

THE
Kensington
Society



Annual Report
1997

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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. 267778

Annual Report
1997

*Kingston House, Kensington Gore
T. Hosmer Shepherd
By kind permission of The Royal Borough Kensington Library*



The South East View of Kensington Church and Church Street.

The Kensington Society

PATRON

**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, K.G., 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, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O.	Dr Peter Nathan
Barnabas Brunner	Sir Duncan Oppenheim
Philip English	Dr Stephen Pasmore
Ian Grant	George Pole
Peter de Vere Hunt	The Hon. Laura Ponsonby
Antony Jabez-Smith	Jack Single
Robert Martin	Martin Starkie
Michael Middleton, C.B.E.	Tom Wilmot
Michael Winner	

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sir Ronald Arculus, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O.	Harry Morgan
Michael Bach	Robin Price
Nickolas Case	Arthur Farrand Radley, M.B.E.
Mrs Angela Darwin	Miss Rees-Jenkins
Calvin Jackson	Mrs Ethne Rudd
Robert Meadows	Robert Vigars
Robert Milne-Tyte	Mrs Susan Walker

CHAIRMAN: Robert Vigars

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Robert Meadows

HON. SECRETARY: Mrs Ethne Rudd

HON. TREASURER: Nickolas Case

VISITS SECRETARY: Robin Price

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Mrs Angela Darwin

ANNUAL REPORT: Mrs Gay Christiansen

President's Foreword

WHAT a curious fuss we make about the end of a century. For some reason everyone has to have views, accounts have to be rendered and summations attempted. Most of what results is absolutely meaningless and of no real importance. Yet the lucrative industry grinds on, helped by the fact that this time it is not just a century passing. It would of course be quite a step forward if there were any agreement about when the new Millennium starts, but that is probably too much to ask of a society which cannot do simple addition without a calculator.

None of this would be more than a passing irritation, were it not for plans to waste a very substantial sum of money for a temporary structure on a disused gas works site in Woolwich. Here, we are told, some magical vision of the new Britain will be unveiled. I strongly suspect it will be no more than a glorified trade pavilion pushing the products of those companies who have helped finance it. What a chance has been lost! The amount it is costing could ensure the structural safety and survival of every English cathedral and leave some to spare. Or it could regenerate a whole range of currently blighted town centres. Or it could create an endowment fund to allow all our great galleries and museums to continue to improve their collections. There are innumerable ways in which £800 million could be spent to give a long term benefit to future generations. But no. The masters of image making, public relations and sound bites from all sides of the political spectrum have decreed otherwise.

This does not mean that no good will come of millennium funding, for there are other much more worthwhile schemes in the pipeline, the restoration of parks and the creation of cycle routes among them. These at least seem geared to the aspirations of ordinary people and their expectation that the Lottery might in some way improve their environment.

Having spent all my working life with organisations whose effectiveness was constantly impaired by financial shortage, I did at first feel that the Lottery might provide some hope. It has not proved so. The requirement for matching funding has been a real problem for many small organisations. And insufficient thought was given to the effect on budgets of the cost of running expensive new buildings. It is no good converting Bankside into an art gallery (a brilliant plan by two marvellous architects) without also taking into account that the number of people required to run it will double the Tate Gallery's wages bill. There is no provision for that.

A lot of people are going round claiming the Lottery has solved all the problems in both art and heritage matters. It is far from

true. And the situation has not been helped by the tabloid press whipping up resentment against projects in London or money for what, I suppose, we now have to call high culture. It is worth remembering that the grant to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, had nothing to do with the cost of the Royal Opera or the Royal Ballet. It was to make practical and serviceable a Grade I listed building whose access was so inadequate that it prevented the companies putting on as many productions as they would wish, and whose ancient stage machinery actually killed a member of the stage crew. The necessary saving of a great theatre was presented as if it were a private subsidy to rich lovers of opera. But once a prejudice is lodged with the wider public, it is hard to change the perception.

In the same way conservation societies are portrayed as the prerogative of a few well off people trying to prevent changes in their surroundings which might damage the value of their property. I am afraid that sometimes that is the impression we give. Yet, as I have often had cause to say during my time as President, not all change is for the worse. The important thing is to look at the whole picture.

It is now twelve years since I was invited to succeed my old friend Alec Clifton Taylor as President. The fact that in that time some of the worst proposals for change have been rejected has much to do with the constant vigilance of the Society. I hope that will continue, for it certainly continues to be necessary. I hope also that while maintaining its influence at the Town Hall, the Society will grow in numbers and widen its appeal to include a broader section of the inhabitants of this borough, for which we all have both affection and concern.

John Drummond

The 1998 Annual General Meeting will be held at the
Maria Assumpta Centre
23 Kensington Square, W8, on April 30th
6 p.m. for 6.30 p.m.
Chairman Sir John Drummond, C.B.E.
Speaker The Rt. Hon. Alan Clark, M.P.
'Personal experiences of the Heritage'

Annual General Meeting 1997

THE 44th Annual General Meeting was held on April 24th, 1997, at the Maria Assumpta Centre, 23 Kensington Square, W8, with the President, Sir John Drummond, in the Chair. Sir John opened the meeting by extending a warm welcome to the Society's Patron, H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, his words supported by applause from the assembly. Other distinguished guests, including Mr Michael French, R.B.K.C. Executive Director of Planning and Conservation, and the principal speaker, Mr Simon Jenkins, former Editor of *The Times*, were also welcomed.

Minutes of the 1996 A.G.M. were then carried, and the Annual Report adopted. The Chairman of the Society's Executive Committee, Mr Robert Vigars, expressed thanks to the Report's compiler and editor, Mrs Gay Christiansen, Vice-President of the Society.

The Society's accounts were formally approved, and the Honorary Auditor, Mr Andrew Snelling, thanked and re-appointed. All existing officers and committee members were re-elected, with the exception of the Treasurer, Mr Vigars explaining that with the resignation of Mr Hugh Wilson, a replacement would be confirmed at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. Messrs Calvin Jackson, Nicholas Case and Hugh Wilson would be co-opted on to the Committee.

Under Other Business, Mr Vigars urged members of the Society to participate in the meeting being held on May 1st, 1997, by the Friends of Holland Park, concerning the restoration of Holland House.

In bringing the business of the meeting to a conclusion, the President commented on the desirability of a larger membership for the Society, but took note of the vigorous existence of numerous smaller societies in the area.

In his talk entitled "How can Kensington develop yet still remain Kensington?" Simon Jenkins paid tribute at the outset to the impressive nature of the Society's Annual Report, the best, he declared, of the many such publications which reached him each year.

Surveying developments in Kensington during recent decades, Mr Jenkins recalled that period in the 1960s when the urge to demolish and rebuild was at its height. Even Leighton House had been considered for demolition by Kensington Council. That building had been saved, but the Imperial Institute had gone, leaving its tower in isolation, and thanks to the then Labour Government's subsidies to builders of hotels, the entire landscape

was now scarred by hotel towers. The argument at that time had been "You can't stand in the way of progress", an argument subsequently proved untrue, and one which had been thwarted by such victories in the Kensington area as the preservation of Holland House, Tower House and others in Melbury Road, properties in Kensington Church Street, and the Coronet cinema. Areas of conservation were, in fact, where many people wished to live and work, and thanks to the battles of the 60s, the present generation was the first able to feel safe in the belief that what was worth saving in Kensington would be saved. At the same time, proposals to change the use of buildings should not be automatically rejected, such changes should, however, be slow and controlled. But, said Mr Jenkins, there was today growing dissatisfaction with channels of protest, a result of the erosion of Council authority through the centralisation of power in Westminster. In other words, it seemed more difficult to stand up for "neighbourhood" interests than in the past. Thus the debate now taking place about a new structure of local government for London, the proposal for a professional, elected Mayor, was not unreasonable because the politics of London had become depersonalised. TV debate, for example, on such a matter as the future of the Tube was non-existent at present, whereas the idea of a mayoral race, as in such cities as Paris or New York, could revitalise local politics, to the considerable advantage of such a district as Kensington.

The meeting concluded with a short speech by the Patron, H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester, who, commenting as a trained architect, reminded his audience that for more than 50 years, from 1914 to the 1960s, very little new building had taken place in Britain. Therefore the learning curve had been far steeper for architects beginning to design the new projects of the 1960s, particularly since their efforts had been complicated by the demand for quantity rather than quality. Happily the rise of such pressure groups as the Kensington Society had focussed the need for better design and more concern for relationships with surrounding environments. Thus, said the Duke, he was delighted to occupy the post of Patron of a Society which spoke collectively on so many important matters bearing upon the everyday life of Kensington's residents.

In bringing the meeting to a conclusion, the President congratulated H.R.H. on his recent appointment as Knight of the Garter.

Chairman's Report

THANKFULLY there has been no "cause célèbre" in the planning of the Borough in 1997 but the Society has been engaged in much on-going work in its endeavours "to protect preserve and improve the Borough's buildings open spaces and other features" to quote from its objects as enshrined in its constitution.

The Executive Committee has set up four sub-committees to carry out this work and to set out the names of these and of their chairmen will give some indication of its endeavours:

Planning (Robert Vigars and Robert Meadows);

Transport traffic and the environment (Michael Bach);

Visits and lectures (Robin Price);

Membership and public relations (Angela Darwin, Ethne Rudd and Celia Rees-Jenkins).

These sub-committees have mostly met monthly and they report to the Executive Committee bi-monthly. The Society is most grateful to all who give so much time to serve on these committees and implement their decisions, co-ordinated by the Hon. Secretary, Ethne Rudd.

Some controversial proposals of the past such as the Fenelon Place redevelopment are now being implemented and we shall see whether the Society's forebodings were justified. Others such as South Kensington Station are pending. Yet others such as the Victoria and Albert Museum "Boilerhouse" project have (mercifully perhaps) been shelved for lack of finance. The redevelopment of the Campden Hill Waterworks is about to burst upon us.

The Society remains greatly indebted to Mrs Christiansen who has once more compiled this fascinating Annual Report and obtained essential financial support from advertisers. She has also (with the help of John Bickel) looked after the Princess Alice Memorial Garden which gives so much pleasure to the many hundreds of visitors to the Town Hall and the Library. The Society receives many tributes to the beauty of this Garden in the course of the year, including those from the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

R.V.

Kensington Society's News

HER Majesty The Queen has appointed His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, her cousin, to be a Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter. The Duke of Gloucester joins the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Kent as Royal Knights of the Most Senior Order of Chivalry, founded 650 years ago.

Robert Meadows, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, represented the Society on the panel of assessors for the Borough Council's Annual Environmental Awards. See page 20.

Acknowledgements

A few changes have taken place in the Committee during the last year. Mr Hugh Wilson has retired as Hon. Treasurer and Mr Nickolas Case has been appointed as Hon. Treasurer, and the following have joined the Executive Committee, Mr Calvin Jackson and Miss Celia Rees-Jenkins, O.B.E. The Chairman Mr Robert Vigars, Vice-Chairman Mr Robert Meadows and Mr Michael Bach have attended and reported on Borough Council Meetings and have examined and reported on planning applications before the Borough Council.

We are grateful to Mr Taylor, Chief Executive and Town Clerk of the Borough Council for the interest he has shown in the Princess Alice Memorial Garden, and in the oak tree which Her Royal Highness planted near the entrance to Kensington Palace, for the Kensington Society on December 7th, 1977. For some years the tree has looked as if it was growing up in a gooseberry bush. Telephone calls and letters to the Council's tree department have been without success. Mr Taylor was then approached and within days the tree has been seen by the tree department. Thank you Mr Taylor.

The Society is again indebted to Mr Jabez-Smith for reading a proof copy of this Report, and thanks are due to Miss Tracey Rust, planning information room, who has been very helpful with planning information for this Report. Many thanks are due to Mr John Bickel, a member of the Society, who has done much work on the Princess Memorial Garden.



Holland House. Published September 1789.

Car Parks Under Square Gardens

The Kensington Society supports the Borough Council in calling for a change in the law to stop developers building under Square Gardens. On September 25th, 1996, the Planning Service Committee granted planning consent and listed building consent for a 24-space car park under the access road at Earls Terrace. At the same time planning permission and listed building consent were refused for a 68-space car park extending under Edwardes Square Garden.

The developers appealed to the Secretary of State against the Council's Decision. The Inspector allowed the appeal.

"The Council appealed to the High Court on three grounds, namely that the Inspector failed to take into account the impact of the development on the character and integrity of the Square Garden, he failed to have a proper regard to the impact of the development of the Conservation area and he failed to have regard to the effect of the development on parking in the area."

On August 7th, 1997, the Council's appeal was dismissed by the High Court. After extensive and detailed submissions from both parties the Arbitrator granted consent for the construction of a 68-space car park under Edwardes Square Garden. The development was supported by Edwardes Square Garden Committee. I hasten to say *not* by E.S.S.A. (Edwardes Square, Scarsdale and Abingdon Association).

The Borough Council's report recommends that in the light of the above decision the Executive Director of Planning and Conservation and the Director of Legal Services be instructed to take preliminary steps towards trying to secure an amendment to the London Squares Preservation Act 1931 prohibiting development under Square Gardens.

Buildings at Risk

The Register of Listed Buildings at Risk was set up by English Heritage in 1991, Kensington Borough Council's Risk Register followed in 1992. The Register includes those buildings identified by English Heritage but also any listed derelict or partially derelict buildings or sites in the Royal Borough.

As a result of the publicity given to the Buildings at Risk initiative, further derelict buildings and sites have been identified by councillors and local residents and brought to the notice of the Borough Council. Since January 1992, 235 individual properties have been added to the Register, 133 individual properties have been removed from the Register as building works have been carried out and the buildings are no longer considered at risk.

The list can be seen in the Planning Department at the Town Hall.

The Iranian Embassy Site 117a/122 Queen's Gate

This building has produced many problems. The site has been derelict and unused for over 20 years. It was acquired by the Shah of Persia in the early 1970s for diplomatic and ambassadorial purposes.

Conditional planning permission was granted in May 1991. Due to the condition of the buildings total demolition was allowed in 1993. Although assurances have been given over the years that development would take place on this site, no progress has been made.

The Borough Council have stated that the time has come to take compulsory purchase action in order to ensure the proper planning of this site. Any action to secure the compulsory purchase of this site requires the agreement of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Secretary of State for the Environment, and they are being approached.

