with other area associations to press the Council to respond to the concerns expressed in an excellent paper produced in July by Mr French, their Executive Director of

Planning & Conservation, to impose Article 4 directions under their new powers in order to prevent some of the worst effects of the new permitted development rights now available to those who wish to spoil their houses. This is all a great disappointment, coming as it does in the year in which the London Conservation Areas Conference, of which we had such high hopes, was dissolved.

Visually, the most important event in our area was the restoration, with the help of English Heritage, of St Peter's Church in Kensington Park Road. Their new technique for restoring stucco was revealed, when the scaffolding at last came down, to have produced a most striking effect, especially after rain, but when it has weathered and we have got used to it it will be a great improvement.

Our events were once again very well attended, and we plan an expanded programme next year. Our Spring Walk explored three of our finest communal gardens; Piers Paul Read the distinguished author and local resident gave a fascinating talk after our AGM; and we have just held our best-attended Christmas party ever in another very attractively restored house.

Stephen Enthoven *Chairman*

NORLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

The aftermath of the recession has meant that there have been few planning applications of significance. The Committee has therefore been able to concentrate on matters of underlying concern.

Not least of these is the continued increase in traffic throughout the area. On 25th October therefore this Society set up a meeting, together with the Royal Crescent Association and the newly-formed Addison Road Conservation Society, at the Town Hall, with the Chairman of Highways and Traffic and with his principal officer, in order to voice our growing concern. In the event, HMG has so constricted local councils that little other than cosmetic adjustments to traffic flow can be made; so much for democratic government. In the meantime, we await a cell study of the traffic flows in the conservation area soon to be undertaken by the Council.

Similarly, we continue to press for the return of the bus route 12 to Holland Park Avenue, ending at Shepherds Bush. The Avenue is now very poorly served solely by the increasingly irregular 94 bus, whose notions of reliability and regularity make it a collector's item.

The Society is increasingly disturbed by the likely extremely deleterious effects of the huge Hammersmith and Fulham shopping mall development at White City on traffic flows in our area. We are glad to note that the Royal Borough is itself deeply concerned and that it is initiating a series of traffic investigations in relation to this mega-scheme, a scheme which in the view of many residents should not have been permitted.

The recent revisions to the General Development Order, releasing a significant number of building alterations from Council control, are highly disturbing. We keep a watching brief on this matter, basic to the preservation of the appearance of the area, and we hope to make representations to the Council together with the contiguous conservation societies.

Finally, on a more cheerful note, we hold our annual lecture on Tuesday 12th March 1996 in St James Norlands Church, Addison Avenue, W11, at 7.00 p.m. which will this year be by the well known Roger Phillips on the re-creation of Eccleston Square Gardens and on the conservation and development issues facing London squares. Members of other Kensington conservation societies will be more than welcome to attend, and they will be circulated later with details and price of tickets.

Chairman: Robin Price
5/7 Princedale Road, W11

ONSLow NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

Of our two oft reported "problem" sites, South Kensington Station and Brompton Hospital North Block, the former is still in the discussion stage with the Planning Office. The latter, however, will shortly be before the Planning Committee. At our 1995 AGM, held on 3rd April at the Royal Marsden Hospital, the developers, Tremerton Ltd., and their architects, the Hunter Price Partnership, gave a detailed presentation. This was well attended and the audience generally seemed to approve the development of the site, but expressed misgivings about parking and traffic generation. But more importantly, there was considerable disquiet because the proposals for the new-build wing buildings considerably overstep the designated new-build areas as indicated in the Council's Planning Brief which had been prepared, after much local consultation, back in November 1990.

Since our meeting, after consultation with the Council's Planning department, amendments have been made to the proposals, namely a reduction from 85 to 54 in the number of flats and some movement of, and reduction in height, of the new-build wings. This reduction, in part, was the result of the Council's insistence on the greater retention of internal features in the old building which is listed Grade II.

However, the Association has objected to the newly submitted proposals because it is felt that they still seriously overstep the Planning Brief, also there is concern regarding the survival of the fine interior artefacts of the old chapel, Grade II* listed, should it not survive for religious use, the obvious course being its incorporation with St. Paul's Church. We now await the decision of the Council.

The next largest project in the area, the development of the former garage site off Neville Terrace with a large private house,

previously reported in its planning stage, is now in the course of construction. While work has been slow, it is noted that a high standard of brickwork is being achieved, which bodes well for a finished structure of quality.

I see from reading previous reports, that car parking problems have features as a regular issue. I am afraid they are still with us especially the congestion ever growing in the Old Brompton Road. Much of this caused by large pantehnicons delivering and picking up at Messrs. Christies. The designated times allowed for loading and unloading are often ignored and the efforts of the traffic wardens are meagre in the extreme. We fear the problem will be exacerbated when Christies expand into the present Europa premises next door.

Chairman: Hugh Brady, 16 Selwood Terrace, S117 3QG.

PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

The Pembridge Association has been active this year in supporting the efforts of the Notting Hill Gate Improvements Group since a considerable part of this falls within the Pembridge Conservation Area. New paving, new street furniture and tree planting along the Bayswater Road has already made a huge impact and when the trees have matured the whole aspect of Notting Hill Gate should be transformed. A major effort is now being made to upgrade the shop fronts and shop signs and we are hopeful that the large number of tawdry second hand "Exchange" shops owned by Mr. Brian Abrahams will receive a facelift.

We are continuing to press the RBK & C to refuse permission to demolish front garden walls and convert front gardens into car ports in our residential streets. This has such a very serious impact on the whole street aspect, reduces the spaces available for street parking and actually encourages speeding traffic - Chepstow Place bears witness.

At a Public Enquiry we opposed a most contentious application to demolish the charming original arched window frontage to the shop at 49, Pembridge Road. Together with the Japan Print Gallery a few doors down these are the last two original frontages in the street and we believe them to be of significant value - historically and architecturally .

Chairman: Mr. D. A. Hales
Planning Secretary: Mr. John Scott

VICTORIA ROAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

This has been a year of major progress on the "big" developments in or adjacent to our area. The Prince of Wales Terrace "island block", after 10 years of increasing dilapidation, is at last being redeveloped behind the main façades. This will preserve and

enhance the unique character of Prince of Wales Terrace, with its three feathers motif, and almost unbroken run of railings at street and first-floor balcony level. The development, which will be completed in two years, will restore these details. We also look forward to a new lighting scheme and traffic calming measures.

The Waitrose site in Gloucester Road is now almost complete. The unwillingness of the owners of the Harrington Arms to ask a more realistic price has meant that the last opportunity of getting a supermarket to underpin the Gloucester Road shopping centre as the focus of the local community has been lost.

The last major site in our area, in South End, has recently received planning permission,. The scheme, consisting of town houses and flats, raised concerns in the local community about their height, density and traffic generation. Despite some minor changes to the roof line, the new development is still too large for the "village" scale of the area.

The speed of traffic in Victoria Road remains a problem. Our project for 1996 is to get a solution for this problem - perhaps the first 20mph zone in the Borough.

The issues of breach of planning control and repeated applications which fail still cause a great deal of concern.

Chairman: Mr Kenneth Woodward-Fisher
14 Albert Place, W8

Hon Secretary: Mrs Anne Woodward-Fisher



Christ Church, W.8.



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Telephone: 0171-937 1275/1592 Fax: 0171-937 9863



JAGUAR

Daimler

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Statement of Accounts
for the year
1995

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET
as at the 31st December 1995

1994		1995
£	£	£
	Assets	
0	Office equipment at cost	0.000
	(less depreciation)	
	Bank Balance - Current A/Cs	
1346	General Fund	913.96
2237	Princess Alice Memorial Fund	4208.01
	- Deposit A/Cs	
7699	General Fund	6524.87
5792	National Savings Bank Inv. Fund	6125.57
		<u>17772.41</u>
17074		17772.41
(15)	Sundry Liabilities	(75.15)
		<u>17697.26</u>
17059		17697.26
	Accumulated Funds & Assets	
14065	Balances as at January 1st 1995	14836.65
	Surplus (Deficit) from Income	
757	and Expenditure Account	(1302.25)
		13534.40
	Princess Alice Memorial Fund	
1416	Balances as at January 1st 1995	2237.35
	Surplus (Deficit) from Income	
821	and Expenditure Account	1925.51
		<u>4162.86</u>
		<u>17059</u>
		<u>17697.26</u>

T. B. H. Brunner
Mrs. E. Rudd

Hon. Treasurer
Hon. Secretary

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

Barclays Bank PLC
Premier Banking Centre
30 Sloane Square
London SW1W 8ZA

A. J. Snelling
Premier Banking Manager
10th February 1996

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
for the year ended December 31st 1995

1994		1995
£	£	£
	Income	
3665	Subscriptions	3665.00
499	Interest Received	569.41
1266	Receipts from visits	422.60
1140	Advertising in Annual Report	860.00
0	From Chelsea re UDP	0.00
0	Donations received	500.00
		<u>6017.01</u>
6570		6017.01
	Expenditure	
1152	Printing, Typing and Stationery	1689.96
953	Postage and Telephone	795.73
2536	Producing Annual Report	2692.00
0	Sundry Expenses	69.00
170	Subscriptions and Donations	50.00
816	Visits	643.83
138	Meeting expenses	378.74
48	Unitary Development Plan	1000.00
		<u>7319.26</u>
5813		7319.26
757	Surplus (Deficit) to Balance Sheet	(1302.25)
		<u>(1302.25)</u>

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
 PRINCESS ALICE MEMORIAL FUND
 for the year ended December 31st 1995

