

# THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY



Annual Report 2009

**Front Cover:** *Painter's Garden* (2004) by Lucian Freud.  
Photograph by John Riddy, © The Artist. Find out more about  
one of Kensington's most prestigious artists on page 42

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The Kensington Society Annual Report 2008 won a  
Highly Commended award in the publications category,  
from London Forum of Civic Amenity Societies.



# THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

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[www.kensingtonsociety.org](http://www.kensingtonsociety.org)

The objects of the Society are 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 interest.

Registered Charity No. 267778

# THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT

## STYLE

**W**hen Prince Charles intervened in the Chelsea Barracks affair, he received both bouquets and brickbats. One critic opined that he was right to object to the excessive scale of the proposed development, but wrong to criticise its style as being inappropriate to that part of Chelsea. The critic was wrong on the latter count.

Style, Oscar Wilde said, albeit in a different context, is everything. It is indeed very much alive today, not just in glossy magazines, décor and taste, but in architecture and therefore in planning. If on one's travels, one applies the hotel bedroom window

test, there are many cities which show their style at a glance - Venice, Florence, Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, Prague, San Francisco, New York, New Orleans, to name but a few! There are also distinctive regional styles, such as Tuscany, Provence, our own Cotswolds, Lake District, or Highlands of Scotland. There are progressive places where central streets have been successfully pedestrianised, such as Verona, Rome, Montpellier. There are capitals with monumental areas at their centre: the formal Saint Petersburg, the boulevards and vistas designed by Haussmann in Paris; new creations like Brasilia, the Regents Park zone of London, the planned governmental and museum area of Washington, DC. - and so on. Then there are many styles in London itself and differences can be found even in one Borough, such as Kensington and Chelsea, which have very distinctive personalities. Where there is style, there is variety, pleasure and pride, but much effort is needed to preserve it. Where modernisation is needed, the trick is to design a style that will discreetly harmonise with the existing trend and this is evidently not easy. The Sainsbury Wing of the National Gallery is a good example, however, controversial at the time. Kensington and Chelsea both pass the style test in different ways and strive to avoid their various styles being spoiled.

When I was involved in the controversy about the proposed Libeskind extension to the Victoria and Albert Museum (now scrapped), I recorded my objections – some on style and others on more practical issues – on camera outside the proposed site at the V&A on a chilly day. The results were embodied in a TV film, during which the architect



Photograph courtesy of J W Rogers

Sir Ronald Arculus

himself justified his design. I recall that he said he 'wanted to express himself', I wished he would do so, somewhere modern and suitable. As it happens, part of what I said by way of introduction was edited out, but I remember saying that I had walked to the museum



Trafalgar House

from the Kensington Square area, past several characteristically Kensington styles which we wanted to preserve. There was the historic Kensington Square itself, typical of many London squares; then the tall, but not too tall, red brick canyons of Kensington Court. Next, there were the harmonious streets of villas around Victoria Road and Launceston Place. The monumental stucco terraces of Queen's Gate and the attractive row of mews houses behind. Finally, there were the monumental museum buildings at the heart of Albertopolis. So, in a quarter of an hour, I had enjoyed all these styles which, with our gardens, parks and avenues with their fine hanging flower baskets, add up to the Kensington we admire and cherish. Incidentally, I have urged the Council not to insist on pieces of modern sculpture being spread around the Borough, as the price paid by developers for consent for large developments. Instead, I suggested they should plant trees or beds of flowers to embellish developments and add to the general good.

At the other end of the spectrum is uncontrolled development. For example, one could wake up in a hotel bedroom in many parts of the United States and wonder where exactly one was. Main Street Centerville looks much the same anywhere – petrol stations, used-car lots, traffic lights, signs, advertisements, flags, banners, supermarkets, neon lights and so on. Our High Street had better watch out, for it is uglier than it need be.

There is a clear case for careful conservation, but what about necessary renovation and new buildings? At one end of the scale we have pastiche and at the other, modern fashions such as glass boxes, concrete brutalism or high-tech. There is also the problem of appropriately filling in gaps where conforming to, or complementing, the existing style may be the best solution and one which does not deserve to be condemned as mere pastiche.

Listed buildings raise other problems. Clearly listing must be respected, even though this may cause difficulties in future when costly renovation is needed (e.g. the Commonwealth Institute). Errors in planning judgements are likely to be around for





Hamston Lodge

a very long time. The concrete brutalism on the South Bank has been the subject of many reviews, and various schemes to render it less ugly and impractical have been announced, but nothing has happened so far. Someone suggested covering the buildings with Virginia creeper (as with the Churchill bunker

in Whitehall) – a cheap solution at least. On the other hand the Festival Hall has lasted very well and, after an interior renovation, continues to be useful and admired. In crowded Kensington, it is hard to render sympathetic large developments such as supermarkets, car parks and large blocks of flats. Rows of shops can be elegant (e.g. the Parade at Cheltenham) or a mess. Ours could be improved by greater uniformity in signage and style. I remember that in the government area of Washington, DC. even petrol stations were made to fit in unobtrusively and discreetly.

Sometimes one is indeed envious of other towns and cities. Paris, for example, has succeeded in exiling almost all of its tall buildings to La Défense, where a group of modern high buildings have created a style of their own. Sprinkling tall buildings here and there is less effective. In Italy many cities, towns and even villages have their 'historic centre' where almost no development is permitted, only internal maintenance. Some war damaged cities in Germany or Poland have been faithfully reconstructed exactly as they were, following plans which somehow survived the war in basement stores or archives. Sometimes foreign style can be adapted to embellish by contrast, a national style. The Italianate redevelopment of Saint Petersburg is a good example. Just suppose that Wren had been given the job in Saint Petersburg, or that Haussmann had rebuilt London after the Great Fire!

Both Kensington and Chelsea do, as I said, easily pass the style test and your Society does its best to defend and keep the place liveable and attractive. I repeat that we badly need a style of viable modern building which will live alongside our own style, or styles - as there are half a dozen - and not do them violence. The success of Duke of York Square in Chelsea shows that it can be done.

Meanwhile, *long live style!*

*Sir Ronald Arculus*

**SIR RONALD ARCULUS**



# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009

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The 56th Annual General Meeting of The Kensington Society was held at the Maria Assumpta Centre, 23 Kensington Square on Tuesday 28 April 2009. Sir Ronald Arculus, the President, welcomed the members and then introduced the Rt. Hon Lord Hurd of Westwell, who spoke about his biography of Sir Robert Peel. The President thanked Lord Hurd who received thunderous applause.

The President then proceeded with the AGM. The minutes of the AGM and the Annual Report and accounts for 2008 were unanimously agreed. The President introduced Amanda Frame as the current Chairman of the Executive Committee. The President expressed the Society's thanks for Robin Price's service to the Society, including his 14 years on the Executive Committee and seven biblical years as Chairman during which time he extended the Society's coverage north of Holland Park Avenue. He also crusaded energetically in planning cases such as the Vicarage Gate nursing home.



*All pictures courtesy of J W Rogers*

The Rt Hon Lord Hurd of Westwell

The President reported the resignation of Loveday Waymouth as Hon. Secretary. The re-election of Anthony Lee as the Hon. Treasurer was proposed by Celia Rees-Jenkins and seconded by Angela Darwin. The President proposed, and Martin Frame seconded, that the following be re-elected as members of the Executive Committee: Michael Bach, Angela Darwin, Gill Foley, Amanda Frame, Dianne Gabitass, Anthony Lee, Charles Lutyens, Celia Rees-Jenkins and George Wightman. All were agreed unanimously.

Amanda Frame, Chairman of the Executive Committee reported that it had been another active year, particularly in the Society's involvement with the formation of new planning policies - not an easy task, as both the Government and the Mayor of London have increased their controls. Unfortunately the Government's proposals to 'simplify' planning are inappropriate for London and, particularly, for Kensington.

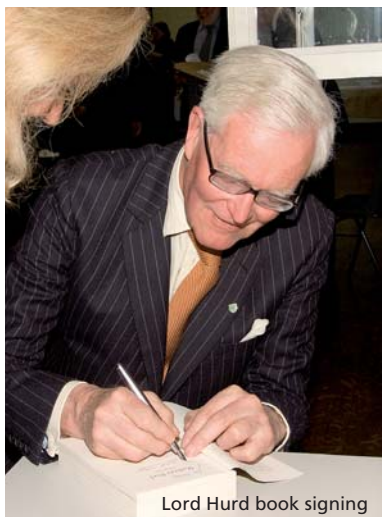


Chairman of the Executive Committee,  
Amanda Frame

A priority is to ensure that the new plan for the Borough – the Local Development Framework (LDF) – and all of the Supplementary Planning Documents reflect the Borough's needs. The Society, led by Michael Bach, has been a key player in the formation of these new policies.

Much of the Society's work continues to be advising, supporting and helping members. The Society had made representations to the Planning Applications and Major Planning Applications Committees.

The Chairman said it had been a difficult decision to increase the individual subscription to £15, especially within the current economic climate. Like everyone, though, the Society was faced with increased running costs. However, the Society had not moved away from its original objectives: *to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington*, but in changing times, the challenges faced were more varied and increasing in volume and complexity. Without members' continued support The Kensington Society would not have the substantial impact it has within the community. The Chairman thanked members for this support.



Lord Hurd book signing

Michael Bach, Chairman of the Planning Committee, said that the Committee was shadowing the work of the Planning Department, including the production of the new Local Development Framework and a number of Supplementary Planning Documents, as well as assessing a large number of planning applications. The LDF was different because, for the first time ever, the Council was producing a document seeking to plan for the future people wanted. The Planning Committee would be commenting – but members also needed to look at the implications for their areas.

Mr Bach said that the Society had been very concerned by some of the draft



Chairman of the Planning Committee,  
Michael Bach

Supplementary Planning Documents, in particular for Subterranean Development, Tall Buildings and the Commonwealth Institute. The final versions of the documents, however, had shown a response to the opposition that had been raised to the first two. While the Society continued to work hard to prevent the overdevelopment of the Commonwealth Institute site.

The Society has tried to work with the Council, for example, by supporting decisions to refuse a development when it came to an appeal process.

But there have been cases where the Council seemed to have disregarded its own development plan. Hopefully, the Planning Committee would take more ownership of the emerging new plan.

Looking ahead, there were already signs that the recession would reduce some of the pressures of the last few years. Not only were applications down, but a number of major projects had been put on hold, put up for sale or actually sold. It was thus possible that some of the worst projects might never happen!

Mr Bach concluded by thanking Amanda Frame and Hilary Temple for ensuring that the Society managed to review such a large number of applications and also thanked members for their support.

Members commented that in the light of the amount of work done by the committee, the increase in the annual subscription was justified. There was also praise for the Annual Report for 2008.

The meeting was closed 8:15 pm.

**MARTIN FRAME**

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

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We have had a most active year. The Executive Committee has worked throughout the year to carry out the necessary up-dating to comply with the Charity Commission's recommendations in order to meet the Trustee Act 2000 and the Charities Act 1993 as amended by the Charities Act 2006. The 1974 constitution will be replaced by the new constitution once it is approved by the Charity Commission. The filing of the accounts is being brought up-to-date with Gift Aid filing as a priority to meet the new HM Revenue & Customs' deadlines. The layout of the financial statements now complies with best practice allowing budget control. New members have been co-opted to strengthen the committee. Membership has increased. The planning committee has commented on over 120 planning applications. We have advised and assisted many of our members in the review of planning applications that will affect them. Increasingly we are consulted by members or developers in the pre-application stages. Numerous times Michael Bach, Hilary Temple or I have presented to the Major Planning Development Committee or the Planning Applications Committee. We have supported the Council in writing, as well as with presentations to the Inspectorate during appeals. Celia Rees-Jenkins has continued her work with the North Kensington environment project and Kensington and Chelsea Partnership. We are currently working with two wards to the north to expand the conservation status.

Tony Shearer has been behind the major efforts to force the disjointed government bodies to recognise the dangers from more flooding from Counters Creek. Thames Water has finally received confirmation of the first stage of funding from Ofwat. This was the first battle, but the war is just beginning; the funding must still be confirmed for the final works and even if approved the works will not be completed as stated by our MP, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, until 'the end of the next decade'.

Angela Darwin handled the large task of administering the change of subscriptions and managing the growing number of members. We currently have 660 members. Dianne Gabitass has organised the Annual General Meeting.

We are very pleased about the 'highly commended' award for last year's Annual Report in the publications category, a wide category including everything from application forms to books on local history from the London Forum. Emma Juhasz, Editor and Nicko Dalton, Designer, have continued with their excellent work this year.

Others cover many of the points within this report and I will review how our efforts have related to the Society's objectives established 56 years ago:

*‘The objects of the Society are to preserve and to 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.’*

## TO PRESERVE AND IMPROVE

There are a growing number of applications to alter grade-listed buildings. No one can expect that our buildings are to be preserved in ‘aspic’; however, modernistic alterations must not destroy their special quality. The owner of a grade II listed building built at the end of the 17th century on Kensington Square, removed the stucco façade without planning permission then left it empty, unfinished and under scaffolding for years whilst application after application was refused; finally



37 Kensington Square a grade II listed building

an appeal was lodged. The Society supported the Council and the appeal was dismissed. The sad news is, at the time of writing, the house is still under scaffolding and the building remains exposed to the elements. We are pressing for enforcement action.

We joined with The Friends of Holland Park, Phillimore Estates, Edwardes Square Scarsdale & Abingdon Association, Twentieth Century Society and Melbury Court Residents' Association in a failed attempt to preserve the Commonwealth Institute buildings, trees and garden. I know many do not understand our stance on the redevelopment and feel there will be no great loss if the site is redeveloped. Although some can see the value of a structure, such as the Exhibition Building, others see a strange empty building with neglected grounds. Whether you love it or hate it that is

not the issue as we see it. The issue is over these two questions: What does it mean to be a grade II\* listed building and secondly, what does this approval mean to the future of grade-listed buildings and registered landscapes?

Only 5.5% of all listed buildings are grade II\*. 0.2% of all listed buildings nationwide were built after 1945. If the demolition of the grade II\* administration building, the reconfiguration of the Exhibition Building and the loss of the registered parkland and garden can so easily be approved, this could mean the bulldozer gates are open for the demolition, destruction and devastation of many more of our prized and valued buildings.

## THE AMENITIES OF KENSINGTON



Subterranean development

An important amenity issue we have been greatly involved with is the growing propensity for the conversion of retail units and small offices into residential units. The Council understands our battle, however as elsewhere; the law limits what can be refused. We are all alarmed at the rapid losses of our local convenience shops. Slowly our neighbourhoods are losing these shops and slowly we are losing our small offices. Where shops once stood, we now have flats. Where we once had retail on the ground and basement floors with

flats above, we now have large houses; the worry is that we may become a bedroom community with many of the large houses and flats empty most of the year.

Gardens everywhere, from our small gardens behind our homes to our large public gardens, are under threat. The Supplemental Planning Guidance (SPG) on subterranean development specifically restricted the construction under grade-listed buildings and as a result, there has been an increase in the construction of basements under gardens. The SPG requires the installation of a metre of soil on top of the basement. While this provides a semblance of a garden, plants have restricted growth space and often drown in tanked water. The Ladbroke Association has produced an excellent report into the short term effects of the construction under houses and under gardens. It is a worthy endeavour, which we hope will result in changes to building techniques and methods.

## PROMOTING GOOD ARCHITECTURE

The developments at Kensington Palace have both related to amenities, as well as promoting good architecture. We were very concerned about the architectural





Artist's impression of the new development for Kensington Palace

style proposed for the new loggia entrance from the Long Walk and the loss of so many trees. Michael Bach's planning report describes the actions by the planning committee and the results of the "split decision". The advisors to the HRP have taken on board the concerns addressed. It is to be hoped that a resolution which will be acceptable to all.

As for promoting good planning, the Society has been fully involved in the complex and lengthy development of the new Local Development Framework (LDF). Nothing will be more important to this borough in the future than this plan. It will set the quality of the borough and we hope as the opening statement within the LDF states, the legacy will be renewed. Michael Bach has been unflagging in his efforts to ensure we shall maintain the quality of our existing and future environment.

## STIMULATING INTEREST IN ITS HISTORY

Our Annual Report as always contains a feature on the history of Kensington. The newsletter was reformatted and maybe reformat next year to cover more local news and events. Our events have been designed to further the understanding of the history of Kensington, while offering interesting events for all.

Gill Foley has planned and completed several well attended events. The future events will be even more original and fascinating. The trip to Charles Darwin's home Down House will tie into the Annual Report on Darwin and his family's time in Kensington.