South Kensington Station Area

The Society has been concerned about the lack of improvement in pedestrian access to and from the station, across the busy lanes of south bound traffic. Mr Michael French, Executive Director of Planning and Conservation informed the Society as this Report was being prepared that the Borough was currently doing a comprehensive review of traffic flows in the area and looking at pedestrian problems. Mr French also said that early 1998 meetings with London Transport were being arranged.

Royal Parks

I have been asked by the Friends of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens to inform members of the Kensington Society that greater support is needed to protect our Royal Parks. Government funding has been cut from £24.6 million pounds to £21.7 million pounds in 1997. The Royal Parks may now have to seek commercial income.

While agreeing that such possibility should be explored, the Chairman Mrs Abensun warns that care needs to be taken not to cheapen the image of the Royal Parks.

English Heritage had proposed an illuminated advertisement selling T-shirts and jeans to be placed on the scaffolding of the Albert Memorial. This was objected to by the Friends of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens and by the Westminster City Council.

Membership Secretary of the Society: Dr H. Walker, 9 Rutland Mews South, London SW7.

Princess Alice Memorial Garden

The Garden was planted by the Society in memory of H.R.H. Princess Alice Countess of Athlone, G.C.V.O., G.B.E. who died January 3rd, 1981. She was the last surviving granddaughter of

Queen Victoria and she was Patron of the Kensington Society for 25 years.

It took a year to persuade the Leader of the Borough Council, Nicholas Freeman, to give the Society permission to transform the pool area under the Council Chamber into a Garden. The pool had not been filled in for two years owing to leakage into the underground car park.

The original plan for the Garden was drawn up by Mr Frederick Nutbeam who took a great interest in the Garden and supplied a number of plants. The Garden continues to be planted and maintained by Mr John Bickel, a member of the Society, and Mrs Christiansen.

It is with sadness that we report the death of Mr Nutbeam who died on May 16th. In 1953 Mr Nutbeam was one of the 120 people who responded to a discrete newspaper advertisement for the post as head gardener in London. He was not aware that he was applying for one of the most distinguished gardens in the country, that as head gardener at Buckingham Palace, a position he held until his retirement in 1978. Before his retirement he was appointed a member of the Royal Victorian Order. The Kensington Society was extremely fortunate to have Mr Nutbeam's help and interest for so many years.

The Garden had considerable difficulties in 1997 with the irrigation system, where the standing irrigation tubes were often broken, presumably by children. A new firm was employed, whose scheme avoided using the tall irrigation tubes, which cost £1,631. The Society records its gratitude to the Kensington Royal Borough for dealing with this expenditure.



H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester talking to Mr Nutbeam after H.R.H. had unveiled the Plaque on Princess Alice Memorial Garden.

Emslie Horniman Pleasance, North Kensington

The Emslie Horniman Pleasance is to receive a much needed face lift following a successful Borough Council bid for £1 million pounds from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The restoration of the Pleasance was initiated by North Kensington City Challenge, but it was the successful lottery application masterminded by the Kensington Borough Council, which made a full £1.3 million restoration possible.

The centre of the whole restoration scheme is the Grade II listed walled garden, designed by the celebrated architect C.F.A. Voysey, 1857-1941. Voysey's original plans and photographs have been unearthed from the Council's Local Studies Collection. The work has started and it is hoped that it will be completed by the summer.

Emslie Horniman was the son of Frederick Horniman who founded the Horniman Museum in South London. Emslie trained as an artist at the Slade School and later took over the family business. He represented Chelsea on the London County Council and was later a Liberal MP from 1906 to 1910. He had a strong commitment to improving urban conditions, purchased nearly an acre of land in North Kensington and offered it as a gift to be dedicated as a recreation ground. It was completed in 1914.



East Row inside Emslie Horniman Pleasance.

Dame Marie Rambert

The Society was delighted that English Heritage had decided to have a Blue Plaque erected on 19 Campden Hill Gardens in memory of Dame Marie Rambert. Dame Marie and her husband Ashley Dukes were members of the Kensington Society. Ashley Dukes attended the first meeting at which the Society was founded. He served on the Society's Council from that time to his death in 1959. He took a great interest in the Notting Hill redevelopment scheme and his last years were filled with dreams of building a great theatre at Notting Hill Gate. He was active in the theatre for half a century in the capacity of dramatic critic, playwright, producer and theatrical manager. During this long period he and Marie Rambert lived at 19 Campden Hill Gardens. We have letters and post cards in the Society's records from them both.

Obituaries

It is with sadness that we report the death of the following members: Wilfred Grenville Griffiths, Sidney Silver, Harold Devereux Still and Miss Emma Hess.

Wilfred Grenville Griffiths

William Grenville Griffiths who died on October 19th became a member of the Society when he moved to Kensington some years ago. His life-long interest was architecture but his father, a medical doctor insisted that his son should become a doctor or a lawyer. Consequently at Christ Church, Oxford, Grenville read law. But the love of architecture led him to work at first with the publishers Eyre & Spottiswoode then Batsfords and finally with a large firm of architects. Although never an architect himself he could be described as an architectural journalist.

A. Jabez-Smith

Sidney Silver

We record with considerable sadness that Sidney Silver died in mid-December 1996 following a heart by-pass operation. Though he had only been a member of the Kensington Society's Committee for a little under two years, his good humour, tact and senior experience in the travel industry enabled him to contribute materially to its greater efficiency, and to the effectiveness of the events programme for 1997 and for the future. His essential kindness and perceptiveness of action will be sorely missed.

Robin Price

Maud Emma Livingstone Hess

Miss Hess was born in March 1902. She died in April 1997. She was born in Leeds, the youngest of eight children. Her father was born in Germany in 1840, came to England in 1870 and founded a chemical business in Leeds. He died in 1912 and the family moved from Leeds to Courtfield Gardens, in Kensington. Miss Hess attended the Queen's Gate School from 1912 to 1916, she always spoke highly of the education she received. She went on to board at Rodean School.

After the death of her brothers she was asked to become the managing director of the London branch of the family business; which she did with great accomplishment between 1932 and 1963.

One of her great nephews Edward Hess is currently serving as Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Planning Matters

A report by the Chairman Robert Vigars

Liaison with Local Conservation Area Societies

Many local societies are affiliated to the Kensington Society but some are not. With a view to improving relations with these societies, the Society invited their chairmen and other representatives to a gathering at the Town Hall in March 1997. The Mayor kindly made his Parlour available for this purpose and spoke briefly in welcome. The Chairman of the Council's Planning and Conservation Committee, Councillor Bryan Levitt, also spoke to convey his appreciation of the work of the societies and the desire of the Council to improve liaison with them by means of the new Area Forums set up by the Council. The Society hopes to build on this initiative in 1998 and to encourage affiliated membership by all Conservation Area Societies. All are invited to apply to the Society's Hon. Secretary.

Area Forums

The Society had reservations as to how effective the Council's new Area Forums might be, but did secure modification by the setting up of two Forums to cover the Society's area instead of two which would have included Chelsea. So far the Forums have had only preliminary meetings.

Residential Forecourt Parking

The Society has continued its policy of objecting to all applications, mostly with success. However, a decision by the House of Lords (the Shimizu case) has made refusal more difficult and the Council is considering the possibility of fresh legislation.

Earls Terrace Underground Car Park

The Council's refusal of consent was sadly overturned by the Inspector on appeal, and an Arbitrator under the London Squares Preservation Act did not uphold the Council's objection. Here also the Council is considering the possibility of amending legislation.

Kings College, Campden Hill

A planning brief to guide redevelopment has been approved.

26-40 Kensington High Street

Objections to a number of different planning applications resulted in the granting of permission for retail use, health club and smaller restaurant (subject to conditions) in place of the former night club and large restaurant.

Science Museum, Queens Gate

An unsatisfactory elevation of a new building is to be reconsidered in response to objections.

Holland House, Holland Park

After minimum consultation the Council adopted an option for the re-building of the west wing in quasi-replica and an upper floor on the main building. The Society is concerned about the bulk and height now proposed as well as the traffic and car parking implications and may well have to oppose the grant of planning permission in due course.

Earls Court Conservation Area

Inclusion of 1-51 Warwick Road was agreed by the Council after representations made.

Kensington High Street Study

A controversial strategy prepared by consultants for the Council will be further considered during 1998: it seems likely to be considerably "watered down" which in the view of many would be unfortunate.

Albert Memorial Advertising

A proposal for a very large illuminated advertisement on the existing scaffolding was refused by Westminster Council.

Tethered Balloon, Hyde Park

Objections lodged with Westminster Council.

Vacant Land at Russell Road

Permission granted for dull, repetitive residential development despite the Society's objections.

Kensington Canal Lock-Keeper's Cottage

Despite strenuous efforts to secure preservation either in situ or on another site, this has now been demolished. Sadly, it was unlisted.

Robert Vigars

A Report from the Hon. Secretary

Mrs E. Rudd

Membership

Your Society continues to grow - which it must do if it is to be effective in its aims. We have had several new members this year, but we need even more - the greater the numbers the more we can do, so this year please make it your aim to recruit at least one friend.

At the beginning of the year we decided to divide up into sub-committees, so planning is now done by the planning sub-committee, which consists of Robert Vigars, Robert Meadows and Michael Bach and their report is elsewhere in this Report. Transport is looked at by Michael Bach and membership and PR by Angela Darwin, Harry Morgan, Celia Rees-Jenkins and myself.

In the summer we had a party at the Town Hall, by kind permission of the Mayor, to which we asked the chairmen of some of the local residents' associations and several of the councillors so that they could talk about their problems on an informal basis. It was a very successful evening and we plan to repeat it.

The Newsletter

We have started a twice yearly newsletter which is sent to all members. In it we put any planning activities we are engaged on, anything controversial, and the current visits. Members will notice that our visits programme is very exciting under the leadership of our Visits Secretary, Robin Price, and this adds greatly to the interest of the Society.

Kensington Gardens

We support the Friends of Kensington Gardens in their determination to keep the Parks free of advertising. To this end we added our voice to theirs in objecting to a huge advertisement of Ralph Lauren jeans being put on the scaffolding on the Albert Memorial. We also objected to advertising on a barrage balloon being tethered in the Park.

Kensington Palace Gardens

This is to be refurbished and in the summer I walked from one end to the other (much longer than you think!) with the Crown Agent's representatives and architects to see how they are going to deal with it. It seems to be very satisfactory and members will have read about it in the Xmas Newsletter.

Victoria & Albert

The Boilerhouse project to which we and the Knightsbridge Society strongly objected seems to have gone dormant for the time being, following their failure to get their lottery money.

Telephone Boxes

We only object to the new telephone boxes in environmentally sensitive places, and we did object when two were placed by the entrance to the Park just by the Royal Garden Hotel. I am very pleased to say that they have been replaced by old style boxes.

Some other cases dealt with

We have written letters of objection and supported our members over various problems at the following addresses:

69 Egerton Gardens, Addison Bridge Place, Petersham House, 17 Upper Phillimore Gardens, Down Mexico Way, McDonalds, and many others.

Appeals

We continue to write and support the Council's decision when it is appealed against particularly if we have supported it in the first place.

Environmental Awards 1997

IT is very much to the credit of the Royal Borough that it makes a series of environmental awards each year. This shows a positive interest in the quality of the built environment and a desire to encourage high standards of design. A weakness in the scheme is that it is reactive rather than pro-active; that is, it relies on buildings being nominated for awards rather than actively nominating buildings which are considered worthy. So, some good buildings may never be nominated. Perhaps local amenity societies should take more trouble to nominate for the awards.

Five different types of award can be made as follows: for new buildings, commercial development, general environmental improvements, restoration or conversion, and access for the disabled. Buildings may enter in more than one category. A panel of assessors is formed led by the chairman of the Planning Committee and including representatives of the Chelsea and Kensington Societies.

This year there were twenty-nine nominations in the various categories and these were well spread across the Borough. The assessment process starts by looking at drawings and photos which should show "before" and "after" views. Then selected examples are visited and finally the possible awards are discussed and, hopefully, agreed. This can involve some argument!

In the New Buildings category the response was disappointing and no full awards were made - there were three commendations. Clearly, there are situations when historical pastiche design is appropriate, but there is a tendency to resort to it as a line of least resistance, forever "keeping in keeping". This means that insufficient effort is made to develop a contemporary idiom of design as a contribution to the vitality and variety of the Borough's built environment.

Perhaps the most interesting new building was one of those commended - The Making Place, an annex to Barlby Road School, W10 - a largely timber building on an open site. Golden Cross Mews, Basing Street, W11, was also commended, as was Neville Street/Neville Terrace, commended mainly for the thorough-going attention to the chosen design idiom.

As shops and shop-fronts play such an important part in the main streets of the Borough, it was disappointing to receive only three nominations. None of these were considered worthy of an award.

In the Commercial Development category, the outstanding nomination was 37/42 Sloane Street, where extra storeys have been

added to the building with great skill in craftsmanship, choice of materials and detail design.

In many of the residential areas of the Borough the street scene is very much affected by the railings to the squares and communal gardens. In most cases the original railings were removed during the last war and replaced by rather poor temporary fences. The joint efforts of garden committees, the Council and English Heritage have led to the railings being replaced in many cases and three such examples were nominated in the General Environmental Improvement category. All three were of a high standard, but the award went to the Royal Crescent Garden railings for their very public enhancement of one of the Borough's architectural set pieces.

By contrast to last year when no award was made in the Restoration and Conversion category, this year it was possible to make two awards. This category calls for scholarly understanding of the character of a building and particular attention to materials and detail design. The awards went to two very different buildings. On the northern boundary of the Borough, Kensal Green Cemetery is a large open space with many interesting buildings and memorials.



Facade of Dissenters Chapel - Photograph A. Farrand Radley.

The small Dissenters Chapel has been well restored and a small new Visitors' Centre and entrance from Ladbroke Grove have been sensitively added. This was given an award. The other award went to a larger building also in the north of the Borough. This is Ladbroke Hall in Barlby Road. This was originally part of the former Rootes motor works. The large site has been

developed for housing and Ladbroke Hall has been converted for various social uses.

The remaining category of award relates to Access for Disabled people. This is an increasingly important matter especially in public buildings and it can present considerable design difficulties. Few nominations were made. The award went to the Action Disability Kensington and Chelsea Centre in Silchester Road. This is an interesting example of how, not only access can be made easy, but many internal design details can be arranged to facilitate convenient use by people with various forms of disability. In a sense this building was an obvious choice for an award, and it could be argued that it is a harder problem to adapt a building designed for general use to make it equally accessible for disabled people.