1994		1995
£		£
	Income	
730	Donations received	2817.50
1568	Sale proceeds	0.00
2	Interest	22.28
<hr/>		<hr/>
2300		2839.78
	EXPENDITURE	
	Cost of Memorial Garden	
602	Plants and fertilisers	554.65
335	Garden Help	125.00
0	Repairs to Irrigation	0.00
146	Sundry Items	214.62
232	Costs of Sale	0.00
163	Peat and Soil	20.00
<hr/>		<hr/>
1478		914.27
<hr/>		<hr/>
822	Surplus (Deficit) to Balance Sheet	1925.51

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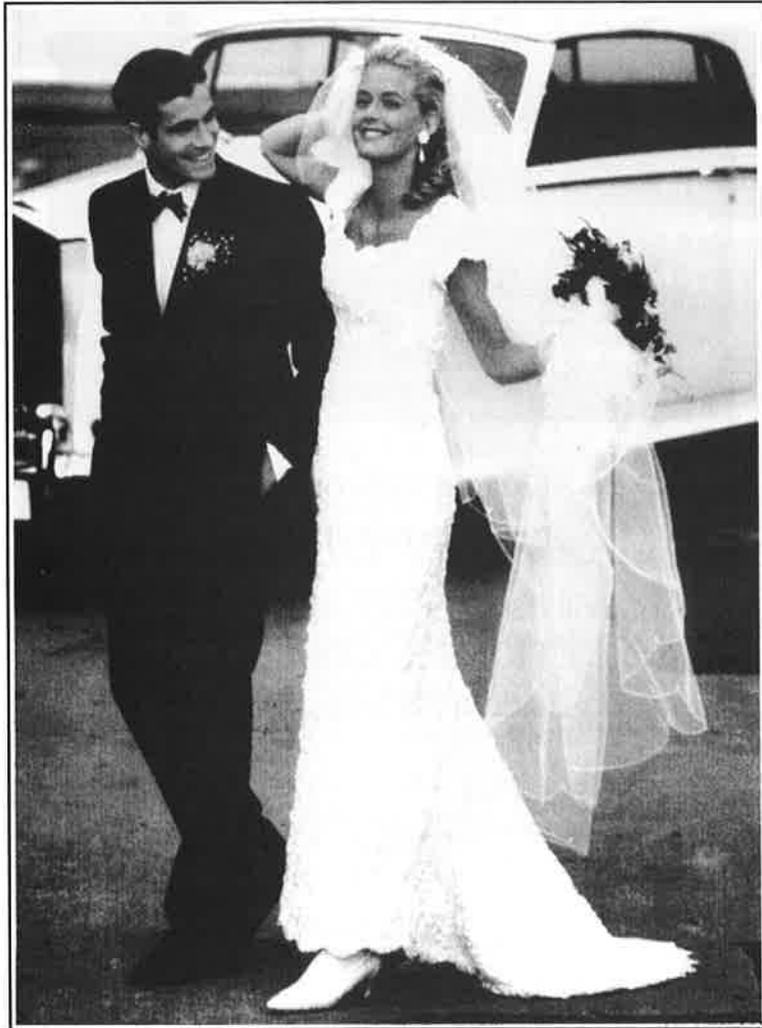
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& MONUMENTAL MASONS

49 Marloes Road, W8.

Tel: 0171 937 0757

Fax: 0171 937 0372

Also at:

74 Rochester Row, SW1. Tel: 0171 834 4624

83 Westbourne Grove, W2. Tel: 0171 229 3810

35 Malvern Road, NW6. Tel: 0171 624 7024

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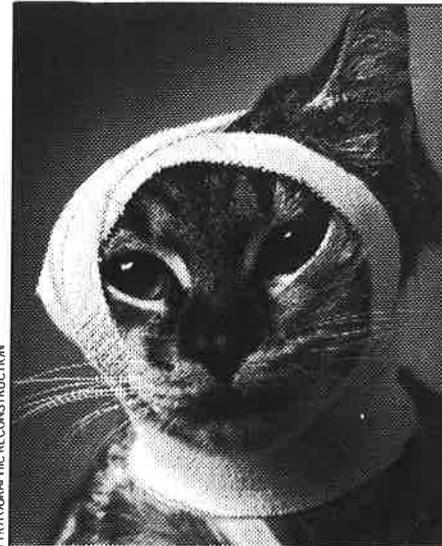
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THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

I,
(Full name)

of
(Address)

HEREBY COVENANT with THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY, c/o 15 Kensington Square, W8, that for a period of years from the 1st day of, 19....., or during the residue of my life, whichever shall be shorter, I will pay annually to the said Society from my general fund of taxed income such a sum as after the deduction of income tax at the rate for the time being in force will amount to the net sum of £10.

IN WITNESS whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this day of 19.....

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

WITNESS

ADDRESS

.....

.....

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OCCUPATION

SIGNATURE

.....

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