Kensington has changed greatly in the 56 years. However, our objectives have not changed and nor have our actions. Many of our current challenges to meet and comply with regulations have been addressed. 2010 will be a motivating and active year. There are many issues still to tackle to ensure The Kensington Society continues with its work towards its founding objectives.

**AMANDA FRAME**



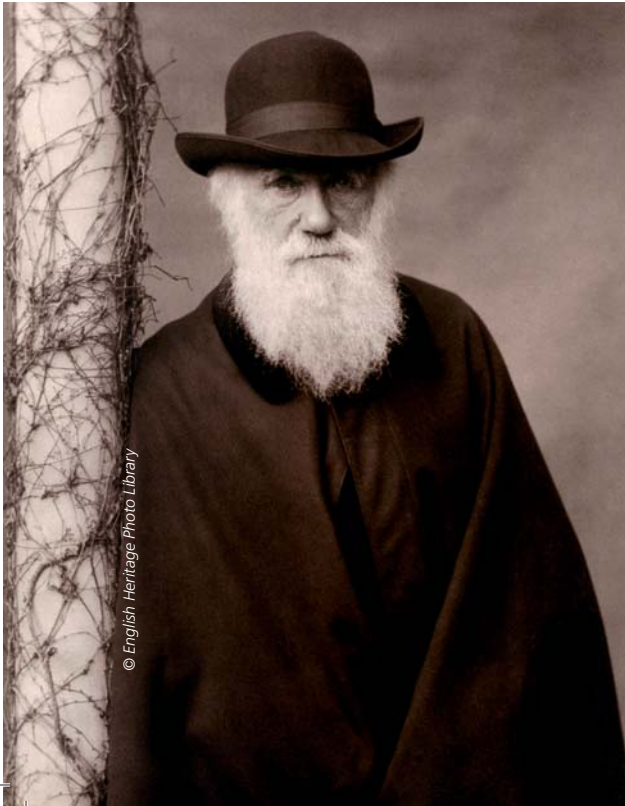
## FEATURE



# DARWIN & HUXLEY: THE KENSINGTON CONNECTION

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On November 24 1859, the first edition of Charles Darwin's book, *The Origin of Species* was published. This monumental work was 'the chief work of [his] life', and was dedicated to proving that today's living species were not created independently by God, but evolved from past species through the process of natural selection. While at the time the devout Victorian world reeled from the implications of his findings, today we can not understand the world without them.



It is no surprise then that 2009 became Darwin's year. With the 150th anniversary of the publication of *The Origin of Species* and 200 years since Darwin's birth, it was time to celebrate the man's achievements. Through careful research and invaluable insight from the Kensington Society's own Darwinian expert, Angela Darwin, we have discovered that Darwin, his family and also his *Bulldog*, T.H. Huxley, were all intricately linked to Kensington. It seemed fitting, therefore, to offer the Kensington Society's own tribute to these great men of science, but with our own *Kensingtonian* twist.

## CHARLES DARWIN (1809-1882)

Born in Shrewsbury in 1809, he was the fifth child of six children born to Robert Waring Darwin (1766-1848), Shrewsbury's principal physician and Susannah Wedgwood (1765-1817).

In 1825, he went to Edinburgh University to study medicine, but he had no interest in the subject and was encouraged to enter the clergy instead. He went to Cambridge in 1828, to study an ordinary degree before taking the holy orders. While there, he read Alexander von Humboldt's *Personal Narrative* (published 1814) - the story of his voyage to the Tropics, which inspired Darwin to plan a month's expedition to Tenerife. Before his plans came to fruition, however, he was offered passage on the survey ship HMS Beagle with the pioneering meteorologist and captain, Robert Fitzroy.

The boat left Plymouth in 1831 on a five-year voyage, which included South America, Pacific (including Galapagos and Tahiti), New Zealand, Australia and home via Cape Town and Brazil. The young Darwin collected and examined extraordinary animals and plants, and found geological specimens, while he explored some of the world's most desolate and isolated areas.

On the voyage, Darwin read Charles Lyell's (1797-1875) *Principles of Geology* (published in 3 volumes, 1830-33) - he interpreted that geologic change happened minutely over enormous periods of time. This thinking had a profound influence on Darwin and on his return to England in 1836, he became friends with Lyell and the comparative anatomist Richard Owen (1804-1892) - in 1837. Darwin sent his pampas fossils to Owen at the Royal College of Surgeons, which eventually ended up in the Natural History Museum.

Darwin spent the next 20 years, trying to unravel the mysteries that he had discovered on the voyage. His findings led him to propose that a theory of evolution occurred by process of natural selection. So, those who are best suited to their environment are most likely to survive. They pass on key characteristics to their young and slowly the species changes and develops.

In an era dominated by Christian thought, Darwin knew that this would be a deeply unpopular theory, so he dithered over publishing it. However, he was spurred into action when a young naturalist, Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913), sent him a 20-page essay from the Malay Archipelago, which included some of his theories of evolution. Horrified, Darwin thought that '...all my originality...will be smashed'. In the spirit of compromise, however, the two scientists' papers were read on July 1 1858, at a meeting of the Linnaean Society. Following that meeting, Darwin prepared his book for publication and on November 24 1859, he published *The Origin of Species*. It sold well and even Owen (who became Darwin's bitter enemy) said it offered the best explanation "ever published of the manner and formation of species".

It was extremely controversial and caused fierce debates for years. While Darwin stayed out of the fray - due to illness and temperament - T. H. Huxley emerged as his stalwart supporter, earning him his title of *Darwin's Bulldog*.

As the debates continued, Darwin's ideas slowly began to gain recognition. By the time of his death on April 19 1882, they had become a new orthodoxy. He was immortalized among the nation's heroes and buried in Westminster Abbey ■



From a commanding position from the top of the main staircase in the Central Hall of the Natural History Museum, the 2.2-tonne marble statue of a seated Charles Darwin, by Sir Joseph Boehm, peers down over the venerable institution. Even the giant fossil of the *Diplodocus*, which dominates the Central Hall, seems to know that he has stiff competition.

The Museum was founded by Richard Owen, who installed Darwin's collection of fossil vertebrates at the museum when it opened. This began Darwin's connections to the Natural History Museum and to this day, the museum considers everything it does as being influenced by Darwin's work. Those who have seen the new Darwin Centre, which opened in September 2009, with the fascinating Cocoon design, will see how the museum continues to work hard to study and preserve nature as Darwin would have wanted. Darwin never saw his sculpture, as although the museum opened in 1881, a year before his death, the sculpture was not unveiled until 1885.

The Natural History Museum was part of a great development that saw Kensington change forever. Prince Albert had a dream to develop the area between Cromwell Road and Kensington Gore into various cultural and educational sites. With the profits from the Great Exhibition of 1851 his dream slowly came alive. Kensington, as a result, rapidly changed from being an out of the way village in the 1840s, '...to get into town from Kensington it was necessary to take your place in the coach the day before', proclaimed Miss F.M Redgrave at the time, to being a thriving part of London, '...inhabited by artists of high standard, its villas are certainly as beautiful miniatures in themselves', 1881 *Suburban Homes in London*.



Unveiling the statue of Charles Darwin in The Natural History Museum  
from the Illustrated London News

## HENRIETTA LITCHFIELD (née Darwin) (1843-1929)

Among the people who were drawn to this expanding community were some of Darwin's children. His daughter, Henrietta lived in Kensington Square for many years. Known as 'Etty', she married Richard Buckley Litchfield, a Senior Clerk with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, in 1871. They chose to move to Kensington Square from Bryanston Street, as they needed a larger house to make Charles and Emma Darwin's visits more comfortable. A month after they had agreed to buy no.31 Kensington Square, Charles Darwin died. While Richard recalled that this was a sad period for them. 'This house was a happy choice for us. There was a peculiar charm in the low well-proportioned rooms which made it unlike a modern London house.'

Although they loved the house, the Litchfields made considerable alterations to the property, including in 1882 when they added a large straight-sided gable to the front of the house. Richard's admiration for the textile designer William Morris and the art critic John Ruskin, influenced the interior decoration in the house. Etty's niece, Gwen Raverat recalled in her childhood memoir of the Darwin-Wedgwood clan, *Period Piece* (Faber & Faber, 1952) that the house was, '...full of Morris wallpapers, and Morris curtains, and blue china, and peacock feathers, and Arundel prints, and all that sort of thing'.

While Richard's love of the arts influenced the style and decoration of the house, it was Etty who ran it. The Litchfields did not have any children, so Etty just managed the house and her husband. This gave her plenty of free time to pursue her other interest,



Henrietta and William, Down House

wife assumed him to be of a delicate disposition and would do everything to protect him from the elements. Even at home, when a room was being aired, Richard would be fully covered in a dust sheet while the window was open, to ensure that he did not catch a cold. Etty took things a stage further for herself; she even invented her own gas mask to wear when she had a cold. It was made from a kitchen strainer and stuffed with antiseptic cotton-wool. Such was her obsession though that even when she had visitors, she would continue to wear and speak through it, much to the mirth of all around.

ill-health. Her parents' had been obsessed with illness, particularly her father, who was often ill. Charles and Emma had also lost three of their ten children at an early age. This undoubtedly fuelled Etty's concerns about ill-health, but she took things to extraordinary levels. She would often go off to rest - just in case she might get tired later, or even the next day. In fact guests were often told, '[Not to] come by the ten o'clock train, but by 3.30pm, so as to give me time to put you off, if I am not well'.

Richard suffered at the hands of his wife's hypochondria. Not only was he regularly forced to eat a 'healthy' home-made porridge; his



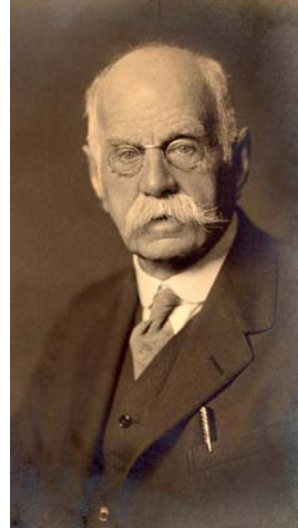
No 31 Kensington Square



## LEONARD DARWIN (1850-1943)

While Etty ran a happy, if not slightly eccentric, home in one of Kensington's most popular addresses, her younger brother Leonard followed in his father's footsteps. He became a scientist, eugenicist and eventually president of one of Kensington's leading societies.

Leonard started out in the military, entering the Royal Military Academy in Woolwich at the age of 18, proclaiming that he had chosen the army because he was one of the most stupid members of the family. While serving, he undertook various scientific expeditions, including viewing and recording the transits of Venus. This is one of the most unpredictable astrological phenomena, thought to only happen every 243 years. (It is when Venus passes between the Sun and Earth, causing an effect like a total eclipse, but due to its distance from the Earth it obscures just a small part of the sun). Leonard never saw this, but in 1886 he went to Grenada to photograph a total eclipse of the sun. This trip was a great success and was part of his inspiration to join and get involved with the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) (see *next page for a brief history*).



© English Heritage Photo Library

He continued to serve in the army until 1892, by which time he had been promoted to the rank of Major. He left to become a politician (1892-95), but he continued his work with the RGS and by 1908 he had been elected as President of the society. He was, however, gaining notoriety as a leading scientific figure - in 1912 the University of Cambridge conferred on him the honorary degree of doctor of science. This began to take him away from exploration and in 1911, he was persuaded to resign as President of the RGS and become Chairman of the British Eugenics Education Society.

At the age of 61, Leonard entered his most important working phase. He wrote two books, *The Need for Eugenic Reform* (J.Murray, 1926) and *What is Eugenics?* (The Third International Congress for Eugenics, 1932). Both were considered to be hugely influential works and they were also the result of a burgeoning friendship and working relationship between Leonard and Ronald Fisher. Fisher was 40 years his junior, but

# THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

## *A Brief History...*

The Geographical Society of London was founded in 1830 and like many societies of the time it started as a dining club, whose members held informal dinner debates on scientific issues and ideas. Its main function was to promote and advance geographical science. Its founder members included Sir John Barrow (English Statesman), Sir John Franklin (Royal Navy Officer, Arctic Explorer) and Francis Beaufort (developer of the Beaufort scale for indicating wind force).

Under the patronage of King William IV, it later became known as The Royal Geographical Society, which absorbed the 'Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa' - the African Association, (founded by Sir Joseph Banks in 1788), the Raleigh Club and the Palestine Association. It was granted its Royal Charter under Queen Victoria in 1859 and moved to its current location on the corner of Exhibition Road and Kensington Gore in 1912.

For many years, the society was closely linked with exploration in Africa, the Indian subcontinent, the Polar Regions and central Asia.

It has been a key associate and supporter of many famous explorers and expeditions: including Charles Darwin, David Livingstone, Robert Scott, Henry Stanley, Ernest Shackleton and Sir Edmund Hillary.

Today, the society is a leading world centre for geographical learning - supporting education, teaching, research and scientific expeditions, as well as promoting public understanding of geography ■

he became renowned as a leading scientific figure and would later be described by Richard Dawkins as, '... the greatest of Darwin's successors'. Leonard became his mentor and supported him through his career. When Fisher wrote his seminal book on modern evolutionary synthesis, *The Genetical Theory of Natural Selection* (Clarendon Press, 1930), it was clear who had influenced and aided his progression, as the book was dedicated to Leonard, "In gratitude for the encouragement, given to the author, during the last fifteen years, by discussing many of the problems dealt with in this book".





Royal College of Art Collection

Portrait of Sir Robin Darwin by Ruskin Spear (1961)

### SIR ROBIN VERE DARWIN (1910-1974)

Charles Darwin's great-grandson takes this scientific family on a professional deviation. In the great tradition of the Darwin name, however, he excelled at his chosen profession.

He was born in Chelsea, son of Bernard Darwin, a golf correspondent and Elinor Monsell, a distinguished painter and sculptor. He followed in his mother's footsteps, attending the Slade School of Fine Art, London in 1929. In 1933, aged only 23, he returned to his former school, Eton College and took up the post of art master. He was responsible for transforming the art department from being an unused, discrete hideaway, into a vital centre of the college's daily life.

On the outbreak of war, he left Eton and moved the Gloucestershire to paint and work for the camouflage directorate of the Ministry of Home Security in Leamington Spa. In 1945, he was appointed as the Education Officer in the Council of Industrial Design, where he reported on the training of industrial designers. Part of his job was to examine the function of the Royal College of Art (RCA) and he commented at the time that the next appointed principal would be pivotal to its future. Little did he know how true this was, and what a key figure he would become to the organisation.

The RCA was founded in 1837, starting its life in Somerset House as a School of Design. Following the Great Exhibition in 1851, it moved to the South Kensington Museum, was renamed the National Art Training School, and transformed to accommodate art, as well as design. In 1896, it became the Royal College of Art. After spending World War II based in Ambleside in the Lake District, it returned to London somewhat stagnant and in need of new direction. That came in the guise of Robin Darwin in 1948, when he was appointed as the college's new head.

Robin transformed the school during his long leadership 1948-1971. He was determined that the college should be a 'magnet for talent' and set about introducing new departments, such as fashion, design and photography, while aligning the college closely with industry. He developed academic and administrative systems that would win respect for the college, and fundamentally revitalised the staff – he said that when he joined, 'two of the five professors were alleged not to have exchanged words for fifteen years'.

In 1962, he moved all the design and applied arts to its present location in the Darwin Building on Kensington Gore. Following this, in 1967 the college was granted a Royal Charter, which empowered it to award degrees and for Robin to change his title to Rector of the Royal College of Art. The college's students have included Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore; however many consider that its heyday was during his leadership. He fostered the artists who were responsible for launching British Pop Art, including David Hockney and Allen Jones. It was a period that was considered to be, 'the days...when RCA couldn't do anything wrong if it tried' (Sir Christopher Frayling, Rector of RCA 1996-2009).

We mustn't overlook Robin's own work. He was an extremely accomplished painter. He painted portraits, including a collection of his RCA colleagues, but it was his watercolours that were considered to be his finest achievements. He exhibited at various galleries around London and the Royal Academy, where he was elected RA in 1972. He served on many arts councils throughout his life and was appointed CBE in 1954, awarded the bicentenary medal of the Royal Society of Arts in 1962 and knighted in 1964.



### **T.H. HUXLEY (1825-1895)**

Huxley took centre stage for Charles Darwin on June 30 1860 in Oxford. It was a public debate between Huxley and Samuel Wilberforce, the Bishop of Oxford – who had been coached by Richard Owen- about Darwin's teachings. Wilberforce ended his speech with a question, was Huxley descended from an ape from his grandfather or grandmother's side of the family?

His intended gibe at Darwin's theory of evolution did not end well, as Huxley was ready. He countered saying that he was not ashamed of his ancestry but, '...would be ashamed to be connected to a man who used great gifts to obscure the truth'. While the audience and the bishop reeled from Huxley's implication that he'd rather be related to an ape than the bishop, Huxley had begun his long career of supporting Darwin and advocating science.