Is the general standard getting higher? In many cases it is let down by a confusion or lack of understanding of architectural language or by inadequate attention to detail design. But the Environmental Award scheme encourages architects and developers to aim at high standards of urban design in the Borough.

Robert Meadows, A.R.I.B.A., M.R.T.P.I., Vice-Chairman

Royal Crescent Railings

IN 1941, the Royal Crescent Garden Committee generously sold the original railings for £62 to aid the war effort. Link fencing was no adequate substitute; and with £80,000 saved, and with generous funding from the Royal Borough and from English Heritage, plus a very strong dash of determination from Helen Murlis, the Committee Chairman, the £215,000 project was completed, and celebrated by a splendid garden party, in 1997. Susan Walker was the architect, and the Norland Conservation Society supported the project through Gift Aid.

This western entry through a particularly dignified avenue is enormously improved. It is hoped that another square on this route will follow their splendid example.

Robin Price

St. Augustine of Canterbury Church

Queen's Gate, Kensington

"Yet under the Travers Baroque, in a lime washed whiteness
The fiddle backed vestments a glitter with morning rays
Our Lady's image, in multiple candled brightness
The bells and banners - those were waking days.
When faith was taught and fanned to a golden blaze"

Sir John Betjeman

1997 was an important year for St. Augustine's Church for it marked the 1,400 years anniversary of its patron Saint's arrival in England and the beginning of Rome's part in the conversion of England to Christianity. On May 17th, 1997, a special Eucharist Service of Thanksgiving was celebrated by His Grace The Archbishop of York - the Rt. Hon. and Rt. Revd. David Hope, P.C. assisted by the Rt. Revd. The Bishop of Kensington. The Mayor and Mayoress of Kensington were also present together with other distinguished persons. The stained glass window featuring St. Augustine was used by the Post Office as one of the official stamps commemorating the 1,400 years anniversary.

St. Augustine's Church was dedicated 125 years ago. The prime mover to build the Church was the Rev. Chope a curate of Holy Trinity, Brompton, who had come under the influence of the emerging Oxford Movement (the Tractarians) - two of its leading ordained theologians were eventually to leave the Anglican Church and be received into the Roman Catholic Church and eventually be made Cardinals - Newman and Manning.

Obtaining permission to create a new parish and build a new Church was beset with difficulty. The then Bishop of London was implacably opposed to the proposal and it was not until he was translated to Canterbury that his successor granted consent. A group of influential people offered a benefaction of £100 a year stipulating that the first incumbent was to be the Rev. Chope. A site was obtained and the well known Victorian architect William Butterfield (1814-1900) appointed (he was later to design the vicarage also). His design for the Church was estimated to cost £18,000. The Church, however, had to be built in two stages on account of insufficient funds. 1871 saw the completion of the Nave and adjoining aisles, and 1876 the Chancel and Sanctuary. Originally designed to seat 850 people internal rearrangements have since reduced the seating to comfortably seat 250, although 700 can be fitted in when necessary. Other remaining significant

buildings designed by Butterfield are All Saints, Margaret Street, W1 (1859), St. Alban's, High Holborn (1863), New Buildings at Merton College, Oxford (1864), Keble College Oxford (in whose hands the Living of St. Augustine's reside), the Chapel of Fulham Palace, and the Anglican cathedrals of Melbourne and Adelaide in Australia.

In the 1920s there was a reaction to the exuberance, ornateness and colour of Victorian architecture and St. Augustine's was not to escape this trend. Motivated at the time by a curate who had had some architectural training, it was decided to make the interior more austere and more in keeping with the Gothic spirit. The colourful interior was painted overall with whitewash; marble, alabaster, mosaics, stonework, the delicate patterned brickwork and the murals adorning the walls - nothing was to be spared in order to achieve the object of a stark interior.

Fashions, however, change. There was the inevitable reaction against the bleak and stark interior. Salvation came by way of Martin Travers, then a young up and coming professor at the Royal College of Art, who was commissioned at various times to add to the décor. First there was the Calvary, now in the North Porch. In 1929 Travers' masterpiece - the striking baroque reredos was erected. This dominates the interior and described by John Betjeman in one of his poems - "Butterfield by day, Travers by night". Matching the reredos in beauty and quality is the wooden Altar Frontal piece, gold on one side, black on the other with silver tear drops surrounding a Pieta. To create the massive effect of old gold, Travers used the technique of first covering the wood with a silver coloured foil, and then painting with a gold tinted varnish. Travers' fourteen stations of the cross date from 1933. Strikingly simple in concept they depict the events described only with no extraneous embellishments.

After the Second World War, Travers was commissioned to design a stained glass window to replace that destroyed by bomb blast. He did not like large areas of glass, and furthermore was determined to have none behind his magnificent reredos, so he deliberately spent the available money on the present window leaving the lower half to be blocked in. The eventual solution to the unfinished appearance was to paint the plaster to simulate the brick and stone work on either side, so that it looked like part of the Butterfield design.

By 1944, the whitened interior of the Church had become dingy and parts of the fabric needed urgent repairs. There was also, under the inspired leadership of the then incumbent, Father Hewitt, a strong desire to restore the interior to the original design of Butterfield but retaining the works of Martin Travers. A public appeal was launched to raise the necessary £150,000. Generous donations were received, including a £10,000 interest free loan from the Royal Borough (repaid on time) enabling the work to



St Augustine's Church Queen's Gate.

proceed. Repairs to the West Front were made and the task of removing as much of the whitewash and paint from the interior put in hand to reveal Butterfield's original designs. Much damage had resulted where paint had eaten into the stone and brickwork as well as the wood and it was not possible to strip off all the old paint as so much was painted over to simulate the original. The ceiling of the nave was pointed to imitate the original Oregon pine and that of the Chancel and Sanctuary is now resplendent with gold leaf and paint. Butterfield is now back again for new generations to admire and hopefully to value and conserve.

Later it became possible to replace the antiquated and inefficient heating system with a modern one. The present organ which dates back to 1872 and replaced the earlier original fine Father Willis one destroyed by fire, has also recently been repaired and restored at a cost of £50,000.

Now the task before the P.C.C. is to find the money needed urgently to replace the roof and guttering and to clean off and repair the exterior brickwork of the north and south side and the east end. The cost of this essential work is well beyond the resources of the existing congregation and a public appeal for funds is proposed as a millennium appeal.

If fine buildings such as St. Augustine's Church are to be valued and preserved the responsibility of doing so must be shared with the wider community, together with government financial support.

George Pole
Acknowledgments

St. Augustine's Church - The History 1871 -

Silver Thimble Fund

If you were walking along the Broadwalk in Kensington Gardens and you had the need of shelter from a sudden downpour, you would find the perfect refuge on one of the two "Silver Thimble Benches". Once settled there you would admire the view of the Round Pond nearby. You might turn to look at the back of your bench and learn that in 1919 your shelter was built with the proceeds of the "Silver Thimble Fund" in respectful memory of soldiers killed and wounded in the war. The second bench near you pays similar homage to the sailors.

The history of the Fund starts with the initiative of Miss H. E. Hope-Clarke, O.B.E., in July 1915 when she organised the first collections of old silver thimbles to be sold in aid of the sick and wounded. Their first major success was a motor ambulance for the Western Front.

The scope of her organisation grew dramatically until hostilities ceased in 1919 and its rebirth in September 1939 met the far greater needs of the Second World War. Honorary District Organisers set to work in this country and in "His Majesty's Dominions" overseas; to silver thimbles were added gold and all sorts of household treasures; funds raised were devoted to all forms of relief for war casualties, the major achievements were early ambulances on the land, on the sea and in the air. By December 1944, the Fund's blood-transfusion units had supplied 250,000 pints of blood.

Since then the Fund has been naturally diminished, two of its long lasting beneficiaries being King George V Seaman's Hospital and the Little Sisters of Mary Hospital, both in Malta. This connection led to the Fund being merged with the Little Company of Mary, its Sisters being devoted to the care of the terminally ill in their homes in West London.

The management of the Royal Parks has now authorised much needed restoration work of the benches. This will include two new plaques using original blocks of timber. Early next year those who take shelter on these benches will be reminded of the proud history of the Silver Thimble Fund.

Antony Carr-Gomm

THE "SILVER THIMBLE" FUND

Cash Statement for the Period

Dr.	RECEIPTS							
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		
Donations and Proceeds of Sale of Gifts	154,694	15	9					
Less Cost of Repairing Gifts for Sale	189	14	2					
Received from Melting down of Gold, Platinum and Silver				154,505	1	7		
Coins and Foreign Currency				162	1	6		
Interest on Bank Deposit and War Stock Investment				3,216	16	1		
Sale of Motor Chassis and Office Furniture				1,710	6	6		

£172,027 4 5

We have examined the above Cash Statement for the period of 1939-1945, with the Books and Vouchers of the Fund, and certify that it is in accordance therewith.

W. T. FLOWER, Chartered Accountant,
19, St. George's Road, Wimbledon, London, S.W.19.

14th December, 1945.

page twenty-four

THE "SILVER THIMBLE" FUND

3rd September, 1939, to 14th December, 1945

	PAYMENTS				Cr.			
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		
COST OF ADMINISTRATION :-								
Printing, Stationery and Advertising	1,795	15	6					
Rent and Rates	1,404	5	5					
Office and General Expenses	886	8	3					
Postages, Telephone, etc.	378	12	6					
Legal and Professional Charges	149	3	6					
				4,614	5	2		
GRANTS, DONATIONS AND ENDOWMENTS :-								
9 Mobile Canteens for the Middle East	6,650	0	0					
2 Flying Ambulances	10,000	0	0					
5 Mobile Hospital Units	6,319	0	0					
4 Mobile Bacteriological Laboratories	8,000	0	0					
16 Field Ambulances	6,970	0	0					
3 Mobile Surgeries	6,000	0	0					
3 X-Ray Sets	1,119	0	0					
5 Air Transport Ambulances	25,000	0	0					
Blood Transfusion Plants	7,200	0	0					
Air-Sea Rescue Launch	10,000	0	0					
Seamen's Dreadnought Hospital, Greenwich	10,000	0	0					
King George V. Seamen's Hospital, Malta	45,000	0	0					
Little Sisters of Mary Hospital, Malta	10,000	0	0					
Shipwrecked Mariners Society Welfare and Rehabilitation Fund for South East Asia Command	4,000	0	0					
Highland Prisoners of War Fund	250	0	0					
Red Cross and St. John Prisoners of War Fund	250	0	0					
Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital	5,000	0	0					
Royal United Hospital, Bath	1,000	0	0*					
Royal Sussex County Hospital	1,000	0	0*					
Cheltenham General Hospital	500	0	0*					
Sundry Donations to Hospitals and Institutions	2,154	19	3					
				167,412	19	3		
				£172,027	4	5		

A Mighty Mortification

ONE of the principal attractions of that part of Kensington Palace open to the public is the decorative painting of William Kent, particularly the intriguing group of figures depicted in Italianate style on the walls of the King's Staircase. But Kent's work at Kensington, which also includes the ornately-ceilinged Cupola Room, where Queen Victoria was christened, would never have been commissioned had it not been for the Sergeant Painter, the official state artist, pricing himself out of the job. Sir James Thornhill, the man concerned, had been invited to quote for the task of decorating three new state rooms built at the command of King George the First a few years after his arrival from Hanover in 1714. The story of the Sergeant Painter's "mighty mortification" was reported by a contemporary; "They asked him what he would have for one room. He said £800, which being thought too extravagant, and so represented to the King, he, without more ado, takes Mr Kent to Kensington and asked him what he would have for the same painting to be done. After having considered, he asked £300, which was agreed, and he set to work." Too late did Sir James offer to do the job "for what any other would do it".

The group of court contemporaries portrayed by Kent at the top of the King's Staircase include King George's two Turkish body servants, both former prisoners of war, the court dwarf, and Peter the Wild Boy, a forerunner of Tarzan, who was discovered in woods near Hamelin walking on all fours and climbing trees with the agility of a squirrel. Although he lived in England for a further sixty years, cared for by benevolent and well-connected individuals and in receipt of a royal pension, he never became truly civilised.

Having represented a cross-section of the Court, Kent obviously felt at liberty to place his personal stamp on the work, and so, on the ceiling above the staircase can be found a self-portrait of the artist, together with that of his actress mistress, and two pupils.

But in landing this important assignment at the expense of the Sergeant Painter, Kent had deeply offended the artistic establishment, with the result that they contrived to make things difficult for him. In May, 1722, "several of the best artists" were appointed to inspect his work at Kensington and report on it to the Board of Works. Not surprisingly, they were less than complimentary.

This predictably critical report provided the Board with an excellent excuse to delay payment of Kent's fee. A second body of experts would be asked to provide an opinion, it was decided. But by now the artist was running short of money, not to mention patience, so he addressed a complaint direct to the Treasury. The

fact that the King himself was highly satisfied with the work clearly had its effect on the Treasury's men because within a few weeks the Board of Works received a sharp note "directing Mr Kent be paid his money without any further exceptions whatsoever".

The new rooms which Kent decorated were built after it was discovered that the oldest part of Kensington Palace was in a state of near collapse. Initially an entirely new royal residence was considered, and Sir John Vanbrugh invited to submit plans. But the always-expansive architect proposed a building similar in scale and magnificence to Blenheim Palace or Castle Howard, his two most renowned works, whereas all the King required was a modest suburban retreat. Thus Vanbrugh's proposal was quietly shelved.