Huxley was instrumental in changing people's perspective of science – in the devout communities of Victorian England, science was largely overlooked. The country was governed by Oxford and Cambridge graduates who were classically trained and sceptical about science. However, Huxley fought hard to change their minds and he even tested their faith by introducing the concept of agnosticism, which summarised his own beliefs.

His influence and popularity grew though and by 1870 Huxley was Professor of Natural History at the Royal School of Mines in Jermyn Street. This position was to be the launch pad for the most fundamental change he brought to science and to



by Permission of Imperial College Archives

The first teaching labs in the Institute

Kensington. Huxley persuaded The Devonshire Commission, a royal commission in scientific instruction, that Britain needed practical based research laboratories. There was a genuine fear at the time about how Germany was rapidly becoming an industrial threat and to counter this Huxley proposed that Britain needed proper places to undertake research.

Sir Henry Cole, the founder and first Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, recalled a conversation with Huxley where they agreed, 'to a National Training College for Science in South Kensington'. Subsequently, it was decided that the Royal School of Mines, amalgamated with the Royal College of Chemistry, should move to Cole's building for the Department of Science and Arts - which had originally been intended to house naval architecture. This is now the Henry Cole Wing at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

This four-storey building epitomised the High Victorian taste for ornamentation and form - with terracotta brick, mosaic and scraffito plasterwork covering the front. The interior however was viewed as Huxley's biological seminary. The huge central stairwell and mosaic-covered floors, led students to a 54-foot lecture theatre on one level and on the top floor to a 60-foot laboratory that was based on models from Berlin and Bonn.

The practical laboratory was a totally new concept in Britain, but Huxley believed they were fundamental to being able to teach his students, who included H.G

Wells, the practical truths about nature. In 1871, the building was still in scaffolding. Undeterred, Huxley requisitioned the ground floor of the South Kensington Museum – the future Victoria and Albert Museum - and set up adhoc laboratories. He had assistants to help him, 38 masters and one school mistress to teach (Huxley argued vociferously for women to be educated and by 1874, a woman demonstrator had joined his distinguished team, which included Michael Foster, William Rutherford and Ray Lankester).

Huxley's science school taught the foundation of the modern discipline of biology. The schoolmasters, who learnt there, took these teachings into schools and subsequently, Huxley reconstructed science's place.

By 1895, there had been a total re-evaluation of knowledge and the theory of evolution was no longer considered a controversial topic, but a natural thought. The *Daily Mail*, at the time, referred to Huxley as 'Apostle Paul of the new teaching', while the *Pall Mall Gazette* saw his hand, 'in all the moving subjects of the day'.

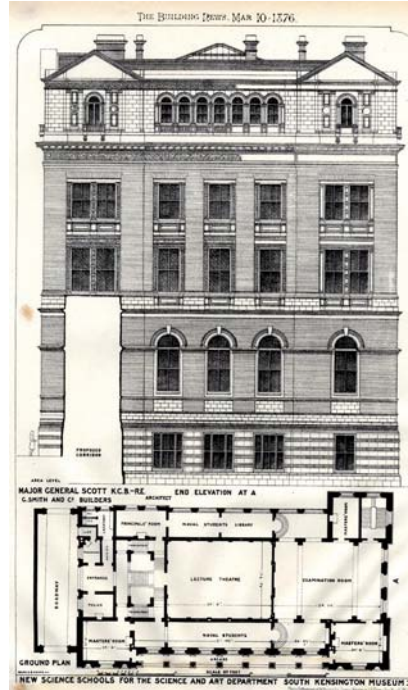
Huxley Building today,  
now the Sir Henry Cole Wing of the V&A





## Plans for the Science & Art Department

Huxley's school of science, originally called the Normal School of Science, became the Royal College of Science and with the Royal School of Mines continued to grow. It slowly amalgamated other departments, such as botany, astronomy and mathematics, and in 1881 Huxley became Dean. By the time he retired in 1885,



Courtesy of RBKC Local Studies Library



Imperial College of Science & Technology, Exhibition Road

The City and Guilds College was about to open and money had been earmarked for a Science Museum. By 1907, the Imperial College of Science and Technology had been built on Exhibition Road, to house all the scientific teaching institutions that had been set up in South Kensington.

At the time of Huxley's death in 1895, South Kensington was considered to be the axis of the Victorian scientific empire. Huxley had succeeded, not only to irrevocably change the way that man thought, but to pave the way for the South Kensington that we know today **KS**

## EMMA JUHASZ

The Society is organising an outing to Charles Darwin's home, Down House on 9 June 2010, please see page 72 for further details.

# PLANNING IN 2009

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Charles House Development, Kensington High Street

Despite the recession and the reduction in bonus-fuelled subterranean developments, this has nevertheless been a very busy year.

Our main concerns have been:

- Consultation documents, such as the new plan for the Borough and supplementary planning documents, the Mayor's emerging strategies and proposed changes by the Government.
- Major developments, such as the Commonwealth Institute, The Gem (158-166 Brompton Road), and Charles House.
- Major projects, including South Kensington and Exhibition Road.
- The continuing flow of applications, which unchecked would erode the character of the Borough.



## **Local Development Framework (LDF)**

The new plan for the Borough has now reached its last stages – objections were due by 10 December, following which the Council will submit the plan to the Secretary of State in March and an Examination by an Planning Inspector will be held in Summer 2010.

The Society made a significant contribution to the new document and, for the most part, we are very pleased with the result – we have been able to secure a clearer vision and improvements to the policies to help tackle some of the issues on which the current plan is inadequate. We are, however, concerned that the plan still does not deal effectively with a number of key issues:

- It fails to elaborate key policies in the London Plan, especially those on density of development, identifying views and vistas, and the premises needs of voluntary organisations.
- The mix of housing required to respond to the housing needs of the Borough's residents, in terms of the proportion of new housing that should be affordable, the proportion of market housing that should be in large units, most of which seem to be sold to an international market as 'second homes', and the need for a better choice of housing for people who want to downsize but stay in the Borough.

The Society does, however, strongly support both the strategy and the policies in the new plan and is urging the Council to start taking account of these new policies as soon as possible when making planning decisions.

## **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

At the same time the Council has been developing supplementary documents, which elaborate on the policies to indicate how they will be applied. The SPD on subterranean development will help mitigate the problems associated with development under existing houses and their gardens. After contributions from the Society we managed to make this a much tougher document. We are still awaiting the new SPD on tall buildings which, in draft, seemed to be eager to find locations for tall buildings.

## **Mayoral Strategies**

The Mayor's proposals for a revised London Plan and Transport Strategy were out to consultation until mid-January. The revised London Plan is an improvement on the last



The Commonwealth Institute, as it will be seen behind the future Kensington High Street Development

one in that it does not seek to “maximise” the density of development and is much less promotional about tall buildings. This may present an opportunity to renegotiate density and height of buildings on the Warwick Road sites.

The Mayor’s Transport Strategy includes a proposal to abolish the Western Extension to the Central London Congestion Charging Zone. Residents were encouraged to indicate their preference, but it is highly unlikely that many Borough residents will have responded, and anything they did say, for or against, is likely to have been dwarfed by the results of a campaign in Hammersmith and Fulham where residents cannot wait to get the free run of this Borough! Instead of the result reflecting the views of Borough residents it will be determined by the ‘votes’ of residents who live outside the zone. It looks like the consultation has been hijacked.

### Major Developments

The Society has been actively involved with a number of major developments: pre-application consultation, assessing the proposals, commenting to the Council and, where necessary, addressing the Major Planning Development Committee to try to persuade them to reject the schemes. This year’s crop included the Commonwealth Institute, Charles House, The Gem and improvements to Kensington Palace.

#### i) Commonwealth Institute

We were very disappointed that, after the first scheme, which would damage both the exhibition building and its setting, was roundly rejected by the Major Planning Development Committee and English Heritage - a marginally revised scheme, after a 5:5 tied vote, was pushed through by the casting vote of the chairman. Worse still,

English Heritage did a complete U-turn. Having completely rejected the first scheme due to the harm to the building and its setting, they decided not to object - despite the acknowledged harm to the building and its setting - because it offered the early reuse of the building. We question English Heritage's judgment in this case, because there is no great urgency to get this grade II\* listed building back into use – it is not at risk as it recently had a lot of money spent on making it wind and weather-proof. The scheme permitted by the Council would result in three blocks of flats, which would dominate the listed exhibition building and either damage or block views of it from Holland Park and from Kensington High Street. We have asked the Secretary of State for his own decision in this case, but sadly he refused.

ii) Warwick Road/Charles House

The Council's planning brief for the Warwick Road sites has proved to be far too generous to developers in terms of density and height. This has led to high expectations on the part of developers, although this "generosity" has enabled the Council to demand the inclusion of a primary school in the Charles House scheme, whilst allowing buildings even taller than the planning brief. The height of the buildings means that the limited open spaces would be almost constantly in the shade. This is likely to be repeated on the Homebase site.



The Commonwealth Institute today



Kensington Palace today

### iii) Kensington Palace

The Royal Palaces Trust proposed a major refurbishment and expansion of the State Rooms to open in time for 2012 – the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. Unfortunately, they wanted to attach a “loggia-like” structure as a new entrance on the east side of the Palace, to clear most of the trees round the eastern side and replant trees along Kensington Road. This would close off the vista of the Palace, which is currently framed by an avenue of trees planted by the Society after the 1987 hurricane. The Trust took an “all or nothing approach”; the Council proposed to refuse the scheme; so the Society proposed a “split decision” to allow. What we all agreed to be approved and put the “loggia” and “tree issues” to one side to be resolved separately. We are pleased to say the main refurbishment is proceeding after getting Heritage Lottery funding, leaving the main project on track for completion in 2012.

### iv) Princess Louise Hospital and Vicarage Gate Car Home

Sadly both these cases were lost, because the old development plan, the UDP, did not provide a strong enough policy basis for their protection. The new LDF will be able to do it – it has come too late to help these cases, but future planning briefs will now have the backing of the plan.

### v) South Kensington and Exhibition Road

The Society has been involved with the advisory group on these projects: removing the one-way system, proposals to develop the station site and the major project for Exhibition Road.

The South Kensington traffic scheme is almost complete and, apart from simplifying the traffic system, will greatly improve the pedestrian environment between the station and the Museums, as well as creating a new public space to the south.

Transport for London has consulted on possible ways of developing the station site. The Society and local groups have insisted that

any scheme must provide: step-free access to the underground platforms, that Thurloe Terrace is retained and the buildings above the station will need to be sympathetic in scale to the surroundings.

The Society supports the Exhibition Road project, which would reapportion the space between pedestrians and vehicles, making the pavements wider and the road narrower, separated by a corrugated “rumble strip” rather than a conventional kerb. This latter element has proved controversial and has been used as the focus for opposition. The Council currently faces a legal challenge.

### **Development pressures**

The current recession has led to a reduction in the number of applications and a marked slowdown in the implementation of schemes – some of the worst schemes may yet not happen! This includes super-luxury housing (such as De Vere Gardens) and many subterranean developments, both products of the pre-recession development climate.

Our current concerns, in addition to large schemes, remain changes of use from local facilities to housing, new shop fronts, advertising – all of which undermine the essential character of Kensington. We hope that the new plan – the LDF – will soon start to bite and that the officers and the Planning Applications Committee buy into the new vision, strategy and policies of the plan. We sincerely hope that they take the new plan more seriously than they have taken the last one.

**MICHAEL BACH**



A common street scene during a large residential development



## FEATURE

The Royal Borough of Kensington  
and Chelsea

# PORTOBELLO ROAD, W.11

George Orwell lived at no.22 in 1927, Hugh Grant lived just off it (in the film *Notting Hill*) and Paddington Bear made daily visits. Portobello Road and its market has attracted millions of visitors - some famous, some not - over the years, but it is important to remember that this unique part of Kensington is not just merely a tourist attraction. It has been, and continues to be, home to a diverse community who endow the area with its special character and vitality. It is this vibrant community and the road's unique heritage, which have defined the character of the area for over 150 years.

Portobello Road started out as a farm track enclosed within the northern boundary of the Parish of Kensington. 'The Lane' connected the Kensington Gravel pits (now Notting Hill) in the south with Kensal village in the north. The farm buildings lay about two thirds of the way up the lane on the eastern side of the track.

The farm, and soon thereafter 'The Lane', took the name Porto Bello after the 1739 victory by Admiral Sir Edward Vernon. Vernon had captured Porto Bello ('Beautiful Harbour') in the Caribbean from the Spanish. The names Porto Bello and Vernon were used across the country in honour of the victory.

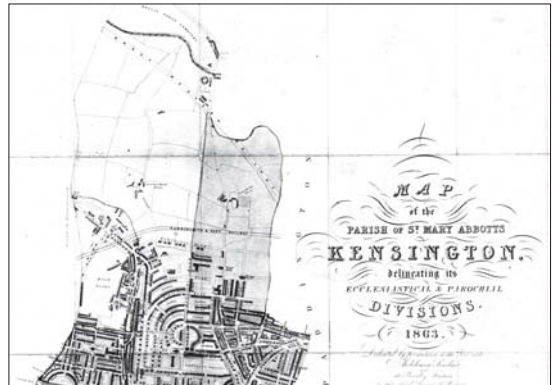


Between 1755 and the 1860s the farm was owned by three generations of the Talbot family. Throughout the 1860s Mary-Anne and Georgina-Charlotte Talbot, the current owners, sold the entire 166 acre estate; 164 acres to Charles Henry Blake and two acres of their estate, including the farm buildings, to a religious order. The order built St. Elizabeth Franciscan Convent on the western side of Portobello Road, which is now the Instituto Español Cañada Blanch – located between Oxford Gardens and Chesterton Road. There has been a Spanish community in the area since the 1930s and today the northern end of Portobello Road still has Spanish shops, such as Garcia and Sons, and the well-known restaurant Galicia.

Meanwhile, the southern end of Portobello Road was changing rapidly under Blake's various leaseholders and builders. By the end of the century, various speculators had achieved their desire to "cover the ground with as many modestly sized dwellings as possible." In fact by 1891 the road was developed and inhabited as far as house no. 429. There were now over 715 residents in nos. 1-112 alone, and most were tradesmen, domestics and scholars.



Kensington 1846



Kensington 1863



Kensington 1879

In the 1860s a regular Saturday market had begun and by all accounts stall traders were making the most of the fresh produce available - thanks to the railways. (In 1838, overseen by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the mainline Great Western



Portobello Road 1900

Railway was built south of the Grand Junction Canal. In 1864 the Hammersmith and City Railway opened and the development of both railways enabled local shopkeepers and traders to collect fresh produce). Indications are that the market traders initially sold food produce, but there were also Totters who collected bits and pieces, bric-a-brac, from homesteads during the week to sell at the market. It wasn't until the 1920s, however, that soldiers and sailors returning from the First World War began to trade daily. They began street trading, in the vein of the Totters, however they were desperately poor and needed to work every day, which resulted in strong resistance from local shopkeepers and the council. At the time daily street trading was unlicensed, so in 1927 the London County Council authorised local boroughs

to licence market stalls and the daily market became an established feature of Portobello Road.



In the days before licensed stalls, Saturday traders would have to run for their stalls at the sound of a whistle or claxon, often having waited from as early as three or four in the morning - or in extreme cases, overnight. In 1927 the licences were granted 'each case on its own merits'. As individuals were licensed (and not a company) the legislation stated, and still

Portobello Road cured meats

does, that the licence had to pass to a blood relative. Once a stall holder becomes permanent then, under the local authority act, family succession means that the stall can only be passed onto a family member. To this day, there are stalls which have been run by the same family for several generations.

Cheryl Devlin (née Collins) is a costermonger – someone who sells fruit and vegetables – whose family have traded on the street for over 100 years. Cheryl continues the tradition practised by her father and grandfather (and possibly great-grandfather) of being up at 4am, buying her produce and trading in all weather before finishing at 7pm or later.



Portobello Road 1967

Courtesy of RBKC Local Studies Library

Cheryl started on the market when she was six years old and would stand on the corner of her father's stall shouting "five lemons for six pence." Today you are more likely to hear her chatting with her customers, as she continues to sell some of the best fruit and vegetables available. She feels that hers is a way of life that may well end with her generation, as big supermarkets kill off the traditional market and the younger generation are reluctant to adopt the profession.