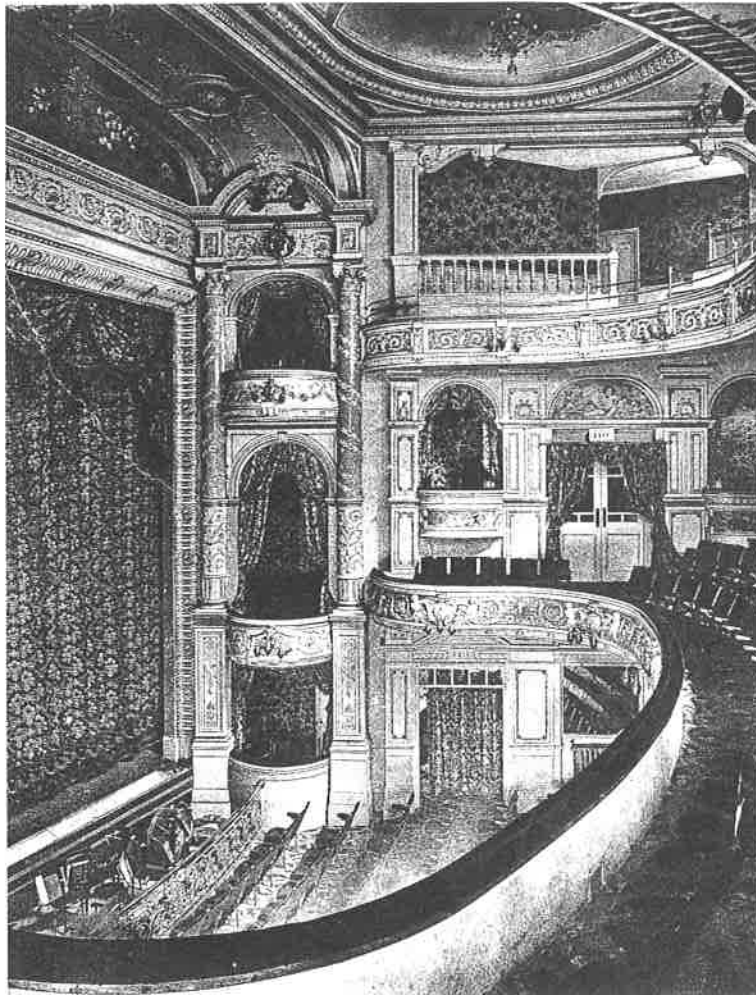
The King had first visited Kensington within three days of arriving in England, being accompanied by his lanky mistress, Melusine von der Schulenberg, soon dubbed "the Maypole", and his portly half-sister, Sophie von Keilmansegg, equally quickly known as "the Elephant". The visitors caught the staff at the palace on the hop, but all went well, the monarch having "liked very well" all he found there, according to an official who showed him round. But the real attraction of Kensington was the opportunity it presented to create a garden on the scale of that at Herrenhausen, his greatly enjoyed country seat in Hanover. With that in mind, he would tramp around the Kensington site for hours, exhausting his less than enthusiastic courtiers in the process. One of his first decisions was to enlarge the garden at Kensington by appropriating 150 acres of Hyde Park, those who objected being told "they should rather rejoice, seeing the whole would be laid out after the fashion of the Elector of Hanover's famous gardens at Herrenhausen".

A menagerie was also established there, leading in due course to an approach to the Treasury from the supervisor, who complained that "...the tigers at Kensington are so unruly that he spends much of his time in tending them, and has a man to help, for which he asks ten shillings a week." Eventually the supervisor found himself coping with a leopard and a lion too, but the noise which the animals made, and worries about their possible escape, led to them all being transferred to the zoo at the Tower of London soon after George the First died.

As for William Kent, his fortunes continued to flourish under George the Second, reaching a peak when in 1739 he was appointed principal painter to the crown.

Robert Milne-Tyte

The Valpys of Earl's Terrace



Coronet Theatre, Notting Hill 1898.

BUILDING in Kensington has always produced winners and losers. Earl's Terrace is in the news again with its massive re-development. This Georgian row originated as a speculation in professional homes associated with Edwardes Square. An uncertain start there resulted in the Frenchman, Louis Léon Changeur and London solicitor, William Elderton Allen both fleeing as bankrupts to France. Daniel Sutton (1756-1842), who then acquired the leases of the whole of Earl's Terrace and a considerable additional area in this vicinity, became one of the winners. A project which had faltered in 1812-13 developed successfully after he wisely became more fully involved only in 1820, when post-war recovery was assured.

Sutton was himself an early resident, at No. 6 from 1813 and then at the larger No. 25. *The Gentleman's Magazine* stated "that he possessed property amounting to nearly half a million sterling, including the leaseholds of very many houses in his neighbourhood." His son, also Daniel (1780-1871), lived nearby in a house soon to be occupied by Richard Valpy, Esquire, of an old Jersey family partly settled on the mainland since the previous century. His arrival eventually brought them the Sutton fortune, and four generations of his family dwelt there over the next twenty years.

The Revd. Richard Valpy, D.D. (1754-1836), only comes into our story since he died at 19 Earl's Terrace, where his son had resided for some time. Appointed at the age of twenty-seven, he became the most long-serving and distinguished Headmaster of Reading School. Opened with the Abbey over six centuries earlier, it was re-founded as a Free Grammar School by Henry VII. Valpy transformed it into one of the leading schools of the day, using his own money to improve its buildings. "To elevate it was the first wish of his youth, and to maintain it was the last object of his age." (Its on-going success would please him for in 1997, now "selective grant maintained boys", it achieved first place for A level results among such schools.)

He declined all other offers, including the Headmastership of Rugby, where Arnold presumably would have succeeded him. It is said he refused two bishoprics, though his politics as moderate reformer and "very warm and early advocate for Catholic emancipation" would not have helped him. Indeed an obituary claimed that his views "excluded him from preferment, until preferment ceased to be an object with him either of desire or regret".

He anticipated the modern Gideons by giving a Bible to every pupil. Revered by many for his kindliness, hospitality and sense of fun, he was also known as a "mighty flogger", then thought essential in any successful Headmaster, and was affectionately characterised as "the Reverend Duodecimus Wackerbach, D.D.". Excessive punishment led to rebellion in other schools like Eton and Winchester, where the army had to be called in. Valpy never provoked such violent reaction, continuing for fifty years into green old age and being succeeded by his youngest son when blindness overcame him.



The Reverend Duodecimus Wackerbach, D.D.

Dr Valpy as Chaplain of the Volunteers "arrayed in full field-day canonicals, his triangular hat on head, that almost inseparable and very useful companion, a well-knotted cane in hand, the said cane not now descending according to its wont, in full force upon the devoted shoulders of some careless giddy biped, that needed wholesome chastisement and strict discipline, but falling now gently, and almost playfully, upon the arched neck of the delighted and proud quadruped, converted for the nonce into a war-horse as he curveted in the ranks of 'The Corps'."

Perhaps the most singular thing about his eldest son, resident in Earl's Terrace, was the making of his marriage. Mary Russell Mitford relates this in a letter (December 8th, 1818) to Sir William Elford who lived near the bride's family in Devon. Phoebe Rowe wrote letters of "sense and kindness to her brothers" at school under Dr Valpy. She also wrote "flattery to the Doctor" who "fairly fell in love with her, not for himself, but for his sons". (Valpy was

now a widower twice over, with only one of his five sons married.)

When she was jilted by another, he invited her to stay, but she took to her bed after catching cold on the long journey. Still persisting, the Doctor "summoned his sons, according to promise", and set his first class of pupils to write a poem in her honour. These tributes he sent up by "his eldest and favourite son", together with "tea and oranges, coffee and flummery". The last was a barbed *double-entendre*, for it means both soft, bland foods and meaningless flattery.

The tactics were successful. Miss Mitford observes with relish that she "swallowed the flattery and the flummery, the love and the lemonade; she lost her heart and her fever; and when she left the room at the end of three weeks she was again an engaged woman." However, she cheerfully concluded that "this singular courtship has ... precipitated them into a marriage of affection rather than of convenience. I most sincerely wish them happy."

Richard (1783-1852) and Phoebe, settled in Earl's Terrace, raising their family, but he later moved to Edgbaston as an Official Assignee at the Birmingham Bankruptcy Court. In 1844 their eldest son, also baptised Richard (1820-89), was married by Archdeacon Sinclair at St. Mary Abbots to Emily Anne Sutton, daughter of their neighbour, Daniel Sutton junior, still at nearby No. 25. The couple stayed in the Terrace until they moved out to Wimbledon Common in the 1850s.

They illustrate the wealthy middle class tendency to leave an increasingly congested and polluted Kensington for cleaner air and more spacious accommodation elsewhere. Helping to edit the proceedings of the International Statistical Congress in London (1860), he later became Chief of the Statistics Department and Corn Returns at the Board of Trade. As sole remaining child when her father died, Emily Valpy inherited the Kensington properties and Champneys near Tring, with 270 acres (acquired by her grandfather about 1840), which made the Valpys the ultimate beneficiaries of Daniel Sutton's speculations. That estate became their country home, and he a J.P. for Hertfordshire with a town house in Rutland Gate, moving to Prince's Gate (then still in Kensington).

Their only surviving son, Arthur Sutton Valpy, was born in Kensington in 1849. Ordained after Eton and Cambridge, local connections continued as curate at St. Mary Abbots from 1875 to 1878, as the present building was being completed. He died a Canon of Winchester in 1909. His inheritance enabled him to follow his great-grandfather, the famous Headmaster, not only in his clerical vocation, but in his generosity towards its ends, since "his ample private fortune was most liberally devoted to the church". Among such benefactions to that Cathedral, the Epiphany Chapel remains his finest memorial.

The Revd. David Weeks

Peter Pan by Sir George Frampton, R.A.

A MEMORIAL TO THE JOY OF CHILDHOOD
by John Empson

ON the morning of May 1st, 1912, *The Times* appears saying there was a surprise in store for the children who go to Kensington Gardens. They would find, it said, a figure of Peter Pan on a stump of a tree. And so the May Day appearance of the statue Peter Pan - that was to become the delight of children worldwide - was first announced.

It was the gift of Sir James Barrie, Bt, O.M. (1860-1937), author and playwright. Born in Kirriemuir, his first play was performed in 1891. He introduced Peter Pan in *Little White Bird*, followed in 1906 by *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*, dedicated to Sylvia and Arthur Llewelyn Davies and their boys or "my boys", as Barrie possessively described the brothers that were the inspiration of his story.



Peter Pan, Kensington Gardens.

Peter Pan was then portrayed as but a babe of seven-days-old who escaped, flying over the roofs of London, to join the fairies in the Gardens. But the Peter Pan, as he was later to appear in the pantomime - first performed in 1904 - had matured to become a tough young character, capable of taking on the daunting Captain Hook.

The idea of a statue originated in a request to feature Peter Pan on panels in the children's shelter in the Gardens. But Barrie decided to go one better and so commissioned Sir George Frampton, R.A. (1860-1928), a leading sculptor of the day, to produce the statue.

Frampton, recognising Peter's development from the original book to the stage character, described his statue as having two parts. Peter Pan atop the stump, he said, drew its inspiration from the play. But the tree stump - with its fairies - had its origin in the book and it was, in fact, derived from the illustrations of Arthur Rackham (1867-1939), one of Britain's finest book illustrators.

The origin of Peter, himself, however, is a matter for conjecture. Barrie sent Frampton photographs of Michael, his favourite among the Llewelyn Davies boys. In one of the series of tragedies that beset the Llewelyn Davies family, he was the brother who was later drowned as an undergraduate at Oxford. But Michael was not the only inspiration for the statue. Frampton commented that he had three models, taking the best from each, but the final version, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1911, still came in for criticism. He was not Peter the pirate killer nor the babe from the original tale. Barrie, himself, commented that the statue "did not show the devil in Peter" and so it stands as a compromise but nevertheless a symbol of childhood happiness world-wide.

Peter then spread his wings. A casting, presented by Frampton, in Brussels was unveiled in 1924 by the young Princess Marie Jose, who, with her country occupied, had spent the First World War in England. Its inscription thus commemorates the bond of friendship between the children of Britain and those of Belgium.

Another in St. John's, Newfoundland, having again a childhood connection, was presented in 1925 by Sir Edward Bowring of an old Newfoundland merchant family. It is a commemoration to Betty Munn, Bowring's god-child, drowned in a shipping disaster.

A further casting in Camden, New Jersey, USA was unveiled in 1926 by an eleven-year-old, dressed as Tinker Bell, at a children's Peter Pan festival. A similar festival marked the unveiling of another in Sefton Park, Liverpool, in 1928 and Barrie sent a telegram, characteristically saying: "For Heaven's sake don't grow up when they remove the swathing sheet."

A casting in Perth, Australia, was presented by the Perth Rotary Club in 1929, again, as a gift to children but this time to those of Western Australia. The last is in Toronto, Canada, placed in 1929 after Frampton's death under the supervision of his wife,

Christabel, herself an artist in her own right. Further reproductions then ceased and Meredith, Frampton's son, wrote: "To prevent inferior copies of the statue being made, my father decided that all the original material was to be destroyed and I had the unenviable duty of carrying this out."

But the link between Peter Pan and children still continues. On his death in 1937, Barrie bequeathed the copyright of his story to the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children and, on its expiry in 1987, a unique amendment to an Act of Parliament was introduced such that it can now continue in perpetuity.

On the anniversary of Peter Pan's first appearance in Kensington Gardens, on May 1st this year, H.R.H. Princess Margaret, a childhood friend of Barrie, unveiled a commemorative plaque at the statue. It was presented by the Friends of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. It is one of their series on the outstanding collection of statues in the Gardens, designed so as to helpfully inform the many visitors, and so it reminds them of the story of "The boy who would not grow up".

The Statue of Queen Victoria

by Princess Louise, her "Unconventional Daughter"
in Kensington Gardens
by John Empson

SOON after Queen Victoria (1837-1901) had arrived at Addison Road station on June 28th, 1893, to drive in an open carriage along Kensington High Street to the Palace, the heavens opened and a torrential shower of rain descended. The hoods of the Royal carriage had to be closed and the welcoming throng that lined the route disappeared into a forest of umbrellas while the Royal Escort of the local regiment, the Second (South) Middlesex Rifles, stood stoically to attention and got very wet.

It was an inauspicious start to a day that was intended to become a landmark in Kensington's history. The Queen had returned on a visit to the Palace where she was born and, as a young girl, had been told she had succeeded to the throne. And her statue in commemoration of her Golden Jubilee, done by her daughter, Princess Louise, and a gift from her loyal subjects of Kensington was to be unveiled.

There are - or so it is believed - some 150 statues of Queen Victoria. They are to be found throughout the length and breadth of - as it then was - the British Empire. A city of any consequence had to have one. The biggest, and certainly the most significant, is Sir Thomas Brock's masterpiece outside Buckingham Palace. The monument used 2,000 tons of marble and 70 tons of bronze. Unveiled by King George V in 1911, it was the centrepiece of a major reorganisation of the entrance routes to Buckingham Palace that created The Mall and involved the construction of the Admiralty Arch. All in all, it took seven years to complete.

But the best must, surely, be that of the young Queen of 19 years in her coronation robes that stands with a quiet and graceful dignity in Kensington Gardens. It is located, looking out towards Westminster, by the Broad Walk with the Palace that she grew up in as a backcloth. And, as the only statue of the Queen in her youth, it is unique.

Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll (1848-1939), the sculptress, was the Queen's sixth child. *The Times* recorded that "she was the least bound by convention and etiquette of any of the Royal Family". She was a versatile and talented artist with, unusually for a member of the fairer sex, an interest in sculpture. She first studied with Mary Thorneycroft, then went to the National Art Training School in Kensington and became the pupil of Sir Edgar Boehm (1834-1890), the Queen's "sculptor-in-ordinary". A strong attachment developed between pupil and mentor. It was, in fact, the cause of gossip and it led, in the end, to the Princess, in a very distressing experience, being present in his studio when he died of a heart attack.

The idea of the statue came from the Princess's brother-in-law, the Rev. Edward Carr-Glynn, the Vicar of Kensington, who became the chairman of the occasion's organising committee. There is also, in fact, another example of her work in St. Mary Abbotts Church - a memorial to her two brothers, Alfred and Leopold - and a further one - to the soldiers of the Dominions who died in the Boer War - came later and is more prestigiously placed in St. Paul's Cathedral. Working in her studio in the Palace it took her six years to complete her mother's statue and, on its first appearance, it was thought of such quality that it was said that Boehm had assisted her. Perhaps, he did. But it was certain that his successor, Sir Albert Gilbert, also one of Boehm's pupils and the sculptor of "Eros", did, since his wife, impatiently wrote: "I shall be very glad when that tiresome Princess has finished her work."

In the end, the great day for the unveiling arrived. Stands for 850 had been erected around the site but that was not enough. Everybody who was anybody was there. In particular, the Kensington artists of the "Melbury Set", led by Lord Leighton, were well represented. Then, in the words of the *Kensington News*,

"as if by magic", at the critical moment of the Queen's arrival, "the rain ceased, and the sun shone brilliantly".

As the ceremony proceeded, the Princess presented to her mother the silken cord attached to the drapery covering the statue. The Queen then passed it on to her son, the Prince of Wales - later, of course, King Edward VII. He finally did the trick but was assisted, according to the record by two bombardiers of the Royal Artillery. Then, as the Union Jack fell away, the statue emerged and the crowds clapped in delight.

The Rev. Edward Carr-Glyn formally handed over the statue for the safe-keeping of the First Commissioner for Works, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, M.P., who was responsible for the statues of London. He assured the Queen, as a man who knew about such things, that the statue "would be highly regarded not only as a portrait of a beloved Sovereign by an accomplished artist but, also, what is unique in public statues, the portrait of a mother by her daughter".



To the strains, again of the "National Anthem", Her Majesty departed, being driven in her carriage along the Broad Walk, lined with the children of the parish schools, to Paddington station and she travelled thence by train to Windsor Castle. It thus turned out in the end to be a good day for Kensington. But, although a pleasurable duty, it surely proved a challenging day for the Queen, an elderly lady entering her 75th year.

References:

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Darling Loosy, Letters to Princess Louise, 1856-1939: Elizabeth Longford. Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1991.

Royal Artists from Mary Queen of Scots to the Present Day: Jane Roberts. Grafton Books, 1987.



*South view of House, from Drive.
From Holland House by Princess Marie Liechtenstein.*

Kensington Society Events

February-July 1998

Wednesday, February 11th **Lecture by Philip Ziegler**
Philip Ziegler, a long-standing resident of Kensington, distinguished historian, biographer and writer, has kindly agreed to talk to us about Sir Osbert Sitwell, the subject of his forthcoming biography. With so excellent a biographer, and so egregious a subject, the lecture cannot fail to be absorbing. A glass of wine will be provided on arrival.

Meet at 6.00 for 6.15 at
15 Kensington Square, W8 **£5 per person**

Monday, March 16th **Spencer House, SW1**
Spencer House, built 1756-66 for the 1st Earl Spencer, is London's finest surviving 18th century town house. Designed by John Vardy and James 'Athenian' Stuart, its rooms are among the first and grandest neo-classical interiors in Europe. Recently magnificently restored, its splendour is worth many visits.

Meet at 9.45 for 10.00 inside the main entrance,
27 St James's Place, SW1
(nearest tube, Green Park) **£10 per person**

Tuesday, March 31st **Kensington Housing Trust, W11**
Since 1926, K.H.T. has achieved wonders in ameliorating housing for the deprived; latterly, with its flagship project on the Wornington Green Estate, with City Challenge funding. Securely conducted in coach by K.H.T.'s PR Director, we shall visit some remarkable new schemes, Bridge Close (for the homeless), Evelyn Fox Court (sheltered housing scheme), a new Peabody site for housing, the Boathouse (for the disabled) recently awarded a major prize, and Wornington Green Estate. The area is now well on its way to major transformation, with substantial reductions in vandalism and crime. As part of the Borough's initiatives for its underprivileged citizens, it needs to be seen.

The price includes the coach and tea provided by K.H.T. at the Boathouse.

Meet at 1.30 sharp at
18 Kensington Square, W8 **£12 per person**

Wednesday, May 20th

**The Watts Gallery, Compton,
Guildford**

G.F. Watts (1817-1904) quintessential Victorian painter and sculptor, lived in Little Holland House, was a close friend to the painter Leighton and others of the artists of the Melbury Road set, and built this gallery to house over 200 paintings (his and his contemporaries'). Here also are plaster casts of Physical Energy (Kensington Gardens) and Tennyson (Lincoln), De Morgan tiles, and much else. The visit includes an introductory talk by the Curator, tours of the Gallery, the extraordinary art nouveau Chapel and Cloister, also of Compton Church - which has everything and much more, that a medieval church should have. Coffee, lunch and tea in the famous Gallery Tea Shop at individual choice and payment. The fee includes coach hire and donation to the Gallery and Church. This visit is not to be missed.

Meet at 9.30 sharp at
18 Kensington Square, W8 **£24 per person**

Wednesday, June 20th **St. Mary Abbots Church, W8**
Kensington's Parish Church, whose spire cleaves the sky, was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and is a splendid expression of Victorian Gothic. We shall be guided around the stained glass windows by Fr. Frank Gelli and the vestments by the vergier, with plenty of opportunity to view seated in the pews. Bring binoculars and opera glasses. Your fee, after expenses, will go toward the maintenance of the Church.

Meet at 2.30 inside the South Porch (accessible from
the cloister of Kensington High Street) **£5 per person**

Wednesday, July 8th

**Lecture and Dinner at the
Army & Navy Club, SW1**

Our summer meeting joins the new Sydney Smith Association for a Lecture and Dinner. Sydney Smith (1771-1845) founder of the *Edinburgh Review* (1802), Canon of St. Paul's, lover of life, good living, wit and drollery, shone in the Whig salons of Holland House. We are fortunate to have Dr. Leslie Mitchell, Fellow of University College Oxford, expert on Smith, speak to us before dinner. The fee includes lecture, dinner and room-hire. Cash bar, and reasonably-priced club (and other) wines available at choice.

Meet at 6.15 sharp at the Army & Navy Club, 36 Pall Mall,
SW1 (entrance just within St James's Square; nearest
tubes Green Park and Piccadilly Circus) **£25 per person**

Guests are welcome at any of these events.

The Kensington Canal Lock-Keeper's Cottage - a case study

THE only surviving building on the only canal in the Borough has now gone. Its passing presents an object lesson in preservation which, alas, has been learnt only too late.

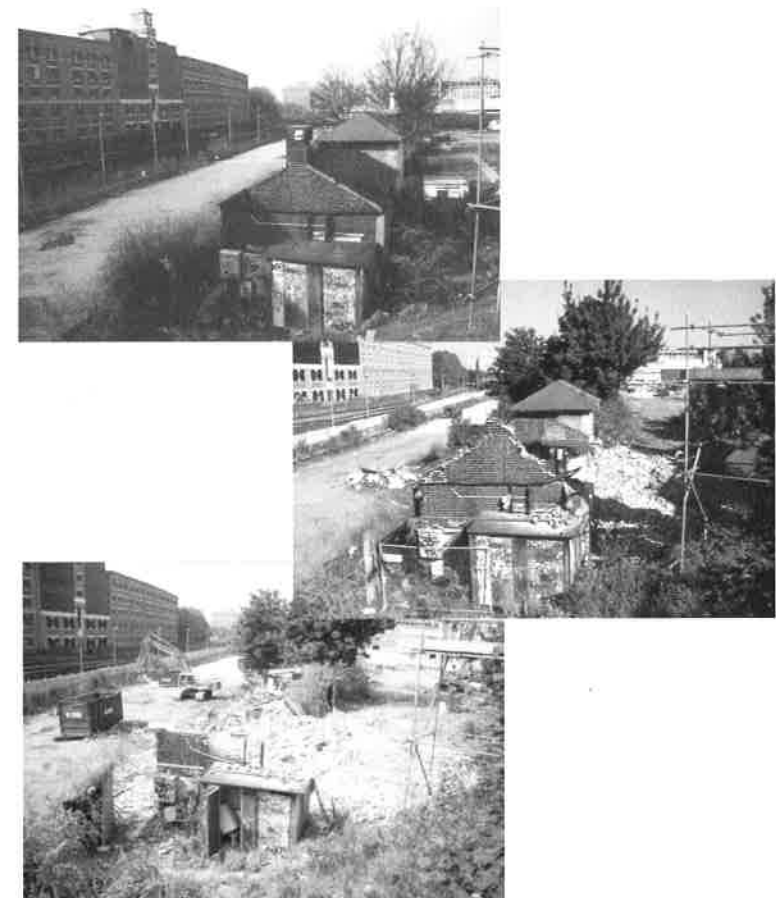
The lock-keeper's cottage was built just south of the canal basin which was its northern terminus, in the rectangle now framed by the West Cromwell Road, West London Railway, Warwick Road and Kensington High Street. Opened in 1828, the canal was never more than a flawed commercial venture backed by the second Lord Kensington, William Edwardes (of the Square). It gained a northern connection through the West London Railway of 1844 which branched off from the early Great Western and London & Birmingham under the fascinating title of the Birmingham, Bristol & Thames Junction Railway. It only lasted, however, until 1863 when it was overbuilt by the West London Extension Railway to form the present through line, also used by Eurostar trains to reach their "hotel" at Wormwood Scrubs. The only water left - and it was all tidal, hence the need for that lock - is at the south end past Lots Road Power Station which it helped build. There are some unique mudflats and an infilled stretch up to the Kings Road still housing a sunken barge should you feel like a little excavation.

No one would say that the cottage was an architectural masterpiece and it is not even homogeneous since the West London Railway built on a boardroom in 1845. This was until recently the Club room of the Kensington Rifle & Pistol Club, there since 1909 but now doubly hit by Dunblane and eviction since the Council had sold the whole site to Tesco. There had been two previous attempts by enthusiasts to have the cottage listed but, they both failed. Nevertheless the Society determined to try once more and this time enlisted the support of the Georgian Group, the Council of British Archaeology, the Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society, British Waterways and the Inland Waterways Association. You might well have thought that this was enough but not a bit of it: English Heritage said No again. "Although of an early date and of some local interest, this building is now divorced from its original context and it is considered that there are better examples of canal and railway architecture." Maybe: but this was *our* cottage the only one on *our* canal, in *our* Borough. And Georgian to boot: how wrong can you get?

But that was that, and neither the Council nor Tesco would relent now. The Society and the Inland Waterways Association still tried hard to preserve it. There was strong support from the local Press (*News* and *Times*) and a TV spot on Carlton's London Regional News. British Waterways made a last-ditch attempt to persuade the Council to relocate it on a projected Eco site. But it was all in vain, and the bulldozers moved in on August 16th. "History Dies" proclaimed the *K & C Times* in large type on the front page.

Even the bricks were sold off by contract with the demolition firm for use on "period" buildings elsewhere: the only one left is in my fireplace - by grace and favour, may I add hastily. All that can be said is that the cottage has been carefully measured up and photographed so that any Phoenix-like operation you may care to mount can take it from there.

Arthur Farrand Radley



*Kensington Canal Lock-keeper's Cottage.
Photographs by kind permission of A. Farrand Radley.*

Hyde Park like other Royal Parks owes its origins to Henry VIII's love of hunting. For it was Henry who in 1536 took over land including what was known as the Manor of Hyde from Benedictine Monks, enclosed it and used it as a private hunting ground. It was to remain a royal venue with the respective monarchs arranging hunting expeditions, military reviews and other entertainment for themselves and visiting guests until 1637 when Charles I opened the Park to the public. At once the Park became a popular meeting place with Londoners and it continued to hold its attraction over the centuries.

This map is produced by kind permission of Richard Briggs, O.B.E. Proprietor of British Horse Society, Riding Stables Hyde Park.



Please note all the statues described in this and previous Reports are marked.

The Kensington News 1869

THE earliest copy of *The Kensington News* is dated January 23rd, 1869, two previous issues having succumbed to the fragile condition which threatens the rest of the file, brown with age, the edges as brittle as dried leaves. There are four pages and the price was one halfpenny.

The publisher, the 36-year-old printer, James Wakeham, had set up business 15 years earlier at 4 Bedford Terrace, Silver Street (now 118 Kensington Church Street) where he lived "above the shop" with his wife and four children.

Wakeham had already made his first venture into publishing, the *Kensington and Chelsea News*, in 1865, a successor to the tabloid-sized weekly produced by Charles Strutt, another Kensington printer, for a brief period from 1854-55, and to whom it is generally believed Wakeham had been apprenticed as a boy, at a shop at the lower end of Church Street.

In 1869, Wakeham replaced his *News* with *The Kensington News and West London Times*, a broadsheet. His timing was good, on the verge of the 1870s Kensington was a place of change and expansion, the High Street, lately no more than a winding lane, was being widened and new lighting installed. The old parish church of St. Mary Abbots was about to be demolished and rebuilt and the new Metropolitan Railway stations had just opened at Notting Hill Gate and Kensington High Street.

By this time Wakeham was also one of the largest jobbing printers in the area with over forty hand-setting compositors employed at various premises in addition to those in Church Street, with contracts for the government as well as the Vestry, local businesses and schools. The early printing presses were steam-driven. (With mock modesty, Wakeham explained to disappointed readers who could not obtain copies of the paper because it had sold out, that there was "a limit to even the power of steam machinery"!) Later a gas engine was installed to power the heavy newspaper press. Much of the construction work was carried out by Thomas Small Wakeham's stalwart machine minder, a giant of a man, who erected the overhead shafting in the various works (all the machines were operated by pulleys). Mr. Small was also a bricklayer and carpenter and helped to erect the extension behind the frontage at Bedford Terrace where the basement was already being used to print the newspaper, until the neighbours complained about the noise and vibration and a larger works was leased at Rabbit Row.