Following the Second World War the bric-a-brac stalls flourished – it is thought that this was once again due to discharged soldiers and sailors looking for work – however the products available now included antiques. While the food market was still supplying the local population with fresh produce, the antiques section evolved into the specialist environment it is now famous for. One dealer, Anne Swift, has been working in the market for 30 years, she now specialises in antique lace and fabrics. She holds stall no.1 on the antiques section of the road, however when she



Anne Swift and Kaho

started out she would queue up from 7am on a Saturday hoping to be allocated a stall, which would only become available if a permanent stall holder was sick or on holiday. Now a member of the Portobello Antique Dealers Association (PADA), Anne describes the dealers and area as “a heritage, a collection of people with specialist knowledge” and remarks that the Portobello Road is the only street where you can buy almost

anything – Anne famously had a pair of Queen Victoria’s knickers in her collection, they were made of linen and embroidered with the royal insignia, and were donated to a charity auction, where they fetched £2,000.

During the 1950s and 60s several shops along the southern section of the road were partitioned to create the famous arcades, which still house hundreds of specialist dealers in individual units. However, one arcade, Lipka’s, has recently ceased to function as an antiques arcade and the building has been redeveloped and is now a retail fashion store. There are an extraordinary number of antiques and specialists dealers, today, which attract large numbers of tourists. However, Lipka’s demise meant that 60 dealers have lost their units and with the threat of the closure of another arcade, The Good Fairy, Portobello stands to lose many more of its specialist dealers.



Portobello Road 1904





Courtesy of RBKC Local Studies Library

Portobello Road 1900

In the 1920s, the Portobello Road offered cheap accommodation, was densely overcrowded and was far from salubrious. The 1950s saw a further influx of migrants, now predominantly from the West Indies. This was due to recruitment drives in the colonies, begun in 1949 and funded by the British Government, primarily to staff the newly founded NHS. The area was already crowded and the further population explosion incited racial tension and eventually rioting broke out in 1958. However, the arrival of migrants began to add to the cultural diversity of the road. The new inhabitants contributed to the range of unique produce available, influenced musical innovations and helped to create the original cultural milieu which made the Portobello Road famous in the 60s. The Portobello Road became a unique melting pot for the emerging radical, creative and musical culture that epitomised Britain at the time. The extraordinary military paraphernalia available in the market inspired pop artist Peter Blake's and his wife Jann Haworth's design of the iconic Beatles' album cover Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.

Robina Rose has been a local a resident for over 50 years and recognises that the 'most amazing thing about Portobello is the synthesis of different groups of people', the remarkable 'integrated cross-section of people' who continue live and work in the area. Robina is one of many passionate locals, residents and traders who have built on the '60's campaigning spirit.'

What seems to make Portobello Road and the market so special, is its fascinating history and the finely tuned balance of unique retail presence - something which many feel could be destroyed if there are too many chain stores or mass produced

reproductions available. What is feared by many traders and locals is that the very things which make Portobello special and attract visitors will be lost, resulting in Portobello Road becoming just another retail high street with nothing to distinguish it from any other.

Local needs have influenced the growth of a large number of organisations which developed to defend and protect neighbourhood concerns: these include the Notting Hill Development Trust, The Ladbroke Association, PADA, Portobello and Goldborne Management committee, Market Street Action Group, Friends of Portobello and Westway Development Trust. These groups offer pertinent insights and suggestions, while campaigning against the potential threats to the area.



Portobello Paella

In 2006, two young film makers Alex Thomas and Paul McCrudden of TAG Films captured a moment in time with a 20 minute documentary, Portobello: Attack of the Clones in which they have recorded the opinions and feelings of several locals in light of the changes which loom. What emerges is a snapshot of a 'culturally interesting

and specific place' that needs to be recognised and preserved, something many traders, local campaigners and community historians have endeavoured to emphasize. The film picks up on the huge sense of solidarity amongst the various sections of the Portobello Road. It also highlights the 'unique retail ecology' that is the Portobello Road and as Alex remarked 'markets have a huge cultural significance and importance in British life'.

Nick Kasic, the Market Manager works to navigate the tensions which naturally arise in trying to provide for the needs of traders, local residents, visitors and tourists. He



Portobello Road Today



acknowledges that it is 'all about balance' and the need to 'maintain the character and historic nature of the markets... a balance between a visitor attraction, a market and somewhere people live'.

Meanwhile, Mark Atkinson - regularly referred to as the 'Portobello Market Champion' – has the task of overseeing the 'economic and community development...to bring new vitality to the [Borough's] market'. He readily acknowledges that the Portobello area is already thriving, but has the delicate task of assessing and navigating where the future may lie and seeks to 'ensure the long term financial viability of the markets and market streets'. Mark suggests that 'the best chance of long term sustainability is to be as resilient and diverse as we possibly can'; to look at the rules and regulations currently in place and to see whether they do what they are supposed to do; and to try and address the legitimate concerns being aired. Mark recognises that there is 'untapped potential' which, with the right leverage, could be mined for everyone's benefit **KS**

**LOUISE BENZIMRA**



Portobello Road baked goods



Portobello Road silverware

# NEWS FROM THE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA PARTNERSHIP

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Last year saw the publication of the Royal Borough's third Community Strategy and the completion of the first Local Area Agreement (now rolled forward into the second one), which was made in 2006 when the Government agreed that some of the targets in it, if met, could expect to receive performance reward grant. As they have been achieved, two payments are due, in spring 2010 and 2011. The Partnership has decided that half should go to the organizations responsible for reaching the targets, with the remainder (possibly about £2 million) to be allocated as The Steering Group wishes. Consideration is being given to how the money should be spent, with the objectives of supporting new activities and helping to alleviate the impact of the economic downturn, particularly on employment prospects. Current favourites include a Partnership Apprentice Scheme. Although some Partnership members have their own schemes, a combined approach with placements across Partnership organizations would be new, and could offer generalist apprenticeships - perhaps in business administration or customer services - intended to support local residents, provide experience in several organizations and a range of employment possibilities. To test this out, the plan is to hold a pilot operation with about five placements over two years, with the first step being the formation of a project group of representatives of organizations who could take the pilot forward. Another possibility being researched is the setting up of a Credit Union, which would operate like a community bank improving access to financial services for those increasingly excluded by the recession from mainstream services. The Credit Union would provide access to affordable loans and debt management advice and also opportunities for saving. There is already a Credit Union operating in Hammersmith and Fulham, which could be used as a model for Kensington and Chelsea - a feasibility study will explore this.

On a more cheerful note, a recent survey has shown that for 90% of the respondents, the Borough is a good place to live in. There is a high level of satisfaction with the local environment, particularly parks and open spaces. Refuse collection, street cleaning and recycling are all rated as high performing. But while the Partnership has worked hard to consult local people and understand their needs, there are many who still do not feel well informed about public services. The Partnership has now established priorities for action in the Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement. It can, therefore, move away from concentrating on statutory duties, and next year try again to find better ways of engaging with the community and encouraging more of them to become involved in decision making.

**CELIA REES-JENKINS**

# PORTRAIT OF A LOCAL ARTIST

### EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

We continue this year with another feature emphasising and recognising the rich heritage of our living Kensington artists. Our Portrait of a Local Artist this year is Lucian Freud.



*'My work is purely autobiographical...It is about myself and my surroundings. I work from people that interest me and that I care about, in rooms that I know...When I look at a body it gives me choice of what to put in a painting, what will suit me and what won't. There is a distinction between fact and truth. Truth has an element of revelation about it. If something is true, it does more than strike one as merely being so.'* – Lucian Freud

Lucian Freud, awarded the Order of Merit in 1993, is internationally acknowledged as one of the most important artists working today. In May 2008, his portrait *Benefits Supervisor Sleeping* (1995) was sold at auction by Christie's in New York City for \$33.6 million, setting a world record for sale value of a painting by a living artist. He is best known for his sombre, realistic, often naked, portraiture. His highly individualistic style has redefined portraiture; however, he does not idealize or glorify his subjects. 'I paint people', Freud has said, 'not because of what they are like, not exactly in spite of what they are like, but how they happen to be'.

However, not all are naked portraits. He prefers to paint people he knows well and his love for animals, especially his whippet and horses, is obvious in many of his paintings. As in *Double Portrait* (1985-86) where the sitter's face is covered and subverted, while the whippet is fully shown. Is it a painting of the dog or the woman? As the title states, it is a Double Portrait.



*Double Portrait* (1985-86)

Lucian Freud was born Berlin in 1922. His architect father was the youngest of Sigmund Freud's children. The family moved to England when he was ten, to escape the rise of Nazism and he became a British citizen in 1939. Freud briefly studied at the Central School of Art in London and later at Cedric Morris' East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing in Dedham, and at Goldsmiths College - University of London from 1942-3. He served as a merchant seaman in an Atlantic convoy in 1941, before being invalided out of service in 1942.

Between 1949 and 1954 he was a visiting tutor at the Slade School of Fine Art, London. In 1951, his *Interior in Paddington* (1951), from the collection at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, won an Arts Council prize at the Festival of Britain.

In 1943, Freud moved to Paddington, where he was to remain for 30 years before moving to Kensington. "It seems absolutely obvious, as well as convenient, to use as a subject what you are thinking and looking at all the time, the way your life goes." Freud became preoccupied with the view from his window on to a waste ground. When tramps began to remove the rubbish Freud had to buy them off so as to keep his vision intact. *Factory in North London* (1972) was painted towards the end of his time here.

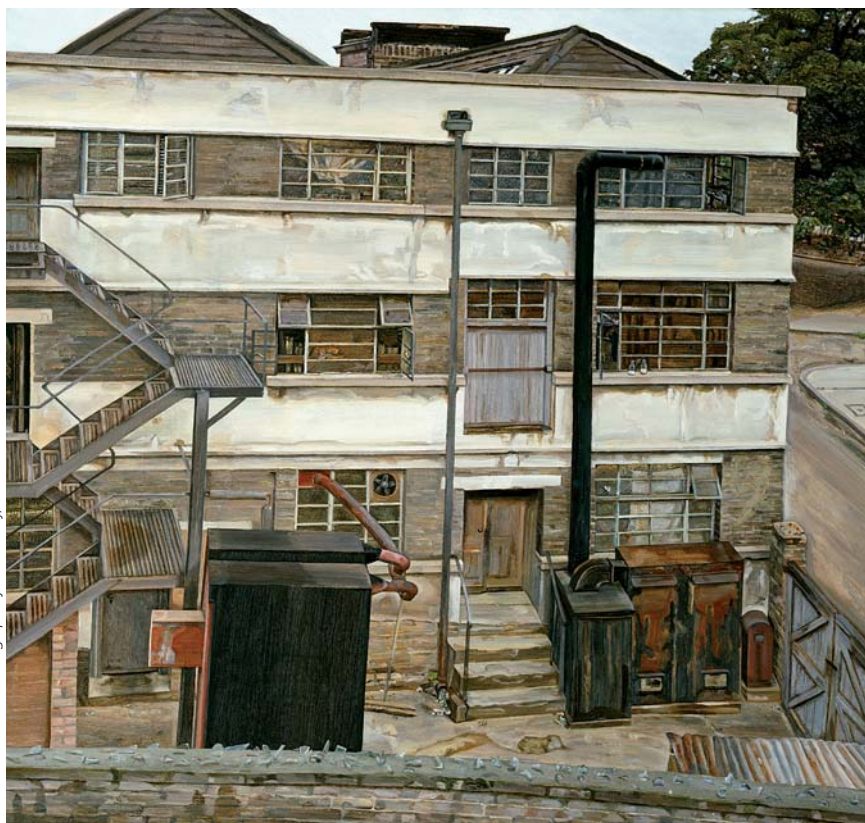


Freud's great friendship, for 20 years from 1945, was with another Kensington artist, Francis Bacon. Bacon rented 7 Reece Mews, South Kensington, a converted horse stable. Thurloe Place was to be home and studio for the last 30 years of his life. A portrait of Bacon painted by Freud in 1951 and only the size of a large postcard, was stolen from a British Council exhibition in Berlin in 1988 and has never been recovered.

Although best known as a painter, etching has become integral to his practice. Our front cover, *Painter's Garden* (2004), is an etching of his own garden. When preparing an etching plate, he treats it much like a canvas, standing the copper upright on an easel. The etchings allow viewers to get a closer and more detailed look at the artist's creative process. In late 2007, a collection of Freud's etchings titled "Lucian Freud: The Painter's Etchings" went on display at the Museum of Modern Art.

The finale piece to the 2002 Tate Britain's retrospective on Freud was a self-portrait, *Self-Portrait: Reflection* (2002). Freud claimed that "painting myself is more difficult than painting people, I've found". As William Feather stated in his review for The Guardian in May 2002, "Its two things at once: the sitter busied, the viewer viewed, a mirror intervening. In *Reflection (Self Portrait)* (1985), worked on over the same period as the first painting of Thyssen [Baron H. H. Thyssen-Bornemisza, owner of the

*Factory in North London (1972)*



Photograph by John Riddy, © The Artist




*Self-Portrait: Reflection (2002)*

greatest art collection in private hands], Freud captured his reflected image, mirror-struck and mirror-bound, as though catching himself unawares. It looks instantaneous.”

During a period from May 2000 to December 2001, Freud painted Queen Elizabeth II at sittings in St James’s Palace. The painting is quite small, about 15 by 22 cms, and was not commissioned. It followed six years of negotiations, before permission was granted and was done as a gift to the Queen from Freud. One cannot imagine she did not know his work and was surprised at the result. At Freud’s request, the Queen wore the diamond crown she wears for the opening of the British parliament and in her portrait on stamps and bank notes. Freud was quoted as saying that this was because he “had always liked the

way her head looks on stamps, wearing a crown”, and he, “wanted to make some reference to the extraordinary position she holds, of being the monarch.”

Whether you think Lucian Freud’s painting dishonour’s her, or is a work of a genius, will depend on whether or not you like his powerful painting style. Lucian Freud’s portrait has entered the collection at the Queen’s Gallery, Buckingham Palace.

Lucian Freud lives in Kensington and works from his studio in Holland Park. His work can be found in museums and private collections throughout the world. He is very private person and in 1993, the reclusive Freud refused an honorary degree from Oxford, claiming he was neither an Oxford graduate nor a graduate of any university. He is simply, as art critic Robert Hughes declared, the greatest realist painter of his time 

## AMANDA FRAME

*Portrait of Queen Elizabeth II (2002)*





# NORTH KENSINGTON ENVIRONMENT PROJECT

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On a beautiful spring afternoon local residents attended the opening of the refurbished Sunbeam Gardens to see the new play area and the changes made to the landscape, in order to create better sight lines and help security. Following consultations, the aim was to make a safe, attractive and well used park, and it is encouraging to know that during the summer months the improvements have been enjoyed and respected. It is hoped a Friends Group will soon be set up.



New garden by  
St Michaels Church

In July the new garden beside St Michael's Church in Ladbroke Grove was the scene for a celebratory cream tea party. The small park, now established at the west end of Kensal Road, survived the Carnival once again, and is being used and appreciated.

On the 'Do It Yourself' front there has been considerable support for the Community Kitchen Gardens Project. It is intended to develop underused areas and enable



All Pictures courtesy of T Cartwright-Laebli



Pampas Grass at the west end of Kensal Road

residents to grow vegetables with the help of a community gardener, who holds fortnightly workshops. There are now ten sites; many residents groups have expressed interest and there is a waiting list for plots. Three Living Roofs in the north of the Borough should be planted shortly. Rather than sedum, the intention is to use a wildflower meadow mix to help insects, particularly bees.

Planning is also underway for major improvements to the small square in Clydesdale Road beside All Saints' Church, which provides an attractive

neo-Gothic backdrop. A consultation exercise has shown strong support for changes to the square to benefit children, local residents and the disabled, concentrating on the use of natural materials and rainwater harvesting. The next steps are to complete an agreed design and secure funding.



The refurbished Sunbeam Gardens' new play area

Proposals are currently being considered for improvements to the appearance and lighting of Kingsdown Close Bridge and St. Mark's Bridge, but preparations for work on Golborne Road Bridge are now on hold. Decisions need

to be made about the site of the Cross Rail Station in North Kensington, which could affect the railway tracks below the bridge. Hopefully next year it will be possible to report progress with its refurbishment.



Golborne Road Bridge, 2009

**CELIA REES-JENKINS**



## FEATURE

Kensington has some of London's finest parks and green spaces. While most of us are acquainted with the delights of Kensington Gardens and Holland Park, there are many other beautiful gardens and public spaces in the area. Here are just some of Kensington's various hidden paradises.

### The Meanwhile Gardens

The Meanwhile Gardens, a little urban green space not far from where I live, are not Kensington Gardens (though they lie just within the Royal Borough), let alone the hanging gardens of Babylon or the gardens of the Summer Palace in Beijing, thoughtlessly destroyed by British troops during the Opium Wars. Nor are they the gardens of Kubla Khan's pleasure dome in Xanadu. They are decidedly modest in scale, just a four-acre ribbon of trees, walks, borders, ponds and beds hugging the south side of the Grand Union Canal, as it meanders from Paddington towards Kensal Green.

All the same, they do what city gardens should do – they provide breathing space and greenery and surprising beauty in what was once a desperately poor zone and is still classified as a deprived ward. Children appreciate them; at one end there is a playhut and a skateboard park. For those requiring a quiet space for contemplation, there is a scented courtyard. The charity, Mind in Kensington and Chelsea runs horticultural training schemes out of the gardens for people who have experienced mental health problems. The Meanwhile Gardens are rich in wild flowers and wildlife: the other day I heard blackcaps and chiffchaffs and willow warblers singing together in early summer concert.



KENSINGTON'S GREEN &  
PLEASANT GARDENS



All Pictures courtesy of T Cartwright-Loebel

I like their somehow provisional and self-deprecatory name. These are not the gardens of some glorious future, of Le Corbusier's ville radieuse, in which all the problems of urban living have been miraculously solved, once and for all. They've had to eke out a place, between a council estate and one of London's most notorious tower blocks, between the canal and the railway line. The Meanwhile Gardens do not promise salvation; salvation has not yet arrived and maybe never will, but in the meantime, life is still there to be lived.

What does it mean, the meantime or the meanwhile? It could sound like a poor time, an impoverished time. It tends to mean an interim time, the time while we are waiting (for what? for something better?). But the meantime, the meanwhile, is also where we live. Mean can also mean average, middle of the road. So the Meanwhile Gardens could be a place for dwelling as well as waiting, in between one thing and another, between the beginning and the ending, nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita, or in the middle of the road of our lives, which are always between a beginning and an ending.

This may sound unambitious, but in their small way The Meanwhile Gardens point to something important. Our imperfect, provisional urban lives can be touched by beauty, can be open to flourishing and conviviality as well as mere survival. This was what the Roman poet Martial meant by *rus in urbe* (the countryside in the city), one of those phrases which has sounded through the centuries while its context has been forgotten.

In fact when Martial uses the phrase, he does so with a good deal of irony. He is writing from clamorously noisy Rome to his friend Sparsus, explaining why he has to take frequent country breaks to be able to think and be quiet. Rome gives him no rest at all. There are schoolteachers bawling in the morning and corn-grinders by night, not to mention hammering and metal-beating (it was a bit like that where I used to live in leafy St John's Wood). Of course, Sparsus wouldn't know about any of this; he lives in luxury and peace in his magnificent villa on the Janiculum hill complete with vineyard.



In other words, Martial's *rus in urbe* is more of an aspiration than a reality; something in his day enjoyed only by the very rich and yearned for with envy by the *hoi polloi*. But it is a powerful aspiration, one which has caught the imagination of city-dwellers and planners for 2,000 years. For Martial, *rus in urbe* seems to be a private preserve in the midst of teeming public urban 'noise and smog'. But what if *rus in urbe* could enter the public realm?

The great parks of cities such as London and Paris mostly started as royal or aristocratic playgrounds before being handed over to the public. The *Meanwhile Gardens*, on the other hand, were never an aristocratic preserve. Thirty-three years ago a local sculptor called Jamie McCullough had the idea that a derelict industrial area could be turned into a community garden. The council (then Westminster) gave temporary permission; a nickname was coined and it became, paradoxically, permanent.

This modest and provisional achievement, for me, may be a better guide for the cities of the present and the future, than either aristocratic largesse or utopian planning. We cannot expect another Hyde Park or Bois de Boulogne; but in cities all over the world there are crannies which, with a bit of imagination and will, can be greened.

This is regeneration in its most basic form; another poet nearer our time, Gerard Manley Hopkins, saw a world already 'seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil', but he also recognised something else: 'There lives the dearest freshness deep down things'.

## **HARRY EYRES**

*This article originally appeared in the Financial Times, June 20 2009*

## **OTHER GARDENS IN KENSINGTON**

### **Arundel & Elgin Crescent Gardens**

Arundel Gardens and Elgin Crescent were built between 1852 and 1862, as part of the residential development of the Ladbroke Grove area. The gardens were laid out to an original Victorian design from an old map of 1862 and are one of the few Kensington gardens to retain its original layout. It is a friendly and informal garden square with mature trees, plants and shrubs, and is dominated by a very tall plane tree in the centre.



Picture courtesy of G Gardiner

Arundel & Elgin Crescent Gardens



## Kensington Square

One of the earliest garden squares in London. It dates from the 17th century and was the vision of woodcarver, Thomas Young. It was an unusual location at the time, as Kensington was so far from the centre of London – the square was surrounded by fields until 1840. Young struggled to fill the houses and the square was only saved from fading into ruin, when the Court of King William and Queen Mary moved to Nottingham House

(Kensington Palace). By 1696, every house in the, then named King's Square – this was to honour James II –, was filled with people from the Court. It became an important artistic haunt in 19th Century, attracting the artist Edward Burne Jones and the writer William Makepeace Thackeray. Today it is a popular address and the gardens are a quiet leafy haven, tucked away from the bustle of nearby Kensington High Street.



Picture courtesy of S Jackson

Kensington Square

## Ladbroke Square Gardens

Originally it formed part of the Hippodrome racecourse, built by John Whyte in 1837. After the racecourse was forced to close, the site was then laid out in 1849 by Thomas Allason, as part of the Ladbroke Estate. Today, it is one of the largest private garden squares in London - three hectares of wooded land, lawns and flower beds.



Picture courtesy of J Ward

Ladbroke Square Gardens

## Lexham Gardens

This small one-acre square was refurbished in 1990. It has won the All London Garden Square Best Garden award three times and the Brighter Kensington & Chelsea Prize eight times. Among the facilities are a children's play area and ponds with fountains.



Picture courtesy of J Burnett

Lexham Gardens



## Royal Crescent Gardens


These gardens are part of the Norland Estate developed from around 1840 by Robert Cantwell, who laid out Royal Crescent in 1846. The gardens contain two magnificent plane trees, which are thought to be as old as the crescent buildings. The perimeter railings were sacrificed for the war effort in WWII and were only restored in 1997. In 2008, the gardens won the first prize for communal gardens in North Kensington under the Brighter Kensington and Chelsea Scheme.



Picture courtesy of G Gardiner

Royal Crescent Gardens

## Sunningdale Gardens

This strange, almost secret, little space is essentially the front garden of just nine 1860s houses. The artist Paul Nash, born here in 1889, dismissed it as 'meaningless', today it arouses strong feelings. Until recently it was tended, with haphazard love, by a few residents, but now a professional element has crept in. Any visit, is a truly intimate experience 



Picture courtesy of S Jackson

Sunningdale Gardens

Many of these gardens are often not open to the public throughout the year, but last year they all participated the Open Garden Squares Weekend - which gives visitors access to approximately 200 gardens around London; ranging from traditional gardens, to allotments, through to historically important gardens and even prisons. This year's event is on June 12 & 13, for further details on tickets and which of your local gardens are participating, please visit [www.opensquares.org](http://www.opensquares.org)

# REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2009

## From the Chairman

Many thanks to all of you have contributed this year. The Society has worked with many of the local societies on specific issues in their areas and we hope that they continue in these efforts. These reports are an invaluable insight into the hard work that is undertaken to help maintain Kensington's unique character.

## BROMPTON ASSOCIATION

This has been another busy year:

- We have co-ordinated the response of local societies to TfL's 'Massing Study' for South Kensington tube. All groups agreed the Study demonstrated how inappropriate and damaging a large new development on top of the tube station would be.
- Continued to press for step-free access, as an operational necessity, once the Exhibition Road Scheme is complete.
- Expressed concern that the character of Knightsbridge is changing for the worse, seemingly aided by the Council's LDF, which seems to view Knightsbridge as another Oxford Street.
- Opposed applications for late night licenses in Knightsbridge.
- Opposed (sadly, unsuccessfully) The Gem development in Knightsbridge, which resembles a vast crumpled paper bag.
- Continued to express concern about temporary planning permissions for structures in the grounds of the Natural History Museum and in particular plans to concrete over the Museum's east garden.

**Sophie Andreae** Chairman

## REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2009

### CAMPDEN HILL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Our main 'Battle' for 2009 has been Holland Park School.

- Despite widespread opposition to their plans, RBKC has now given themselves the go ahead for the re-development of the school, financed by the sale of the southern site playing fields. However, there are still many unresolved issues, which may leave the Council vulnerable to legal challenge and CHRA is currently reviewing its options.

**David White** Chairman

### CORNWALL GARDENS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

This has been another quietly successful year for CGRA:

- We have had no planning disputes and a number of small improvements.
- Councillor Moylan kindly organized the restoration of the arches at the entrances to Cornwall Mews South.
- The summer party was the best ever with food from Jakobs and the ever-popular Brazu Latino Band.
- The members' discount scheme goes from strength to strength with the launch of the website - [www.cgra.info](http://www.cgra.info)

**Tamara Cartwright-Loebl** Chairman

### EDWARDES SQUARE SCARSDALE & ABINGDON ASSOCIATION

Our main issues for 2009 have been:

- The Commonwealth Institute. It is still a major concern and ESSA has played a leading role in opposing the plans, which include very invasive 'enabling development'. It is not just the building itself, but implications of local and national policies being ignored and the impact on our conservation areas.
- We have commented on the draft PPS *Planning for the Historic Environment*, which will replace PPG 15 and 16 and the changes may conflict with alterations to Building Regs. planned for next year: we shall keep abreast of events.
- We have started a discussion group for mansion block representatives with a view to helping to promote their views.
- We have continued our interest in small-scale issues, such as representations at Appeal against high level terraces and roof-top plants.

- We would be interested to discuss questions of environmental impact on the area, including light and noise pollution, air quality and subterranean development, with other interested Societies.

**Anthony Walker** Chairman

## **KENSINGTON COURT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

Our big event last year:

- Was the retirement of our chairman, Sir Ronald Arculus. Whatever the issue, whether leading the campaign against the Princess Diana Memorial Fountain, or getting the developers to add a third architrave to 37 KHS, he was an indefatigable champion of our community's interests. He'll be a hard act to follow.

**John Gau CBE** Chairman

## **LADBROKE ASSOCIATION**

Our major issues in 2009 were:

- The Report on the Survey of Impact of Subterranean Developments on Neighbours in North Kensington will be published in December 2009, available through [www.ladbrokeassociation.org.uk](http://www.ladbrokeassociation.org.uk)

Recommendations include:

- RBKC to produce a Good Development Guide.
- RBKC to improve its handling of planning applications and subsequent building work.
- Compensation for loss of amenity during prolonged building works.
- Rethink controls of planning and execution of major building works in residential areas.
- Better use of Party Wall Agreements.
- Test case under General Law of Nuisance or under Environmental Pollution Act 1990.

Other Concerns:

- Shortening of consultation period on planning applications.
- Flooding: Counters Creek etc.

**David Corsellis** Chairman



## REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2009

### LEXHAM GARDENS

2009 was a great year for Lexham Gardens.

- We were second in both the London Garden Society annual competition for the best garden square and achieved a similar result in the Brighter Kensington & Chelsea garden square competition. We also won first prize in the rose competition for Brighter Kensington & Chelsea competition.
- We were also pleased to persuade the Council to take action to stop cyclists and even motorcyclists travelling down Lexham Walk. There have been serious accidents recently from cyclists refusing to dismount on Lexham Walk. Fortunately, police action has now stopped this.
- Our Residents Association flourishes with 228 member households. We have become a close knit supportive community since our garden was refurbished in 1990.

Sir Cyril Taylor Chairman

### NORLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

This has been a busy year for the Society:

- As we have been chosen by RBKC to pilot the rewriting/updating of Conservation Area Policy Statements.
- A key part of this will be the making of Article 4 Directions to protect non-listed buildings in the CA. We are now 80% of the way through a detailed survey of all the streets in our area, house by house, including preparing a photographic record of every building as the basis for recommending Art 4 directions.
- This is a major exercise, involving all members of the Committee, and should provide experience and guidelines for updating CAPS for all CA's in the Royal Borough.

Clive Wilson Chairman

### ONSLOW NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

In 2009, the Onslow Neighbourhood Association has:

- Condemned the withdrawal of plans to put in step free access at South Kensington station.
- Opposed the PFI plan to develop the station on the grounds of insufficient



improvement for passengers.

- Liaised with RBK&C on traffic management in SW7.
- Held, as usual, a very successful garden party.

**Roger Baresel** Chairman

## **ST HELEN'S RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

The St Helen's Residents' Association is now entering its second year:

- In this time, it has established a voice for the residents of the St Quintin's Conservation Area.
- We are particularly concerned about planning issues and local amenities.
- We are campaigning against over-development on our boundaries and the recently-erected advertising towers.
- We also support the development of local kitchen gardens.

**Clare Singleton** Chair

## **THE BOLTONS ASSOCIATION**

The main planning issue for The Boltons Association over the past year:

Has been the aftermath of the demolition of 18 Tregunter Road, a Victorian Italianate villa on the corner of Tregunter Road and The Little Boltons.

- After being left empty for almost ten years, the property was demolished in its entirety last year after it started collapsing, when builders were carrying out partial demolition works.
- The Council published a report outlining ways in which a similar situation might be avoided in the future, including more active monitoring and action from them for buildings on the 'at risk' register.
- The owner has now applied for planning permission to rebuild the house in somewhat larger form. The Kensington Society and The Boltons Association have objected to the application.
- The balance is between wanting to see something built on the site and ensuring that what is built is appropriate.

**Calvin Jackson** Chairman

## REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2009

### THE FRIENDS OF HOLLAND PARK 2009

Our main issues in 2009 have been:

- We have continued our objection to the Commonwealth Institute development proposals, which are detrimental to the Park. We also contributed to the 'fighting fund'.
- We have illuminated the ceramic tiles beside the cafeteria and provided the Ecology Centre with new equipment.
- Our campaign to conserve Holland House was finally successful and the Borough has completed the work to a high standard. We hope now to see the terrace landscaped and opened to the public.



Restoration at Holland House

Nicholas Hopkins Chairman

### THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Another busy year with continuing consultation on:

- The Government's 'Improved' Permitted Development Rights, which gives cause for concern with regard to subterranean development, air conditioning and shopfronts inter alia.
- The Exhibition Road Project.
- South Kensington Station.
- One Hyde Park.
- Imperial College building projects.
- Air Quality.
- The Civic Initiative to replace The Civic Trust.
- Our Transport & Environment and Law & Order committees were also fully engaged.

Carol Seymour-Newton Hon. Secretary

### THE PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

The main issues for the association over the last year have been:

- The Association supported the Council's refusal for a large family house to be built on Pembridge Villas, on the grounds of increased sense of enclosure on

neighbouring flats. Lost on appeal.

- Imperial College's scheme to build six eco-friendly house terraces on a prominent site in Pembridge Villas. Opposed by P.A. due to unsuitable front elevation and felling of five mature lime trees. Withdrawn.
- Inaccurate drawings for raising roof height on a mews house, led to a protracted and expensive dispute with residents of the terrace, who were affected by the diminished outlook. Developer won.
- Of nine appeal decisions re: planning applications in a Conservation Area, seven dismissed, two allowed.
- P.A. opposed applications to convert, i) Five residential units into one in Westbourne Grove, ii) three floors of office space in NHG to a single residential unit. Council granted both.
- Excellent restoration of front facades, gates and boundary walls on: 6-14, 13-17 Pembridge Gardens.

**Roy Griffiths** Planning Secretary

## **VICTORIA ROAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

Our main issues for 2009 have been:

- De Vere Gardens scheme for super-luxury flats abandoned, possibly for a super-luxury hotel.
- The Council's proposal for a "school, keep clear" scheme for Thomas' School has been abandoned. Residents were incensed by the lack of consultation on an inappropriate scheme.
- Subterranean development either completed or abandoned, thanks to the recession
- Peter Dixon retired after 10 years as chairman

**Michael Bach** Chairman

### **Other Affiliated Local Societies:**

Eardley Crescent Residents' Association  
Earls Court Gardens & Morton Mews Residents' Association  
Earls Court Square Residents' Association  
Earls Court Village Residents' Association  
Kempsford Gardens Residents' Association  
Kensington Mansions Residents' Association  
Marlborough Court Residents' Association  
Nevern Square Conservation Area Residents' Association  
Royal Crescent Residents' Association  
Wetherby Gardens

# KENSINGTON'S MEMORIALS TO THE FALLEN

Photograph by Colin MacMillan



Peace pinning her scroll  
to Kensington War Memorial

The Kensington of my childhood, in the fifties, was a gentle place. A district where my grandmother used to take me, from the ages of three to five years, to Barkers, Derry & Toms and Pontings, shopping amongst ladies seemingly from a previous time; ladies forever dressed in black, the reason for which was lost on me. Now I suspect it was for mourning; mourning not for my father's generation, but for the generation of my grandparents.