On his death in 1885 Wakeham was succeeded by his son, James junior, who inherited nothing of his father's zeal and his death at the age of only 46 in 1900 left the family with no male heir, the

running of the business passing into the hands of more distant relatives by marriage and family friends, including Henry Manfield, Wakeham's executor, and a cousin, William Hill, who remained a director until his death in 1929.

In 1901 the business became a limited company and a modernisation programme began. One of the first Monotype machines was installed with casting equipment in the basement at Church Street, operated by electricity. The directors also decided that a horse-drawn cart was no longer needed for everyday use and it could be sold to the carman, Mr. Beadell, for £15, on the condition that the company would have first call on its use on Fridays and Saturdays if necessary to deliver the paper!

The First World War was a time of serious set-backs as labour became scarce with many of the employees leaving to join the Services, some never to return. Thomas Parr, one of the first keyboard operators, was able to remain, being over age and continued to serve the company until the late 1930s as did also Thomas Rigg and William Hall, who became joint overseers in 1931 and it was at about this time that a woman Monotype operator, Florence Mills, joined the firm.

The Kensington News was one of the few newspapers in London to be printed during the 1926 General Strike and a vast amount of printing work was done for the government, with the men often working 24 hours a day. At this time Linotype equipment was installed and new foundations dug at Rabbit Row to lay reinforced concrete flooring that would withstand the weight of the new flat-bed presses, automatic feeders and folding machines.

For several decades the whole of the 118 Church Street building had been used as offices and composing rooms, the weight of the "stones" (the huge steel-topped tables on which the type was set in the formes) necessitating special supporting beams being installed beneath the floors already bending under the strain.

Business was again severely restricted after the outbreak of the Second World War. Advertising and printing revenue fell dramatically but the newspaper still appeared every Friday, despite appalling nights and dangerous journeys to work by employees who never failed to turn up, the younger members having already departed to the Services or war work.

The main office and the Rabbit Row works had several miraculous escapes. A bomb in Brunswick Gardens sent debris crashing through the roof at Church Street (on publishing nights in heavy raids the machine-minders would take cover under the presses). Later, in the 1944 Flying Bomb attacks, the shop front was blown out when a V1 hit the lower part of Church Street near Vicarage Gate one lunch-time, with tragic loss of life.

The redevelopment of Notting Hill Gate in the 1960s and the expiration of the lease at Rabbit Row spelt the end of the works and the paper had to be printed by an outside contractor, although

the type was still set at Church Street. In 1965 the whole of the share capital of what was then two companies, James Wakeham and Co. Ltd. and The Kensington News Ltd., was bought by the North West London Press Ltd. publishers of the *Kilburn Times*, although the title of *The Kensington News and West London Times* survived and continued to bear the Church Street imprint.

This also marked the end of the band of printers, many of whom had worked for the firm all their lives. Bill Hall had already retired before the war, having served the firm for 52 years. Another long-serving member was George Klippel, who was born at Notting Hill Gate and went to St. Georges School in Kensington Place only yards from 118 Church Street where he started work in 1902. In 1938 he took over as general foreman and it was much due to him that the paper never missed an issue right through the war. He had the pride of seeing his son, Cyril Klippel, growing up beside him in the trade. George Klippel collapsed on his way to work in 1958 and died a few weeks later. Cyril succeeded him as foreman. In 1910, Walter Tomkins aged 14, was sent out by his mother to buy a *Kensington News* to look for a job. The advert he answered was for an errand boy at *The Kensington News* office. After a while he was taken on in the printing works and remained as a loyal, skilled member of the firm until he retired after fifty years producing the paper he bought for a penny.

Two clergymen edited the paper in its early days. In 1878 it was Dr. Maurice Davies who was succeeded by the Rev. Dr. Clarke. Mr. Frederick Gasson took over in 1917, remaining until his death in 1935. After a short spell under Mr. Oscar Cook Miss Joan Young became the first woman editor until 1941 when various people helped to run the Editorial Department in the difficult war years, when paper rationing sometimes cut down its size to four pages.

Barbara Denny, who had joined the paper as a junior reporter in 1938, continued to work for it as a freelance during her period with the National Fire Service, returning to become editor in 1944 until the formation of the London Newspaper Group which bought up all the West London local newspapers in 1972 and still includes *The Kensington News* among its titles.

During its independent years *The Kensington News* had the privilege of sponsoring the Brighter Kensington (later Brighter Kensington and Chelsea) Scheme and Garden Contest, founded in 1953 by a group of local residents to celebrate the Queen's Coronation and nurtured by one of the paper's last directors, Marjorie Thom, who had joined the firm as a junior in 1931.

Fulham Past, by Barbara Denny, new publications.
See advertisement, page 75.

Rachel Alexander

RACHEL ALEXANDER was born at Aubrey House in 1872 and lived there until her death in 1964.

Her great grandfather who founded Alexander's Discount Company, bought this charming 18th century house which borders on the west with its magnificent neighbour Holland House and to the south with Thorpe Lodge (now the Holland Park Comprehensive School). The Alexanders were cultivated people and gradually their home filled with fine furniture, old masters and contemporary pictures alike. Whistler's portrait of Cecily Alexander is now in the Tate.

Rachel's brothers and her three sisters married and moved away. However, as there were no male heirs Rachel, now Miss Alexander and her youngest sister Miss Jean lived on as Queen Regent and Lady in Waiting at Aubrey House.

They were known as "The Ladies" and between them they initiated support and encouraged every worthwhile charitable organisation in North Kensington. Miss Alexander as a trustee of Campden Charities did much to launch the Campden Institute which educated 100 girls in the three Rs and domestic skills. On a strict budget, different groups of pupils each week learnt to cater and cook for the whole school. When it was amalgamated with Holland Park Comprehensive School, the girls were taught how to make canapés instead of cottage pies!

Miss Alexander was a founder member of the Kensington Housing Trust, possibly her greatest achievement. It was fitting that its 71st birthday was celebrated at Aubrey House this summer, the last such event before it was sold. The Alexander Club was also part of her vision for the children of the neighbourhood and she chaired it until it was amalgamated with the Feathers. The writer joined all three committees in the 50s and much enjoyed Miss Alexander's practical advice and kindly authority.

As both wars took their toll and old servants died, new ones were loath to labour in an unmodernised rambling house. The ladies finally lived there entirely alone. Being unsuited to domestic chores they were in danger of dusty malnutrition. A favourite nephew came to the rescue by persuading his old Nanny to care for them. On one occasion when the ladies found to their horror that they were actually eating *butter* they scolded Nanny roundly for profligacy. She was able to prove that at that moment it was no more expensive than margarine. Perhaps it was wiser not to mention that it was also nicer.

However, before the Second World War, I remember a magical summer evening at Aubrey House when Vaughan Williams conducted some singing and there were delicious refreshments in

the long rooms, lanterns in the trees, roses glimmering in the garden and guests walking, talking and laughing across the lawn. This was hospitality at its highest level.

The ladies who greeted us on that occasion were equally at home in the potteries and piggeries. They were forever sorting out jumble for various sales and would cogitate about prices and consider what to keep for themselves, at double the value. The result was occasionally rather unfortunate.

B.N.B.

Kensington Housing Trust (K.H.T.) - Background

K.H.T. was set up in 1926 to provide homes for those most in need with the knowledge that good housing is a first step to the attainment of good health and education, leading to greater opportunities for residents. It has come a long way from 23 homes in 1926 to just over 3,000 now. However, despite housing nearly 9,000 people locally it still remains a community-based organisation, and while good, affordable housing is our top priority, we are always aware of the need to provide further support.

Many areas where we work suffer from typical inner-city problems - overcrowding, unemployment, poor amenities - so helping residents to help themselves is a key priority. All our recent housing developments offer housing, but many offer far more.

Bridge Close, North Kensington provides homes for families and shared housing for single people, many of whom were once sleeping rough and now have the chance to train for jobs.

The Boathouse Centre, North Kensington provides homes built for disabled people above a fully accessible sports activity centre. The Boathouse has won several awards including two environmental awards from the Royal Borough and *The Evening Standard* Award 1997 for the best new development by a housing association.

Westfield Close, South Kensington provides affordable housing and shops in Chelsea built on the site of a redundant ambulance station. Westfield Close was opened in June 1996 by H.R.H. The Princess Margaret who commented on the fact that her mother, H.R.H. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother opened K.H.T.'s first housing scheme in Kensington in 1929 as H.R.H. The Duchess of York.

S. Payne

Campden Hill Waterworks

A meeting of around 100 members of Campden Hill Residents' Association (C.H.R.A.) was held on November 26th at the Town Hall. The purpose was to give Thames Water the chance to explain controversial planning proposals for its site on Campden Hill.

The meeting was good-tempered and informative. But nothing can disguise the extreme concern felt by Campden Hill residents at the substantial addition to private flats and houses in what is at present largely open space. The traffic and parking implications are horrendous, particularly for Aubrey Walk and nearby streets.

Thames Water owns two reservoirs, built in 1868. English Heritage has refused to list them and the nearby pumping station. The reservoirs are now redundant. The company's development proposals include demolition of the eastern reservoir and the pumping station and rebuilding Water Tower House, an unattractive residential/office block in Campden Hill Road itself. The tennis club, though its future would be secured, would lose half its courts. From approximately 20 residential units now, the total would rise to about 100.

According to the Unitary Development Plan, the whole site should be open space and for this reason the Council has indicated its opposition to the proposals in their present form. At the time of writing, these were due to be submitted formally for planning permission by Christmas.

C.H.R.A. has been monitoring the situation over the past two years and first drew it to the Council's attention in spring 1996. Under the umbrella of C.H.R.A., we are putting together a working group of the residents in Airlie Gardens, Kensington Heights and Aubrey Walk to coordinate action. Our public and private response to Thames Water has been one of implacable opposition to the current plans, citing the sheer scale, problems of access and loss of open space.

The Kensington Society has kindly offered their support. We are all going to need each other's help as the planning process takes its remorseless course.

Anthony Land



Great Campden House in its original state.

Some Notes on Campden Street

"HOWARD'S hayrick has smelt abominably for the last two nights." So wrote young Fanny Horsley in 1834 from the family's 1720 house on the other side of what is now known as Kensington Church Street - No. 128. The house looks westwards over what was then, much of it, still fields and open ground, known as The Racks. But some terraced houses for middle class people had already gone up in Bedford Gardens and two St. Marylebone builders, John Punter and William Ward, had already built a row of small houses and shops along the street opposite 128 - the northern end of Kensington Church Street then called Silver Street - "Silver" because of its many pawnbrokers, older residents used to say.

Punter and Ward then went on to lay out two new roads, again of small houses, running up Campden Hill - Peel Street and Campden Street. They wanted to cater for "a different social group" from that in Bedford Gardens.

It was William Ward who took on building Campden Street. He started, rather slowly, on the north side but by 1839 had built sixteen houses, the last five separated from the others and running down eastwards from Peel Passage. The south side of the street he developed even more slowly. In 1832 he sold the land west of what is now No. 72 to give larger grounds to the grander houses in Bedford Gardens. (With two notable exceptions, the added land was first built over by two sculptor's studios, some cottages and some coach houses for Bedford Gardens residents, fronting Campden Street. These in turn have been largely modified or replaced by the modern houses put up in the last twenty years or so.)

William Ward died in 1850 but not before commissioning other builders. One, Henry Gilbert, a local man, built the terrace on the south side (Nos. 72-84) in 1854-55 and the Campden Arms, now No. 34. (The pub lost its licence in the First World War.) Two terraces were also built in the gap between Ward's two stretches of houses and the terrace running up the north side from the Campden Arms completed the street.

By a happy chance, the height of the terraces seems absolutely right in relation to the width of the street: the general effect then must have been as pleasing as it is now.

The next milestones were 1865, when the trench for the Metropolitan Railway was dug and 1910, when the School of Art was built for its founders, John Byam Shaw and Rex Vicat Cole, two notable painters of their day. Shortly afterwards studios were built at No. 71. Both the school and the studios have since been turned into flats.

The different social group for which Ward and his successors built were shopkeepers and artisans - some of them, no doubt, skilled workers who had served a long apprenticeship. The houses had six rooms and an earth closet - on the south side, in the small garden and, on the north side, in the yard. By the end of the 1880s there were shops with living quarters above them at several points up to No. 15, those below the railway bridge remain to this day.

After the First World War some pioneers of a different class came to live here and antique shops began to replace others more useful to residents. During the last war, there was a Warden's post at No. 8, which then had a basement, and a street shelter on the south side, roughly half way up. Luckily not one house was bombed. Agatha Christie, who owned Nos. 47 and 48, lived for most of the war in No. 47 and let her grown-up daughter live in No. 48. Her house in Sheffield Terrace had been damaged by blast. The Byam Shaw School was requisitioned and became a factory for making protective gloves.

I think the first change in its character happened with the building of the Byam Shaw School of Art in 1910. A number of artists moved in at that time, a few still living here in the 1970s. Such people as Middleton Todd the portrait painter at No. 71, the sculptress, Margaret Wrightson, at No. 63, now rebuilt and, much later on, first at No. 11 and subsequently at No. 73, Dorothy Hutton, the first scribe and painter. She was appointed an M.V.O. for inscribing the Prince of Wales' letters-patent, signed and sealed by The Queen, when he took his seat in the House of Lords. The lettering on the royal tombs in Westminster Abbey is also hers. In the 1960s the old inhabitants moved and their houses, now very valuable, were sold to small professional families who in their turn often left after a few years for finer things.

Since 1949 the houses have been enormously improved, but with the removal of the old working families something valuable has gone.

Yes, it was in the 1960s that the character of Campden Street began to change rapidly. It was to try to maintain the old charm that the Campden Street Preservation Society was founded in 1964 "to preserve the character and amenities of Campden Street", and was much encouraged a few years later when the street, from the bridge up, was designated a Conservation Area by the Royal Borough "to preserve and enhance the character of the neighbourhood". Since then, the Society has endeavoured to do just that. It has the signal virtue of being devoted to this one street only.

This article was written by Jane Liddendale, O.B.E. who died last year. An obituary notice appeared in the 1996 Annual Report.

Kensington High Street: A Report on Progress

1997 was supposed to be the year when at last something would start happening in Kensington High Street. It has passed, a lot has happened, but there is nothing yet to see for all the activity.