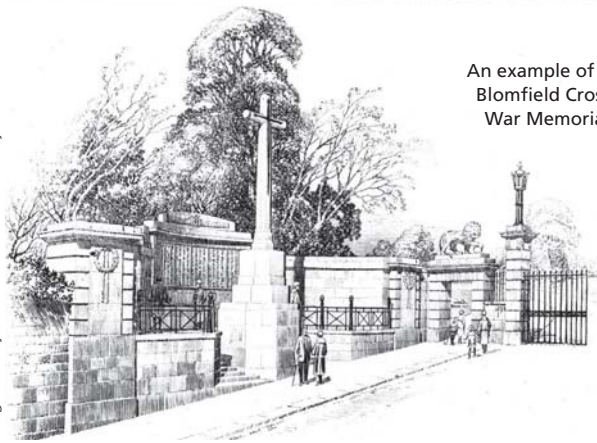
Remembering these ladies, recently I enquired of my Quaker neighbour if there are any war memorials to the fallen of their faith, to which she replied "we would not have war memorials, we are pacifists". In reality, none of us have memorials to glorify war, rather we have memorials, not to war, but to the victims of war; our fallen, those whose loss we grieve and miss.

*To live in the hearts we leave  
behind is not to die.*

*(Hallowed Ground - Thomas Campbell 1777-1844)*

The Great War, 1914-1918, so named as no one could envision a second such great conflict, killed 743,702. It caused the Government to commission Sir Edwin Lutyens to design the Cenotaph in Whitehall and Sir Reginald Blomfield the Cross of Sacrifice, notable in most War Cemeteries.

Before the First World War memorials were commissioned by families, churches, schools



An example of a  
Blomfield Cross  
War Memorial

and regiments, and placed in their halls. During that war Sir Fabian Ware, founder of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, successfully campaigned for equality of memorial for all of the Fallen; and that no bodies be exhumed and repatriated regardless of family, wealth and position. Local authorities were now petitioned for memorials and most chose Blomfield's Cross.

2010 is the 65th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War, so I decided to take a stroll through Kensington, to discover how we have honoured our dead.

We should start at the principal church, the Church of Saint Mary Abbots, wherein are brass plaques to those who fell in the South African wars in Queen Victoria's reign and thereafter the Great War of 1914 -1918. On the corner of the High Street and Church Street is the main Kensington War Memorial, marking those of Kensington and those who served in Kensington Regiments. Positioned poignantly on the monument's face, a woman reaches up to place a scroll, which reads 'Awake remembrance of the valiant dead'. The Regiment's war memorial, bearing the names of the 1,324 officers and men who were killed in the First and Second World Wars, is located in the library of the Kensington Town Hall.

Our journey now takes us north; up Church Street to where the road curves left - where the horses were added to pull the omnibus up the hill. Here the Carmelite Priors mark with a simple Calvary, the Fallen and their church which was destroyed by war. Up Campden Hill, stands the church of St. George in Aubrey Walk with, perhaps, the most beneficial war memorial, in the form of a baptismal font. It is to welcome the newborn, for whose freedom war was fought.

Past Notting Hill Gate we head further north to an area close to the railway tracks, which was heavily targeted by the Luftwaffe. Here, we have the Church of All Saints in Clydesdale Road. Evidenced by the newer buildings to the north, this was twice bombed in the Second World War. Inside the church, in the South Transept, beneath a stained glass window recording all the saints of the United Kingdom, survives a





Church of All Saints, gold leaf screen of St George

magnificent altar. Topped with a gold-leafed screen to St. George, it commemorates the Fallen of the Great War.

Then up to Kensal Green Cemetery, where there stands the traditional Cross of Sacrifice, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. On the surrounding low stone wall are the names of those buried within this ground and nearby is a small plot of Commonwealth War Graves to Great War New Zealanders, who subsequently died in London. In the Roman Catholic area is a huge memorial to Belgian Servicemen who died in London as a result of the Great War and nearby a plot of civilian war dead, all with identically patterned headstones.

Turning south down Ladbrooke Grove we pass Nodes, the funeral directors to the Unknown Soldier and where he lay for a while after his journey from France in 1920, and before his interment in Westminster Abbey.

*They buried him among the Kings, because he had done  
good toward God and toward His House.*

*(From the tomb of the Unknown Warrior and as King Richard II had inscribed on  
the tomb of his friend the Bishop of Salisbury also buried in Westminster Abbey)*

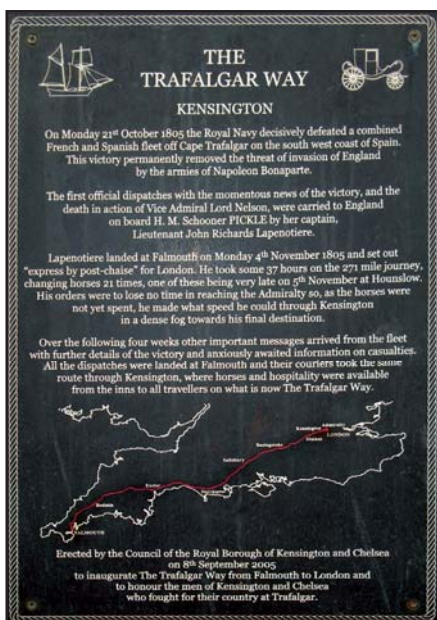
It is interesting to note that until these recent conflicts, repatriation was not in our tradition and the Unknown Soldier was representative of the millions buried in foreign battlefield sites. Notable exceptions were both civilians, brought back to their homeland from the Great War: Nurse Edith Cavell, who worked in a Belgian hospital under the auspices of the Red Cross, and who was shot at dawn for the "treason" of aiding soldiers to escape from German held territory and Captain Fryatt, of the British

Merchant Navy, who was executed for trying to ram a German submarine. Now, of course, with the affluence of our times and the amenity of regular military transport to and from the current war zone, we bring our fallen back to their native land to rest.

Atop the hill in Lansdowne Crescent stands the church of St. John the Evangelist where, unusually, on vellum (mammal skin) in a four-panel frame are recorded the names of upwards of some 546 parishioners who served in the Great War; with those 53 who fell being marked with the sign of their faith. As we cross over Holland Park Avenue, we come to St. Barnabas with its wonderful ceiling and balcony. Below these are memorials to those who died in the Boer War and a magnificent panel to those of the First World War.

Then to Holland Walk to that spot opposite 239 Kensington High Street, the Lyons Corner House, so cruelly hit by bombs and the church, Our Lady of Victories, which was bombed-out. Here, mounted on the railings, is The Trafalgar Way memorial. It records Lieutenant Lapenotiere's ride from Falmouth to London with the news of the Royal Navy's decisive victory over the combined French and Spanish fleet of Cape Trafalgar, on Monday 21 October 1805.

Photograph by Colin MacMillan



The Trafalgar Way Memorial

Down the Earls Court Road to St. Philip's; this has a war memorial that is a carved relief panel and stands some eight feet by four feet. It shows St. Martin, the soldier, sharing his cloak with a beggar. On to St. Luke's, Redcliffe Square, where the parishioners honoured their dead with an organ screen and one of the few mentions of civilians, "Also in memory of the men, women and children who were killed in the war 1939-1945". The 19th Kensington Boy Scout Group also honour their RAF serviceman and Seaforth Highlander, both cruelly killed within days of the end of the Second World War in Europe.

Over to the Boltons and St. Mary's; herein is a magnificent stained glass window dedicated



Carmelite Church War Memorial, Kensington Church Street

to the son of Admiral Noel, Captain Francis Noel of the Devonshire Regiment, who was killed, aged 28, on 26 October 1917. In the south transept is a Great War memorial in the form of an oak triptych with fixed wings, with Christ on the cross in the centre and on either side a list of the 89 men who had died. In their memory, this church went so far as to acquire a wooden cross from the Flanders battlefield.

So we turn east to St. Stephen's Church, Gloucester Road, wherein is a plaque to a Victoria Cross holder from action in Somaliland and a war memorial. Sitting at an angle to the southern end of Queen's Gate is St. Augustine's. Outside is a Calvary to those of the First World War, and, perhaps uniquely for our Borough, a plaque below, commemorating the Fallen of the Falklands War 1982. Yet another Calvary is situated in a side vestry.

Now we come to the easternmost boundary of Kensington. The district – some 87 miles from what was known to the Forties' generation as 'Churchill's Moat' – is historically known as our first line of defence, the English Channel. Here is a good example of commercial service, recognised together with war service. Inside the south entrance to Harrods, just up a short flight of stairs, is the store's war memorial. Not just rank, name, regiment or arm of service; but here are recorded the departments wherein the Fallen worked - situated within the store this brings a certain reality to their names.

Close to Harrods, we find those two great faiths of England, the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. They stand side-by-side facing east - the historic

frontline of our wars. Holy Trinity, Brompton, a fashionable place for weddings and worship, and now a modern day faith centre, contains many brass-plates to military sacrifice from the South African Wars to the Great War. Next to it, east of the Victoria and Albert Museum, is the Church of the Blessed Heart of Mary, known as The Brompton Oratory. Inside is the heart-rending Pieta, which is surrounded by the names of upwards of 200 Kensington residents killed in the Great War – it also acted as a dead-letter box for message exchange between Russian Intelligence agents in the Cold War.

We should venture, however, deeper into this hallowed ground. In the north-east corner of the church, to the right of the high altar and opposite Saint Teresa of Lisieux, we find the altar to the English Martyrs. It was built by a renowned cricketer to commemorate his son, Captain Richard Twining, who was killed-in-action in 1942 in the North Africa Campaign; and is also pointedly dedicated to the English Martyrs. Here, fellow Welsh Guards Officer Rex Whistler, artist, book illustrator and model for Charles Ryder in Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*, was commissioned by Twining's mother to paint a triptych to the English Martyrs, a reproduction of which can be viewed today.

Loss is measured differently, but this son of the nation was husband to Lorna who, by Captain Twining's death in 1943, and, from the death of R.A.F. Pilot Officer Geoffrey Holt in 1942, was twice widowed in the same war. The Welsh Guards history records that Lorna went out to North Africa shortly afterwards, near Fondouk, and served in the mobile canteens with 1st Guards Brigade with many other wives. The Commanding Officer's diary mentions "her name will live in the story of The




Photograph by Colin MacMillan

St. Barnabus Memorial stone

Regiment, as the memory of her gentle kindness will live in the hearts of those who served in the 3rd Battalion" - this accounts for the irregular entry in the War Diary "Lorna arrives with tea and wads! The Guardsmen love her and bless her".

Twining, Whistler (who was killed in Normandy, July 1944) and their fellow soldiers, lie in foreign fields, but just as faraway lands host the Commonwealth War Grave monuments to our fallen, so too in Kensington are we custodians of monuments to those from other parts. Visit Kensington's Cemetery in Gunnersbury on the North Circular Road, just north of the Chiswick roundabout, and there can be found the huge black granite polished monument to the thousands of Polish servicemen killed in the Katyn Massacre in 1940. Therein also lie the unsung heroines of war; the nurse from St. Charles Hospital, a Royal Naval WREN, an Army ATS girl, and the Air Force WAAF, reminding us of their service on the home front.

Those gone before would, I venture, not wish to be mourned as such, but would wish to be remembered. Remember them for their contribution. They are the men who dug the tunnels under the German lines in the Great War, but, also, dug the tunnels of the Central Line. They are the women of the International Red Cross and who inspired hospitals, such as Great Ormond Street, St. Mary's Paddington and St. Mary Abbots. They would not wish to be remembered in their trenches, but in their good works 

*And some there be, which have no memorial; who are perished, as though they had never been; and are become as though they had never been born; and their children after them. Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore*

*(Ecclesiasticus 44: 9)*

## COLIN MACMILLAN

### DEFINITIVE LIST

What would be most worthy of this piece would be to write a definitive list of all Kensington memorials to our dead of the wars. As that would entail walking all the streets of the Royal Borough, it occurred to me to select those found by me and request you, the members, to submit your additions, from which I will produce a pamphlet and directory.

*Please send any details to:* Colin MacMillan, Military Historical Research, Battlefield Tours Limited, 36 Wendell Road, London W12 9RS, or email: [colin@battlefieldtours.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:colin@battlefieldtours.eclipse.co.uk)





## FEATURE

# BOOK BOOM

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## KENSINGTON'S INDEPENDENT BOOKSHOPS TURN A NEW PAGE

At the end of 2009, London saw one of its largest chain bookstores, Books Etc, vanish from the High Street. It started out with 35 stores in 2004, by 2009 there were nine and in 2010 there are none. This rapid decline, of a company that was owned by the bookstore giant Borders UK, seems to be just another sad statistic of a business trying and failing to survive in this difficult climate.

Bookstores have been under threat for some time. Supermarkets and internet sites, such as Amazon.co.uk, have muscled in on their territory, offering best-sellers at massively reduced prices, which smaller companies, such as Books Etc, cannot compete with. Love it or hate it, even Westfield, West London's newest shopping centre, can be blamed for Books Etc's decline. The company had a store in Whiteleys in Queensway, but Westfield is rapidly taking business away from here and even Borders UK Chief Executive, Philip Downer, admits that 'not a lot happens in Whiteleys these days'.

So, this seems to be a sorry tale of another declining business in an economic downturn. In Kensington, however, there is a ray of light and it comes in the guise of independent bookshops. While some chain stores seem to be stumbling and falling, the small, one-off expert shops seem to be flourishing and in Kensington they're growing in number. At the end of last year, two independent bookshops opened, one in Notting Hill and the other in South Kensington. According to the Chief Executive of the Booksellers Association, Tim Godfray, independent bookshops are not only, '...well aware of the difficulties and challenges that face them', but they're determined not to become a victim of the economic downturn. 'It's almost a blitz mentality', he said, 'of "roll up your sleeves and get on with it."'

This is certainly the impression you get from Slightly Foxed who now own The Gloucester Road Bookshop. Slightly Foxed is a literary quarterly that was set up by Gail Pirkis in 2003. Pirkis said that people had advised her not to buy and set up a

bookshop in this climate, but she had felt differently. 'The indie bookseller is set for a return...[as] people are tired of the hard sell'. While Tony Smith, the shop's new manager, thinks that they will have bright future, as they are '...going back to the old-fashioned type of bookselling with knowledgeable staff who know their stock'.

They could not have picked a better spot for their new venture. The shop's previous owner was Graham Greene's nephew, Nick Dennys. Dennys ran a second-hand and antiquarian bookshop, and was renowned for being a decidedly unconventional bookseller. The story goes that when one of his regular customers moved and could



Slightly Foxed Team, Gloucester Road

only get to the shop early in the morning, Dennys gave him a key to the front door. The customer would then drop in once a week before work and leave a cheque on the table for any books that he had taken. This relaxed, if not slightly eccentric approach to running a bookshop, appealed to Slightly Foxed's mentality and they took over the place in September 2009.

Like their literary quarterly, the shop will not focus on the latest bestseller – new titles will account for around 20% of their stock – their main focus will be an eclectic, but well-chosen range of old books, and classic reprints from interesting small publishers. If their comfy armchairs don't pull you in, their insider book knowledge and their ability to source unusual books might. Perkis admits that while sites such as Amazon.co.uk are flourishing, many of their customers do not like using the internet and would rather get recommendations and place orders with a knowledgeable individual.

Over in Notting Hill, literary agents Sarah Lutyens and Felicity Rubinstein have set up a shop in Kensington's independent bookshop haven. Their new shop, Lutyens & Rubenstein Bookshop, is a stone's throw from the well-established – and thanks to the 1999 film *Notting Hill* with Hugh Grant and Julia Roberts – now infamous, The Travel Bookshop. As well as the food junky's book heaven, Books for Cooks – to name but a few independent bookshops in the area.

Lutyens and Rubinstein have been literary agents since 1993, but they have '...wanted to expand into bookselling for a long time'. Like Slightly Foxed, they



Slightly Foxed Gloucester Road

felt that this was the moment to open an independent shop because, '...readers are becom[ing] increasingly disenchanted with the supermarket atmosphere of the chain and there is a new appetite for a more carefully curated experience'.

Their new bookshop on Kensington Park Road is situated in the former Coco Ribbon shop. The interior was designed by local architects De Rosee & Sa, who had the challenge of creating a space that worked

both as a shop and office. Their stylish design allowed for the books to dominate, while Lutyens and Rubinstein could be onsite, but running their agency – they are concealed from the public behind a set of sliding bookcases.

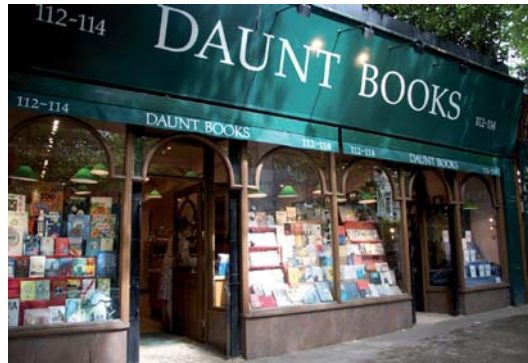
Lutyens said that they '...would not have opened this bookshop if we didn't feel that the golden age of the independent was on the horizon'. They are going to specialise in fiction, general non-fiction and children's books, while this may not sound very unique, there is a Kensington twist. The bookshop's core stock was chosen after they canvassed hundreds of local readers, as they wanted to ensure that they could '...press books into people's hands that we are confident they will enjoy'.

The personal touch to book buying is also the philosophy of Kensington's only chain independent bookshop, Daunt in Holland Park. This is one of four stores owned by James Daunt, who says nothing compares with, '...being dealt with by a responsive member of staff who knows what they are talking about...customers go out with a spring in their step about reading the book'.

Daunt, an ex-banker, set up his first store in the early 1990s on Marylebone High Street. The extraordinary building, which is Edwardian design,



Lutyens & Rubinstein



Daunt Books, Holland Park

has sunlit galleries over three floors. It started out as a traveller's bookshop, with books divided into geographic regions. This was the model for the Holland Park shop, which opened for Christmas in 2005, but Daunt never lost sight of his customers. The bookshop is for the neighbourhood, so it not only has travel, but newly published fiction, non-fiction, biographies and children's books. It is discerning stock as well, as Daunt only likes to sell books that he would like to read himself. While this keeps Daunt's database of books at around 40,000 titles (Waterstones is around 460,000 – information from 2006), it means the staff really know what they are talking about when they recommend a book to you.

So, next time you think you might place an order for your books online; why not take a stroll through the streets of Kensington first? As you never know what literary gem awaits you behind the doors of a small, but discerning independent bookshop **KS**

**EMMA JUHASZ**



## FICTION NOVELS BASED IN KENSINGTON

- A Far Cry from Kensington .....Muriel Spark (Penguin, 1989)
- Girls of Slender Means .....Muriel Spark (Penguin, 1975)
- Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens .....J. M. Barrie (Penguin Classic, 2005)
- A Severed Head .....Iris Murdoch (Vintage Classic, 2006)
- The Children's Book .....A. S. Byatt (Chatto & Windus, 2009)
- Lucia in London .....E. F. Benson (Black Swan, 1984)
- Mrs Palfrey at The Claremont .....Elizabeth Taylor (Virago Modern Classics, 2006)
- At Lady Molly's .....Anthony Powell (Arrow Books Ltd, 2005)
- Ballet Shoes .....Noel Streatfeild (Puffin, 1973)
- Strangers .....Anita Brookner (Fig Tree, 2010)

*Compiled by Slightly Foxed's bookshop & editorial team*

## BOOKSHOP DETAILS:

### **Slightly Foxed on Gloucester Rd**

123 Gloucester Road  
London SW7 4TE  
Tel: 0207 370 3503  
[www.foxedbooks.com](http://www.foxedbooks.com)

### **The Travel Bookshop**

13 Blenheim Crescent  
London, W11 2EE  
020 7229 5260  
[www.thetravelbookshop.com](http://www.thetravelbookshop.com)

### **Lutyens & Rubinstein Bookshop**

21 Kensington Park Road  
London W11 2EU  
Tel: 020 7229 1010  
[www.lutyensrubinstein.co.uk](http://www.lutyensrubinstein.co.uk)

### **Books for Cooks**

4 Blenheim Crescent  
London, W11 1NN  
020 7221 1992  
[www.booksforcooks.com](http://www.booksforcooks.com)

### **Daunt Books**

112-114 Holland Park Avenue  
London W11 4UA  
0207 727 7022  
[www.dauntbooks.co.uk](http://www.dauntbooks.co.uk)



# UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2010

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## The Clock Tower, Houses of Parliament

**Tuesday 11 May 2010 at 11.15am**

This is a rare opportunity to climb the 374 steps to the top of Big Ben in its 150th anniversary year. We shall learn about the history, construction & working of the clock.

Strict fitness rules apply (if in doubt contact me!).

*There is no charge,  
but a donation to charity is welcome*



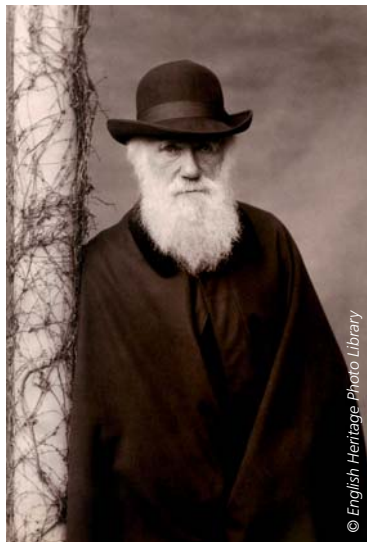
## Down House, Downe, Kent and Eltham Palace, Eltham

**Wednesday 9 June 2010 at 9am**

Down House is the home of Charles Darwin where thousands of objects relating to his work remain, including portraits, photographs, family furniture, manuscripts and memorabilia from the Beagle voyage. The gardens surrounding the house have recently been restored to their former Victorian charm.

There will be time for a light lunch (at own expense) before we depart for Eltham Palace.

The Palace is a fine example of Art Deco style, built by the textile magnet Stephen Courtauld next to the remains of a medieval royal palace, the childhood home of Henry VIII. Set amid 19 acres of gardens, it is considered a masterpiece of 20th century design.



*Depart by coach from Kensington Square at 9am*

*tickets £38 (a few places available)*

Behind the Scenes at the Museum of London, London Wall,  
EC2 5HN

**Thursday 23rd September 2010 at 11am**

This is a rare chance to visit the costume and fashion department, which is not normally open to the public.

The curator will show us a selection of the Museum's dress collection and talk about the history and conservation. The tour will last about one hour and 15 minutes and we are able to view the rest of the museum at leisure. The New Galleries open this summer as part of a £20m redevelopment. The collections cover every aspect of social life from prehistoric time to the present.

The Museum cafe is open from 10am - 5.30pm

*Meet at the above address*

*tickets £12*

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Leighton House, 12 Holland Park Road, London W14 8LZ

**Wednesday 10 November 2010 at 11am**

This was the home of Frederic, Lord Leighton (1830-96), the classical painter and President of the Royal Academy. The house was built 1864-79 and is the expression of Leighton's vision of a private palace devoted to art. We shall be shown round the house, which has been closed for two years for refurbishment.

*Meet at the above address*

*tickets £12*

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## RESERVATIONS

To reserve a place, please send cheques for each event to:

**The Kensington Society, c/o Mrs G Foley, 34 Kelso Place, LONDON W8 5QP**

Cheques are to be payable to The Kensington Society. Please enclose a self addressed envelope and give your contact telephone number.

Tickets will be sent giving full instructions.

Guests are always welcome at any of these events.

# Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 31 December 2009

	2009	Restated 2008
	£	£
<b>Incoming resources</b>		
Voluntary income		
Subscriptions	8,870.00	6,282.10
Donations	575.00	1,460.00
Gift aid 2003/04 (2002/2003)	588.46	617.30
<b>Total voluntary income</b>	<b><u>10,033.46</u></b>	<b><u>8,359.40</u></b>
Activities for generating funds		
Events	1,710.00	1,248.00
Annual report advertising	1,400.00	300.00
<b>Total activities for generating funds</b>	<b><u>3,110.00</u></b>	<b><u>1,548.00</u></b>
Investment income		
Interest	267.33	1,972.86
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b><u>13,410.79</u></b>	<b><u>11,880.26</u></b>
 <b>Resources expended</b>		
Charitable activities		
Newsletter	761.00	923.18
Events	1,183.25	681.95
Annual report	6,253.50	5,970.85
Lecture and AGM	695.13	3,938.94
School prizes	0.00	300.00
<b>Total charitable activities costs</b>	<b><u>8,892.88</u></b>	<b><u>11,814.92</u></b>
Governance costs		
Insurance	573.77	288.75
Independent examiner's fees	475.00	475.00
Office expenses	154.19	527.47
<b>Total governance costs</b>	<b><u>1,202.96</u></b>	<b><u>1,291.22</u></b>
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b><u>10,095.84</u></b>	<b><u>13,106.14</u></b>
 Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	 3,314.95	 (1,225.88)
Total unrestricted funds brought forward	47,104.39	48,330.27
Total unrestricted funds carried forward	<b><u>50,419.34</u></b>	<b><u>47,104.39</u></b>

# Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2009

	2009	Restated 2008
	£	£
<b>Current assets</b>		
<b>Debtors</b>		
Prepayments and accrued income		
Gift aid 2003/04 (2002/03)	588.46	617.30
Insurance for 2010	429.69	0.00
Lecture and AGM	0.00	100.00
<b>Total prepayments and accrued income</b>	<b><u>1,018.15</u></b>	<b><u>717.30</u></b>
Cash at bank and in hand		
Barclays Bank plc high interest	2.33	2.32
Barclays Bank plc current account	9,476.84	4,514.83
Charities Aid Foundation Bank	43,063.73	42,796.41
<b>Total cash at bank and in hand</b>	<b><u>52,542.90</u></b>	<b><u>47,313.56</u></b>
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b><u>53,561.05</u></b>	<b><u>48,030.86</u></b>
 <b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Accruals and deferred income		
Subscriptions for 2010	60.00	0.00
Events for 2010	669.00	0.00
Annual report advertising for 2010	1,400.00	0.00
Office expenses	62.71	451.47
Independent examiner's fees for 2008	475.00	475.00
Independent examiner's fees for 2009	475.00	0.00
<b>Total accruals and deferred income</b>	<b><u>3,141.71</u></b>	<b><u>926.47</u></b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b><u>50,419.34</u></b>	<b><u>47,104.39</u></b>
 <b>Funds of the Charity</b>		
Unrestricted funds	<b><u>50,419.34</u></b>	<b><u>47,104.39</u></b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2009

## Accounting policies

### Accruals basis

The financial statements are prepared on accruals basis to match incoming resources and expended resources within the same activity within the same year.

### Prior year adjustments

As a result of the financial statements being prepared on an accruals basis the 2008 net incoming resources of £1,987.04 has been reduced by £3,212.92 to net outgoing resources of (£1,225.88) for the following prior year items:

	2008 £
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources per 2008 accounts</b>	<b><u>1,987.04</u></b>
Gift aid 2002/03 claim	617.30
Lecture and AGM costs 2008	(3,190.00)
Lecture and AGM costs 2009	100.00
Insurance cost	(288.75)
Office expenses	(451.47)
<b>Total prior year adjustments</b>	<b><u>(3,212.92)</u></b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources restated for 2008</b>	<b><u>(1,225.88)</u></b>

### Cash at bank and in hand

The 2008 cash at bank and in hand for the Barclays current account has been increased by £228.18 for cancelled cheques for prior years that no longer need to be carried forward as a liability.

## Incoming resources

### Recognition of incoming resources

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

### Donations

Donations are only included in the SoFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2009 (continued)

## **Tax reclaims on gifts and donations**

Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the SoFA to the extent that claims have been made.

## **Volunteer help**

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

## **Investment income**

This is included in the accounts when receivable.

## **Expenditure and liabilities**

### **Liability recognition**

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

## **Governance costs**

Include costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings and cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

## **Financial review (figures rounded to nearest £100)**

The net incoming resources for the year are £3,300 compared to outgoing resources last year of £1,200. The subscription rate increased from £10 to £15 per person from 1 January 2009. Gift aid claims have been made for 2003/04. It is planned that gift aid claims will be brought up to a current basis during 2010. Donations were down £900.

The incoming resources for events are £500, the same as last year.

Interest rates fell from 4.6% to 0.6% reducing interest income by £1,700.

The cost of the annual report after deducting advertising income is £4,900 compared to last year of £5,700. The lecture and AGM for 2008 was held in a hotel but the return to a hall reduced costs by £3,200.

Prepayments and accrued income are £1,000. The cash at bank and in hand is £52,500. Accruals and deferred income is £3,100.

The funds of the charity are £50,400.

# Constitution of the Kensington Society

## 1. NAME

The name of the Society shall be "The Kensington Society".

## 2. OBJECTS

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

## 3. MEMBERSHIP

The membership shall comprise Ordinary Members, Corporate Members and Affiliated Societies, i.e.: amenity societies for areas within Kensington who apply for affiliation with the Society and are accepted by the Executive Committee.

## 4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are payable on January 1st each year and shall be such sum or sums as shall be determined from time to time by the Executive Committee.

## 5. THE OFFICERS

The officers of the Society shall be the President, one or more Vice-Presidents, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, the Hon. Secretary, the Hon. Treasurer and such further honorary officers as the Executive Committee may from time to time appoint.

## 6. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall consist of not more than 12 members including the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.

7. a) The Executive Committee shall be the governing body of the Society. It shall have power to (i) Make byelaws; (ii) Co-opt members and fill vacancies on the Executive Committee or among the officers of the Society that may arise for the current year; (iii) Take any steps they may consider desirable to further the interests and objects of the Society.

b) A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of not less than five members.

c) Not less than three Executive Committee Meetings shall be convened in any one year.

## 8. THE COUNCIL

The Council shall consist of not more than 30 members. They shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The function of the Council shall be to support the Executive Committee in any matters relevant to the objects of the Society.

## 9. GENERAL MEETINGS

a) An Annual General Meeting of members of the Society, of which not less than 28 days' notice shall be given to members, shall be held in each calendar year at which the Executive Committee shall submit a Report and an audited Statement of Accounts for the year to the previous 31st December.

b) Other General Meetings of members may be convened from time to time by the Executive Committee on not less than 14 days' notice to members.

c) The date, time and place of each General Meeting shall be fixed by the Executive Committee, and the Chair shall be taken by the President or in his absence by some other Officer of the Society nominated by the Executive Committee.

d) 20 persons present, being Ordinary Members or authorised representatives of Corporate Members or Affiliated Societies, shall form a quorum at a General Meeting.

e) Resolutions of the members in General Meeting shall (except where otherwise stated in these Rules) be passed by a simple majority of members present and voting on a show of hands, each member having one vote. Corporate members and Affiliated Societies must notify the Hon. Secretary of the Society in writing of the persons authorised to receive notice, attend and vote on their behalf, failing which they shall not be so entitled.

#### **10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

a) The election of Officers of the Society (other than the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee) and of members of the Executive Committee shall be effected by resolution of the Members of the Society at the Annual General Meeting, and the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee shall be effected by resolution of the Executive Committee at its first meeting after the Annual General Meeting.

b) Subject to paragraphs (c) and (d) below, any Ordinary Member shall be eligible for election as an Officer of the Society or as a member of the Executive Committee.

c) Candidates for such election, other than those standing for re-election under paragraph (e) below, must be supported by nominations signed by two other Members, which nominations must reach the Hon. Secretary not less than 14 days before the Annual General Meeting.

d) In the case of election as an Officer, the candidates must also be approved by the Executive Committee, which approval may be conferred either before the Annual General Meeting or at the first meeting of the Executive Committee thereafter. If such approval be withheld the office in question may be filled by the Executive Committee for the current year.

e) Unless curtailed by death or resignation or under paragraph (i) below, the tenure of office of the persons elected shall be:-

- (i) in the case of the President, until the third Annual General Meeting after his election;
- (ii) in the cases of the Vice-President(s), the Hon. Secretary and the Hon. Treasurer, indefinite;
- (iii) in all other cases, until the next Annual General Meeting after their election;

but in cases (i) and (iii) those vacating office shall be eligible for re-election.

f) The tenure of office of any Officer of the Society other than President may be terminated at any time by resolution of the Executive Committee.

#### **11. ALTERATION OF THE RULES**

No rule shall be altered or revoked except by a resolution of the members in General Meeting passed by a majority consisting of not less than two-thirds of the membership present and voting.

#### **12. DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY**

The Society shall not be dissolved unless a majority of two-thirds of the subscribing members signify their approval of such a course by means of a ballot taken after receipt by the said members of a statement by the Executive Committee, whom failing by not less than ten Ordinary Members or the President of the Society, setting forth a summary of the arguments for an against such a course and their or his views thereon.

#### **13. SURPLUS ASSETS**

In the event of such dissolution the surplus funds (if any) of the Society may be transferred to such one or more charitable bodies, having objects similar to or reasonably consistent with those of the Society, as may be chosen by the Executive Committee and approved by the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales.