At the end of 1996, when I wrote the last report on the future of Kensington High Street, the Council had just received the draft strategy for the High Street from their consultants, Urban Initiatives. As I described in last year's report, the scheme would reallocate the space in the High Street, leaving less for moving traffic and providing more for pedestrians and generally improving the quality of the environment.

At the meeting of the Kensington High Street Working Party of December 12th, Councillor Levitt, Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee reported that both Councillors and Officers were overwhelmingly in favour of the principle of the scheme, though there were some reservations about the traffic arrangements.

Exhibition

Following a presentation to the Kensington High Street Working Party on March 19th, the proposals were the subject of a public exhibition held at the Commonwealth Institute from March 20th to 22nd and from March 24th to April 7th at the Town Hall. Even though the event got little publicity (the King's Road Study exhibition was held, at much the same time, in two shops at either end of King's Road with notices on every lamppost), the exhibitions were relatively well attended and produced a lot of feedback for the Council.

Members' Working Party

The results of the public consultation exhibition were reported to the Highways and Traffic, Environmental Services and Planning and Conservation Committee in June. It was agreed that a Kensington High Street Members' Working Party be set up, made up entirely of Councillors - Councillors Levitt, Holt, Donaldson, Moylan and Horton. Members of the Kensington High Street Working Party, made up of representatives of the Kensington Society (Robert Vigars and I), residents' associations and the Kensington High Street Association, were excluded. This new Members' Working Party has met once, on October 29th.

Since there has been no meeting of the Kensington High Street Working Party this year, apart from the presentation before the exhibition on March 19th, it is difficult to report progress. The

Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee has indicated that the likely priorities for action will be to:

- * review planning policies for the High Street;
- * develop environmental improvements, such as better street furniture;
- * improve and increase the number of pedestrian crossings; and, later
- * widen pavements and provide continuous pavements across side-road junctions.

None of this is likely to start until the 1998/99 Financial Year.

Public Participation

There is considerable frustration about the slow rate of progress, particularly among the traders who see the threat of the White City shopping centre looming. The impetus provided by the Kensington High Street Draft Strategy appears to be getting lost. The Society, the residents' associations and the High Street Association are all eager to play their part in developing a strategy for the High Street - a strategy that is more than a set of one-off projects, rather a long-term action plan requiring concerted effort and continuing management. We recognise that this involves more than one or two working party meetings a year. It will need several working groups that actually work, and we are prepared to make the effort. We have a stake in the future of the High Street and we want a say in its future.

It is quite clear that finance is not the problem - the Council generates a surplus of some £10 million a year from parking, which could pay for the works in the High Street ten times over. The Council is being cautious, perhaps too cautious, about making the changes to the road layout.

It is understandable that some residents only see the High Street as a street to drive down, but many of us, for whom it is our local shopping centre as well as a High Street, see it from a pedestrian's perspective. This is also how most visitors see it. At the moment it is a nightmare when it is busy - the pavements are too narrow in key places, the pedestrian crossings are very inconvenient and there is a lot of conflict between cars and pedestrians, particularly at side road junctions. The High Street Strategy will address all of these issues. Let's get on with it!

Michael Bach

Campden House

OLD Campden House (*see page 52*) and its grounds stood approximately within the square now formed by Sheffield Terrace (on the north), Hornton Street (on the west), Gloucester Walk (on the south) and Kensington Church Street (on the east).

It was built by Sir Babbist Hicks in 1612. He was created Lord Campden in 1628 from his estate at Chipping Campden in Gloucestershire. It is from this title that Campden Hill derives its name. Although Campden House can never be compared with Holland House, either for size or for beauty of design, it had architectural features suitable to the rank and wealth of its owner. The first Viscount Campden died in 1629, one year after being raised to the peerage. The title devolved to his son-in-law, Edward Lord Noel (died 1643), and the house was owned by the Hicks and Noel families until 1719.

The third Viscount Campden was a zealous Royalist who lost much of his property during the Civil War. He was permitted to keep his estate by paying the sum of £9,000 and making a settlement of £150 a year on the Commonwealth ministry. He resided chiefly at Campden House during the Protectorate, and the Committee for Sequestration held their meetings there. Charles II honoured Lord Campden with special notice and supped with him at Campden House after the Restoration. The mansion was rented by Princess Anne (afterwards Queen) who resided there for about five years (1691-96).

In 1735 the estate was purchased by Stephen Pitt, who let the house, and it became a boarding school for girls. The school closed down in 1847 or 1848, and in that year the Pitt family let the house, gardens and surrounding grounds (apparently on a development lease) to a firm of builders, Messrs. Little, who proceeded to lay out certain new streets but sub-let the house itself and its immediate gardens to Mr. L. T. Wooley, who paid over £6,000 for a ninety-nine year lease.

About 1860, Mr. Wooley began taking out large insurance policies. By 1862 he had insured the house for £12,000, the fixtures and fittings for £7,000, the pictures for £5,000, and the books, plate, china, glass etc. for £5,000 - £29,000 in all. On the morning of March 23rd, 1862, the house was gutted by fire, and the occurrence became the subject of a cause célèbre in the law courts.

Reports from Local Societies

The Boltons Association

The main themes of the last year have not changed. We continue to be concerned with the apparently inexorable tide of over development and increasing commercialisation of our area. This Association's impression of the willingness of the Borough to pursue planning appeals has been mixed. However, a recent Inspector's decision over an unauthorised change of use in the Fulham Road from Class A1 (retail) to Class A3 (catering) has encouraged us. The Inspector took a very firm line on the need to preserve as far as possible the proportion of A1 use in the core shopping frontage of the west Fulham Road which has sadly dropped to barely 55%. This is well below the 75% target in the U.D.P. He also found that even a marginal increase in the number of cars brought into our area in the evening was a relevant planning consideration. In the specific instance he stated that as few as even half a dozen cars "would unacceptably add to the parking and congestion problems which already exist in neighbouring streets".

On the general matter of traffic, we remain concerned that little seems to be being done to discourage the use of side streets in our conservation area as short cuts or "rat runs" to avoid the district routes and traffic routes. The imminent introduction of Red Routes through the south of the Borough may affect this situation.

With reference to my predecessor's report for 1996, I have to note that the applications by the developers of Nos. 21 and 22 The Boltons were approved despite our Association's strong objections. This will have two unhelpful consequences: not only will a large extension be erected on the site of the previous chapel, but the original gap between Nos. 21 and 22 will now be permanently infilled with a third dwelling.

David Bernstein, Chairman, 27 Tregunter Road, SW10 9LS
Barbara Schurer, Secretary, 10 Gledhow Gardens, SW5 0AY

Campden Hill Residents' Association

The prospective redevelopment of the Thames Water site on Aubrey Walk and Queen Elizabeth College on Campden Hill have continued to be the focus of attention for the Association this year. The Committee maintains a policy of opposition to planning applications which would result in the loss of any open space in the area, particularly that used for recreational purposes. To this end we have had meetings with Thames Water properties,

representatives from Campden Hill Lawn Tennis Club, Kensington and Chelsea Council and independent architects. In November C.H.R.A. members were invited to a joint meeting with Thames Water and Barclay Homes to view and discuss proposals for the site. This proved highly successful with more than 90 members attending.

The other main planning issue to affect our area has been the sale of Queen Elizabeth College on Campden Hill Road. The Committee is keen to reduce the potential deleterious effects that development proposals, outlined in the published planning brief, may have on traffic and parking in the area.

Other activities through the year included the A.G.M., held in the Lecture Theatre of Kensington Library at the end of May. Mr. Martyn Lewis gave a very enjoyable talk entitled "Reflections on Success" in which he highlighted extracts from his book of the same name.

Local flooding on the wettest day in July resulted in some upheaval of our Garden Party, held for the first time at Thorpe Lodge. We were fortunate to be able to use the interior of the Lodge and the result was a highly successful occasion. We look forward to fairer weather for next year's event!

Mrs. Anne Margaronis, Honorary Secretary

Campden Street Preservation Society

Our A.G.M. was held in the Unitarian Church Hall, in Palace Gardens Terrace, on May 5th, 1997. It was well attended, and Councillors Christopher Buckmaster and Michael May addressed the meeting. The main point of concern was the Planning Application to knock down No. 57 Campden Street. This was a charming, little blue-painted cottage, where the artist, Mrs. Sylvia Melland used to do her printing. After a strong campaign, including the appearance of a barrister to speak on our behalf at the Planning Committee Meeting, the battle was lost. An ugly, square, two-storey building will soon take the place of the cottage.

No. 10 Campden Street remains an eyesore in our beautiful street. The Chairman has tried to persuade the owner to complete the external refurbishment, or to sell the property.

Our latest campaign is to prevent Bass the brewers from building a covered and heated shelter along the eastern and southern walls of the Windsor Castle pub garden. Several of our houses back on to the garden.

We endure the noise and disruption of the summer months, but this new building will allow for drinking all the year round. The plans show the destruction of a lovely cherry tree, and a rowan tree, besides building over most of this much admired pub garden.

The Chairman was delighted to be invited to the meeting of all the larger amenity and residents' associations, on March 6th, which was arranged by the Kensington Society.

On October 21st, 1997, the ancient wall which separated 70 Bedford Gardens garden from Campden Street, collapsed dramatically. The owners have agreed to rebuild it with old bricks.

We are in communication with the Arboriculturist about the planting of more trees in Campden Street.

We have an active Neighbourhood Watch Committee, which meets every three months, and is attended by our Home Beat Officer.

Evelyn Ellison, Chairman

Cornwall Gardens Residents' Association

I am sure that we are not alone in feeling very concerned at the recent High Court decision to permit underground garages at Earls Terrace. This could be a precedent that could pave the way for more developers to mutilate our garden squares. Hopefully, it can be argued that in this case that Earls Terrace is not a true "Garden Square". However, it reinforces the need for a change in the law which would prohibit development *under* our squares.

We view the acquisition of Point West by new owners with mixed feelings. On the one hand we are relieved that the buildings will be saved from further decay. On the other hand we have bitter memories of the disruption caused to our lives by the previous stages of development of the site. The thought of another 24 months of noise and dust is not a happy one.

Robin Balmer, Chairman
Miss Ursula Overbury, Secretary

Kensington High Street Association

The Association is a major partner in the Kensington High Street Study which began in mid-'96 and which seeks to ensure that the vitality and viability (equal competitiveness and attractiveness) of the Kensington High Street shopping centre are maintained and enhanced in the future.

Residents are the most important constituent of the business community's customer base and the Association has no higher priority than seeking the best possible environment for residents using the shopping centre.

Readers will probably be familiar with the two developments, both of which are a potential threat to the vitality and viability of the Kensington High Street shopping centre. The threat lies not only in the retail competition which the developments will provide but in the extensive customer car parking to be associated with them; car parking space, affordable car parking even more so, is a scarce commodity in the Kensington High Street area.

The earlier development, that of the Fenelon Place site west of Warwick Road, work on which began last August, includes a Tesco superstore and 360 parking spaces. The new Tesco is scheduled to open this autumn.

The much larger development is that of the White City, work on which is scheduled to begin in 1998 and to be completed at Easter 2001. Dubbed Brent Cross-in-the-West, the shopping centre is to have 4,500 parking spaces.

Readers may like to know that the Association is sponsoring a gala concert in aid of Sargent Cancer Care for Children (formerly the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund for Children with offices in Abingdon Road), as the Association did in 1997. The concert is to be held in St. Mary Abbots Church at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 20th. Tickets at the door. More information from the Fund at 0171-565 5103, which is also the Box Office number.

Members of the Society and their friends are welcome to attend the concert and thereby to support a very worthwhile, locally-based charity.

G. Sivewright, Secretary

Edwardes Square, Scarsdale & Abingdon Association

The appeal against refusal for a 68-space underground car park beneath the carriage road and front garden at Earls Terrace was granted. Concerned for the integrity of the Garden Squares protection policy, the Council applied to the High Court to quash the appeal decision but was refused. At the same time an independent arbitrator considered the developer's application under the London Squares Preservation Act. At the request of the Council and the large number of residents concerned at the loss of valuable mature trees resulting from the larger car park, ESSA made representation. While the arbitrator agreed that there would be a loss of mature trees which could not be replaced above the car park structure, he did not find this loss to be sufficiently serious to warrant refusal of the application.

We are encouraged to note that the Council will not allow this decision to weaken their Garden Squares protection policy and will support them in this.

Kensington High Street: Reaction to the proposed environmental improvements have concentrated on the traffic implications. The majority of residents in neighbouring streets seem convinced that the proposed alterations to traffic lanes will increase rat-running in their streets.

1997 has been a busy year in terms of planning, licensing and traffic matters. On a number of occasions we have achieved a satisfactory conclusion by negotiation with both applicants and planning officers. We are grateful to our members for their support and look forward to an active 1998.

His Honour Judge Gordon, Chairman, 7 Edwardes Square, W8
Mrs. Suzanne Anderson, Secretary, 8 Phillimore Terrace, W8

Earl's Court Square Residents' Association

The Association has monitored all planning applications and other proposals affecting life in the Square and made representations where necessary.

Our residential housing stock will be increased following the elimination of the Chelsea and White House Hotels.

St. Cuthbert's and St. Matthew's Primary School has benefited from an elegantly designed addition to provide two extra classrooms. A new shop's loading bay in Earl's Court Road will be created by closing the south eastern arm of the Square. This will obviate lorries traversing our side roads when Red Routes come.

The St. Marylebone Housing Association has acquired properties from another housing association. A meeting with them took place and may lead to reinstatement of some missing architectural features.

We have welcomed the provision of C.C.T.V. cameras in Earl's Court. Six are sited in the area of our Square of which two are in the central garden rectangle. The location of the last two has caused controversy. The Committee arranged with the Council to have the garden masked out, for an experimental period. A vote at the A.G.M. will decide whether this arrangement is to continue.

The property once known as "La Vie en Rose" - and by many other names - is now occupied by a restaurant called "Badgers". We will be watching developments.

Earl's Court has been disgraced by fans of the pop group OASIS. We are glad that further applications to perform will be subject to greater scrutiny.

The garden was the scene of a barbecue in July and of the customary Christmas Tree Lighting and Carol Singing event in December.

For many years the Square has been graced by up to 28 flowering baskets. The continuation of the baskets is now in danger unless wider funding by residents can be found. The baskets cost £160 per annum each.

Rodney Brangwyn, Chairman, Flats A-L, Wetherby Mansions
Kate Marsh, Secretary, 45 Earl's Court Square

Elsham Road and Area Residents' Association

Much of the past year has been spent fighting the proposed high density housing project by Barrats in Russell Road, next to the railway line, where it is proposed to house over 800 people of whom 50% will be in "affordable housing". We very much appreciated the support given by the Kensington and Chelsea Residents' Association.

Although we were successful in obtaining some concessions, including a health centre to be incorporated in the plans, the

Council Planning Committee passed it at the September 9th meeting.

We have also continued pressure to stop the implementation of the Red Route in Holland Road, and have attended public meetings.

We have tried to persuade Council to enforce the law concerning the dumping of refuse on the pavements on non-collection days.

We have tried to obtain clarification of the Council's decision to provide double glazing for those residents facing the railway line.

We represented residents at public meetings in reference to changes in traffic control measures in Addison Road.

The Committee meets quarterly, and any problems raised by residents are discussed and appropriate action taken. The Chairman also acts as liaison with the Police and the Town Hall authorities to ensure that our voice is heard.

David Peacock, Chairman

Kensington Court Residents' Association

Alan Clark, M.P., in a recent piece in the local press, complained about the complexity of planning procedures, and rightly so. These can mean objectors attending several different hearings - planning, music and dancing licensing and liquor licensing, not to mention appeals hearings when they occur.

An example was what the Chairman of the Planning Committee called a blockbuster of a case - "Down Mexico Way" at 38 Kensington High Street. The proposal which so shocked residents was for a 600 capacity disco/bar/restaurant open to 3 a.m. seven days a week at one of the most traffic ridden sections of the High Street, by the junction with "Millionaires Row". Restrictions imposed, mainly on the music and dancing license application, aborted the plan. Attending the hearings took large bites out of three days and my file on the case bulged to a couple of inches thick. However, it was well worth it.

But, the old basement nightclub permit (from the days of the troublesome "Park Club" closed down some years ago) was not killed because no change of use had actually yet occurred.

A new and better proposal recently emerged, covering 26-40 Kensington High Street, and involving new retail use on the ground floor and in the basement, a large health club on upper floors, and a moderate-sized restaurant on the first (not ground) floor, all said to be of good quality.

This was still not entirely satisfactory as proposed. The numbers in the health club were very large and bound to increase pressure on residents' parking in our already saturated area. So we pressed for further restrictions.

At two planning hearings numbers of health club members were restricted variously, dedicated to evening parking slots at a nearby N.C.P. ordered, and the number of restaurant covers also

reduced. Nonetheless, some pressure on local parking for residents is inevitable if the health club goes ahead, so we are pressing for extended parking restriction hours in our immediate area (only), and this case has strengthened ours. A Section 106 planning obligation will finally kill the old night club permit. The case is unfinished in that the health club has not at the time of writing decided whether to go ahead.

This little history shows that Mr. Clark was right to criticise current procedures as cumbersome. Objectors have to deal with elaborate documentation and plans, complex regulations, different procedures for different licensing bodies, efforts by developers to exploit the system, the skills of lawyers who specialise in planning applications, etc. Mounting an effective campaign of objection means hours of preparation and pleading, and prior consulting with ward councillors, council officers and other associations.

You can't win them all, but to win a big one is encouraging.

If I may end with an appeal to local residents, it is this. The state of your local pavements could be improved if all the rubbish put out for collection were (a) packed in large black bags, securely fastened (and not in small shopping bags insecurely fastened); and (b) not put out prematurely. This is a way in which we can help ourselves.

Sir Ronald Arculus, Chairman
Kensington Court Residents' Association

The Ladbroke Association

1997 has been a year of struggles, with some successes and some disappointments and sadnesses. We lost another huge tree in the garden of 6 Ladbroke Terrace, which had its roots so badly damaged by the builders, in defiance of an explicit condition of the planning permission, that we had the melancholy spectacle of seeing it cut down. The Council are to prosecute them. Let us hope that the courts make sure that the penalty outweighs the large profit they will make for disposing of it. An application to install a totally inappropriate double height glass window at 122 Kensington Park Road in place of the remains of the 19th century shop-front, which were still there while it was a restaurant, has gone to appeal. We hope for some help from the inspectors this time in spite of the lack of understanding of the sensitivities of our area which they have sometimes shown in the past. Astonishingly, the new owners of 70a Ladbroke Grove, which they want to call 52 Elgin Crescent, are trying to claim ownership of, and build on, part of the garden square which borders their building, and which is clearly covered by the London Squares Building Act 1931. So far the Council have not been as energetic as we would like in carrying out their statutory duty, but we hope to hold them to

their obligations to see that nothing is built upon such land and any illegal structures removed. We have succeeded, however, in helping to persuade them to keep open, at least for the moment, the lavatories at Notting Hill Gate station, which they wished to replace with regrettable superloo-type structures. Cllr. Tony Holt visited us and showed concern at our complaints about our ever-rising pavement levels which cause our front doorsteps and the footings of our area railings to disappear progressively each time the pavement is relaid. Does anyone else share our concern or care about this problem?

All has not been strife, however. We held our first Musical Evening in June, which was a great success. The tree sub-committee held its third Pan-Squares meeting, attended now even by some representatives from outside Ladbroke. The theme this year was Trees, Buildings and Subsidence, an issue of great concern in this area, where this is often used as an excuse for cutting down mature trees which some developer finds inconvenient. We had a fascinating Autumn Talk by Ian Grant entitled Another Look at Ladbroke.

Readers may like to note that an exhibition of the work of Thomas Allom, which we hope will include his drawings for the Ladbroke Estate, is to be held at The British Architectural Library from March 26th to May 9th, 1998.

Stephen Enthoven, Chairman

Norland Conservation Society

A reduced number of planning applications has again enabled the Society to concentrate on matters of more general concern, not least the effects of the White City shopping development just over the boundary, a development which in the view of most London Boroughs, and especially of course of Kensington & Chelsea, should never have been permitted by government.

Also of traffic concern has been the excessive speed and frequency of traffic passing north and south in Norland Square. Following a traffic study, build-outs have been incorporated in the pavements, and it remains to be seen how useful these measures will be in improving sight-lines and preventing accidents.

The depleted and altogether unreliable No. 94 bus service in Holland Park Avenue continues to be a major irritant. We, for our part, press for the continuance of the No. 12 bus route to Shepherds Bush, which would go far towards solving the problem.

The great success of the Royal Crescent Railings project is reported elsewhere in this Annual Report. Suffice it to say that the railings now fully match this dignified western entry to London, and it is hoped that another square on the route will follow this shining example.

Finally, the North Planning Forum, whose remit it is to advise

the Royal Borough on planning matters, decided when it first met in early September, that it would, *inter alia*, review planning briefs, and also amendments to the U.D.P., and comment on the designation and extension of Conservation Areas. Both its Chairman and Secretary are drawn from the Norland Conservation Society.

Robin Price, Chairman

Onslow Neighbourhood Association

Compared with 1996, this past year has been relatively quiet. However, following the granting of planning permission for the South Kensington Station redevelopment, we still await publication of the Borough's proposals for a new traffic layout to improve the present unsatisfactory one-way system.

Work is now underway on the redevelopment of the Brompton Hospital North Block site and local residents have had to suffer the noise and dust of the extensive piling and, latterly, excavation for the two underground car parks adjacent to the east and west boundaries of the site. In fairness to the contractors, they appear to have gone some way to mitigate such nuisance but a large project like this inevitably causes problems for local residents.

The saga for the use of the Grade II listed hospital chapel continues. Planning approval has been granted for a multiplicity of uses, but conditional on the retention of the existing pews. A close watch will have to be kept to ensure their protection.

This year our Annual General Meeting was held at St. Paul's Church Hall. Our guest speaker was Dr. Oliver Watson, Chief Curator of Ceramics and Glass at the Victoria and Albert Museum, who talked about the exciting proposals for the new extension and the urgent need for such a building to co-ordinate the operations of the museum.

Sadly, our annual event, the Summer Garden Party, was rained off; unluckily, we had chosen a day in what was one of the most miserably cold and wet June weeks for many years.

Hugh Brady, Chairman, 16 Selwood Terrace, London SW7 3QG

The Pembridge Association

Over the past year The Pembridge Association Executive Committee, chaired by Vicky Butler, has met nine times. During this period Chris Fleming Brown handed over the responsibility of Hon. Secretary to Cllr. Doreen Weatherhead.

Few issues have excited as much vociferous interest as the controversial proposal to close the underground toilets at Notting Hill tube station and replace them with two, then three overground Autoloos. The Committee lobbied the Department of Environmental Services for a rethink, along with the other neighbouring ward associations and in support of N.H.I.G.,

without whose energetic efforts Notting Hill would be aesthetically a visually poorer environment. A final decision is still to be made.

There has also been considerable concern from our residents adjacent to Baynard's House which is the subject of a development proposal. Our Committee has discussed the proposal at length and supports the ongoing efforts to achieve a sympathetic solution.

The recent proposal for the redevelopment of the Texaco garage in Pembridge Villas has also received our attention. Our Hon. Planning Secretary Pietro Marcheselli has sent a most thorough and detailed assessment of the proposal and its potential impact on the environment to the Planning Department for its consideration.

Once again our garden party was fortunate to be held on one of the most beautiful evenings of this summer, July 12th. This good fortune contributed to the high attendance and a delightfully relaxed mood. The success of the event was made possible by the sterling efforts of our committee members, organising the raffle, preparing food and dispensing drinks. We are extremely grateful to our generous supporters who gave us such splendid raffle prizes.

It was a pleasure to meet so many enthusiastic residents, and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new members and thank all our longstanding members for their continued support.

Vicky Butler, Chairman



Kensington High Street Jubilee Year.

Victoria Road Area Residents' Association

Last year the two major developments in our Conservation Area were nearly completed, now they are finished. Prince of Wales Terrace block looks very nice and the new road layout in Victoria Road/Prince of Wales Terrace appears safer than before, although vehicles still travel at excessive speed. The St. George's re-development at South End looks good externally but is overdeveloped.

The management of Thomas' School are extending the transit facility to bus children from Cottesmore Gardens to their other school south of the river, this is causing acute traffic problems to the bona fide residents.

10 Cottesmore Gardens is still unresolved, the front and rear elevations and rear garden boundary wall are in breach of planning consent and causing distress to near neighbours.

Work has now started on repairs, renovations and lowering the track of the underground railway between High Street Kensington and South Kensington which, it is hoped, will reduce the noise levels in Kelso Place and Stamford Road.

The "Waitrose Site" shops are mainly still empty, this is due to excessively high rents; the only two inhabited shops, a cleaners and a computer centre for children, are superfluous to local needs. The pub, now called the "Rat & Parrot" in the middle of the block has had a face lift and is something of an improvement. Unfortunately the fly posting on the site and the begging opposite are unpleasant.

Our concern re the breach of planning control and repeated applications remain the same as previously with no improvement.

Kenneth Woodward-Fisher, Chairman

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Statement of Accounts for the year 1997

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Balance Sheet as at December 31st 1997

BALANCE SHEET

	31/12/97
ASSETS	
Equipment	-
Cash - current A/Cs	
General Fund	1,724.45
Princess Alice Memorial Fund	3,936.18
Cash - deposit A/Cs	
General Fund	7,043.89
National Savings investment a/c	7,194.31
	<u>19,898.83</u>
LIABILITIES	
Sundry	-
	\$19,898.83
REPRESENTED BY	
General Fund b/f	14,659.90
Surplus/(Deficit)	1,302.75
	<u>15,962.65</u>
Princess Alice Memorial Fund b/f	3,489.00
Surplus/(Deficit)	447.18
	<u>3,936.18</u>
	\$19,898.83

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Income & Expenditure Account

INCOME & EXPENDITURE Kensington Society

	Y/E 31/12/97
INCOME	
Subscriptions	3,506.30
Visits	3,345.00
A/R advertising	400.00
Donations	2,175.00
Interest	537.32
	<u>\$9,963.62</u>
EXPENDITURE	
Typing	55.00
Stationery	707.11
Coaches	1,009.20
Other visit costs	1,135.00
Telephone/postage	268.70
Meeting costs	529.00
Wren Press	646.33
Subscriptions	108.00
A/Report	3,902.00
Secretary's expenses	121.43
Advertising	60.00
Catering	119.10
	<u>\$8,660.87</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$1,302.75

Nickolas Case - Hon. Treasurer
Ethne Rudd - Hon. Secretary

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
PRINCESS ALICE MEMORIAL FUND

INCOME & EXPENDITURE
Princess Alice Memorial Fund

Y/E 31/12/97

INCOME

Donations	685.00
*A/R advertising	520.00
Interest	29.54
	<u>\$1,234.54</u>

EXPENDITURE

A/R costs (stamps, photos)	332.00
Plants and fertiliser	321.48
Bulbs	51.25
Peat & soil	-
Repairs to irrigation	-
Stationery	52.88
Sundry	29.75
	<u>\$787.36</u>

Surplus/(Deficit) \$447.18

*A/R - Advertising in Annual Report

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FULHAM PAST

by Barbara Denny

Fulham has been changing fast in the last fifteen years. As smart shops have moved inexorably along the Fulham Road, and the terraces of pleasant houses have been spruced up, the nature of Fulham has altered.

The old industrial areas, which blocked the river frontage from the general public, became derelict, lay empty and then were transformed into bright, but highly-priced residential enclaves. Chelsea Harbour, for example, was built on a particularly unsightly piece of riverside.

Barbara Denny looks back to Fulham's rural past, when it was intimately bound up with river activities and the presence and influence of the Bishop of London, whose Fulham Palace was an economic factor in the lives of the tradesmen. The author deals with the many nursery gardens and splendid villas that attracted people like Samuel Richardson and Burne-Jones, the famous Fulham Pottery, and the not-so-famous women's prison near the High Street. Barbara Denny, a lifelong Fulham resident, has many anecdotes of life in pre-smart Fulham.

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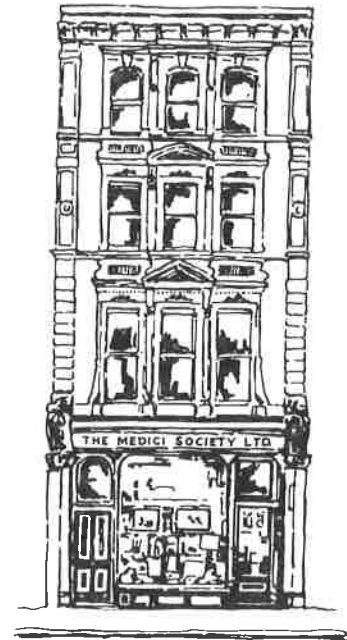
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