# OBITUARIES

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## **Robert Meadows** (1916- 2009)

Robert Ragland Meadows, architect, teacher and pacifist, died peacefully at home, aged 93, on 28 August 2009. The many who attended his impressive funeral service at St John's, Lansdowne Crescent, heard a moving tribute to a humble, kind and considerate man, who was always open to the beauty of life and who at the end of his, was taken to Brompton Cemetery in a simple willow coffin adorned with flowers.

Robert, who was a long established resident of Stanley Crescent, joined the Kensington Society in 1986. He was on the Executive Committee for 15 years and Vice Chairman for five of those. He was appointed a Member of the Council in 2005.

Robert spent many hours monitoring and commenting on planning applications on behalf of the Society. He also contributed to Annual Reports, took a leading part in the provision by the Society of the Millennium Clock on the Town Hall, and represented the Society on the panel of assessors for the Royal Borough's Annual Environment Awards.

A valued source of wisdom and expertise, expressed with gentle humour, Robert is remembered with gratitude and affection.

## **CELIA REES-JENKINS**

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## **Michael Middleton**, CBE (1917-2009)

Michael Humfrey Middleton joined the Kensington Society in 1957. He was appointed a Member of the Council in 1995.

His pioneering work as secretary and then director of the Civic Trust was instrumental in the fight to preserve the quality and character of our surroundings against urban sprawl, the loss of countryside amenities and the casual destruction of historic buildings.

Educated at King's School Canterbury, he then attended art school in London. He met Michael Ayrton and John Minton (who both later exhibited at the Tate) and during a trip to South of France in 1939, they constituted themselves, 'tongue only a little

in cheek', as The Movement, English outriders for Neo-Romanticism. Ten years later, nearly every British Painter was called a Neo-Romantic.

On his return to London, he registered as a conscientious objector to the war and worked in the Fire Service. After the War, he was recruited to work for the Labour Party, as a designer for its publications. While working here, he took over from Michael Ayrton as art critic for The Spectator and took up lecturing abroad for the British Council on art and design. Subsequently to this he became editor of House & Garden magazine before being recruited into the Civic Trust.

He originally signed up for a year with the Civic Trust, but he stayed for 30 and along with Winston Churchill's son-in-law Duncan Sandys, they set up a dedicated staff of planners, architects, designers and campaigners to support the local environment and civic amenity groups.

He was elected honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects and was appointed CBE in 1976.

*Extracts taken from The Times Online Obituary, August 13 2009*

**The Kensington Society regrets to announce the deaths of the following members during the last year:**

Oliver Lebus .....	Member since 1953
Mrs. Bryceson.....	Life member since 1960
Betty Ratcliff.....	Member since 1968
Yvonne Mary Wells .....	Life member since 1978
Carys Wynne .....	Member since 2006
FEH Levinson.....	The Society has just been informed that he passed away in 2007. Member since 1998.



# LICENSING IN 2009

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The combination of extended hours under the licensing laws and the smoking ban continues to cause problems for residents who live near to pubs and bars. Disturbances can be reported to the Council's Licensing Department or Noise Nuisance Department, and diaries should be kept for future reference.

Where a licensed establishment has a track record for causing problems, its licence can be called in for review by the Council's licensing sub-committee at the request of affected residents or "responsible authorities", such as the Council's Noise Nuisance Department. In such cases, it is open to the committee to impose tough conditions after hearing evidence. Such conditions can include an obligation to keep the immediate vicinity of the premises clear of drinkers after an allotted hour and ultimately the licence can be revoked. This is a time-consuming process for all concerned and can be expensive, particularly if lawyers are involved.

An alternative approach is for the landlord to agree voluntarily to control noise levels. To this end, the Council can assist in organising and attending meetings between affected residents and the landlord, to discuss the issues and agree measures. If successful, the landlord can apply for a variation to reflect the measures as formal restrictions on the licence. If the measures do not work, the licence can be called in for review.

Under new rules applications for 'minor' variations, which restrict (rather than extend) licences, can be made via a fast-track procedure. It remains to be seen if this will be taken up by landlords.

Disturbances caused by people smoking outside remains a vexed issue, even if they have no drinks in hand. Ultimately it will be up to landlords to find ways to control smokers if they want to avoid the risk of repercussions.

**ANTHONY LEE**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Editor and contributors would like to thank the following people for all their help with producing this year's Annual Report.

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Harry Eyres

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Jonathan Butler – English Heritage Photo Library

Sue Bradburn – Royal College of Art

Thomas Neve – Daunt Books

Tony Smith and Gail Pirkis – Slightly Foxed Books

Rachel Aked – Open Garden Squares Weekend

Mark Atkinson – RBKC

Nick Kasic – RBKC

Anne Swift - Antique Lace Dealer, Portobello Road

Alex Thomas - TAG Films

Robina Rose - Friends of Portobello

Cheryl Devlin – Costermonger, Portobello Road

Diana Rawstron – Goodman Derrick LLP

James Holland-Hibbert – Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert

## SAVE THE DATE

The Annual General Meeting of The Kensington Society will be held on Thursday 29th April 2010 in the theatre on the first floor of the St. Mary Abbots Centre, Vicarage Gate, LONDON W8 4HN at 6.30pm for 7.00pm. The speaker is Nick Ross, former presenter of BBC's *Crimewatch* programme, who will be discussing Temptation and Opportunities, which will focus on his thoughts on crime in the Borough.



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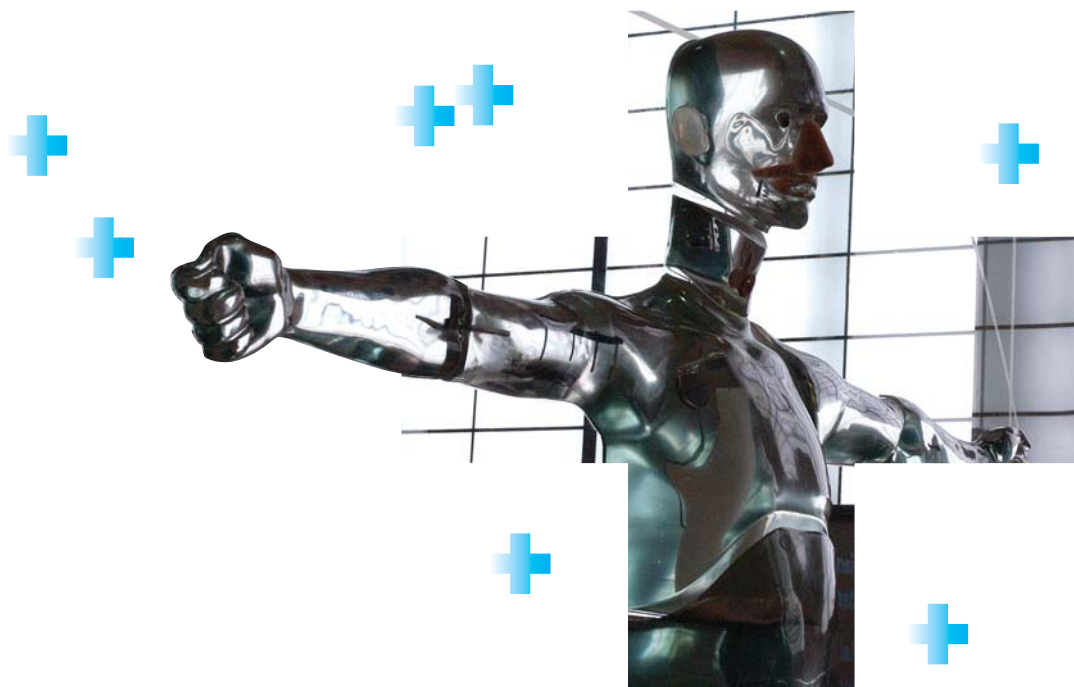
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Trinity is the UK's oldest hospice providing specialist palliative care for people with terminal illness and their families living across Central and South West London. Trinity is also the local hospice for the residents of Kensington & Chelsea. **The care Trinity provides is free of charge.** Every year we rely on the local community's support to raise £5 million of the £8 million it costs us to provide our services. We only receive 1/3 of our funding from the NHS.

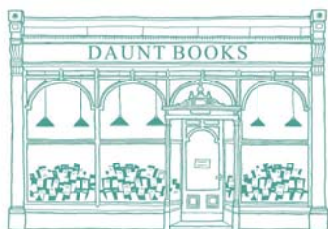
The future of Trinity's inpatient services have been secured for the next generation as Trinity has recently opened its new £10 million inpatient centre. We now need to secure the future of our homecare and outpatient services. We are currently looking to expand our outpatient services north of the river by including the provision of a physical base to provide better access to our specialist services.

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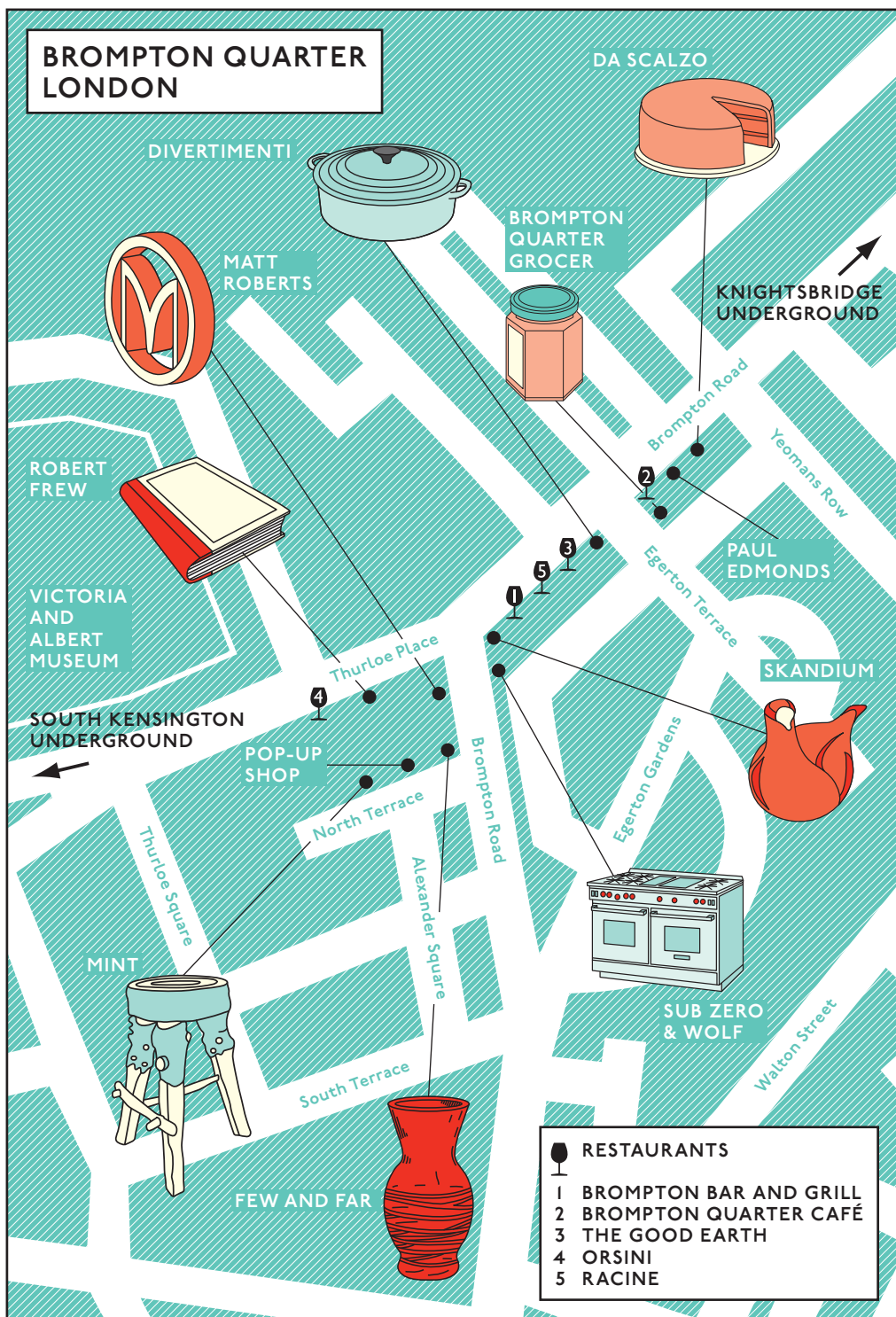
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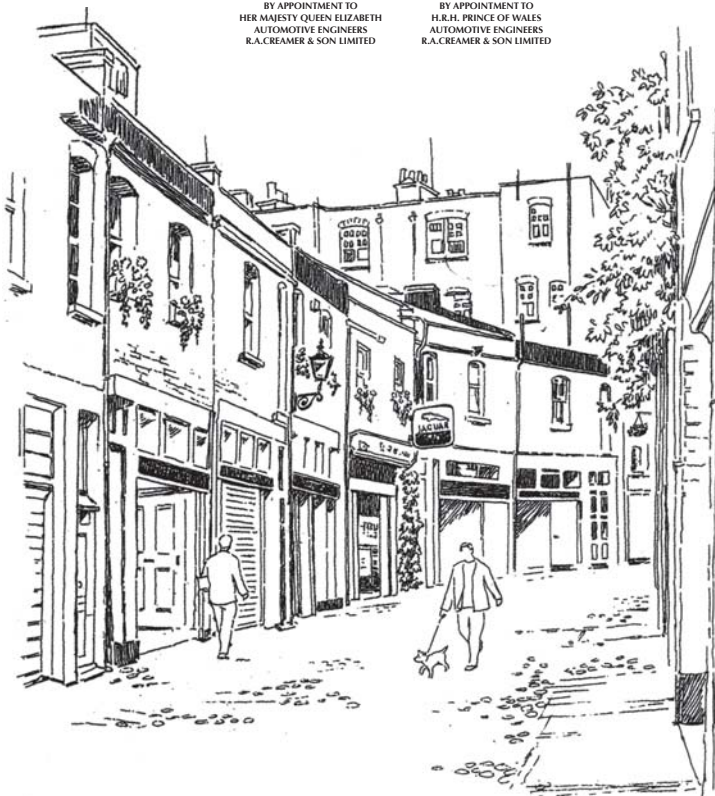




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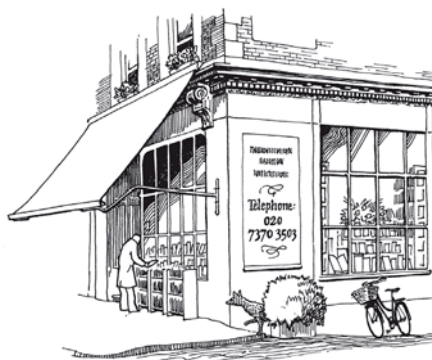
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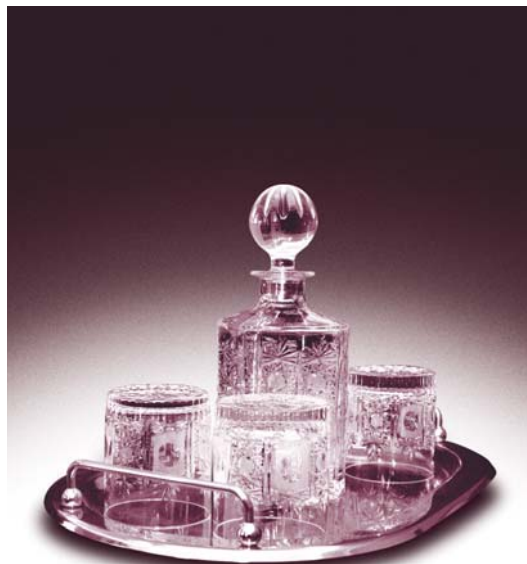
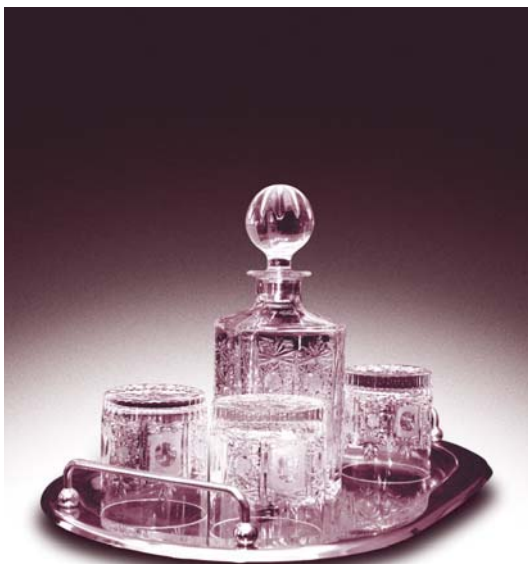
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