

In memoriam

Three former members of the CTRAA have recently died.

The Rt. Hon. Sir Patrick Russell, who was the CTRAA Chairman immediately before Willoughby Wynne, died on 25 October, aged 76. His long and distinguished career at the Bar and on the Bench was mainly spent in his native North (he was born in Urmston, a suburb of Manchester, which was his main home for his entire life), but after taking Silk in 1971, he joined chambers in London and thus needed a London home, which became 4c Brunswick Gardens.

Sir Patrick was knighted in 1980 and served as a Lord Justice of Appeal from 1987 until his retirement in 1996, when he and his wife Janie returned for good to his beloved Urmston. He continued, however, to be a member of the CTRAA for several years. A lively right-arm, in-swing bowler, he played for Urmston Cricket Club until he was in his forties, and served as president of Lancashire Cricket Club from 1999 to 2001.

Charles Vanrenen, 26, who lived with his parents, David and Heath, and three siblings at 35 Brunswick Gardens in the 1990's, was one of the victims in the horrific terror attack in Bali on 12 October. The South African family came to our area after having spent the 80's in Australia. Charlie's parents eventually continued to the south of France, where they now live, whilst he moved to Sydney and from there to Singapore, where he became a computer specialist. He was one of several players in the Singapore Cricket Club's rugby team who had flown down to Bali for a short holiday.

Roland Morgan, of 66 Kensington Church Street, died suddenly outside his flat on 15 September. He had been a member of the CTRAA for many years; a delightful and jaunty person, often sporting a button hole and straw boater.



The Cherry Tree

A newsletter for the Cherry Trees Residents' Amenities Association

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The Cherry Trees Residents' Amenities Association

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The aim of The Cherry Trees Residents' Amenities Association is to improve our neighbourhood and to function as our representative towards the Council and other authorities in matters concerning the area. Membership is open to all residents living in Palace Gardens Terrace, Strathmore Gardens, Berkeley Gardens, Brunswick Gardens, Inverness Gardens, Vicarage Gardens, Vicarage Gate, on the southern side of Kensington Mall, and on the eastern side of Kensington Church Street between Vicarage Gate and Kensington Mall.

Interested in play reading?

Marie-Jacqueline Lancaster of Winchester Court is interested in forming a local play reading group. She knows an experienced leader who would be willing to start the project, and has found that a hall can be rented for as little as £10 for 1.5 hours. So, if ten people join up and meet once a month, it shouldn't have to cost more than £1 per person per meeting - plus cost of play copies, if they can't be sourced at the Library.

Those interested can contact Marie-Jacqueline: 11 Winchester Court, Vicarage Gate.



No more wailing wall

Inverness Gardens' western wall, which, after years of neglect, was torn down to be rebuilt, was finally finished during the summer. There was such a long pause half way through the rebuilding that many neighbours had begun calling it "the wailing wall". However, during the summer the work started again and within a few weeks the wall was finished, closely resembling the original wall from the late 1800's.

You would have thought that the wall was the responsibility of the council or the resident association that owns Inverness Gardens' beautiful garden, but it is actually part of the freehold of 1 Inverness Gardens, which single-handedly had to pay for the costly refurbishment.

Most refurbishments are mainly for the benefit of the freeholder. This one, however, must be regarded as a benefit for the neighbourhood more than the freeholder. So, on behalf of all of us who didn't have to pay for it, we graciously thank 1 Inverness Gardens.



PC Peter Sewell found himself surrounded by residents who wanted to discuss crime issues with him on the Open Day.

Neighbourhood Watch Open Day

The Neighbourhood Watch Open Day in Inverness Gardens in June was quite a success. Some 60 neighbours came to talk with our beat officer, PC Peter Sewell, and to receive information and leaflets from our Neighbourhood Watch representative, Mariju Lee.

Peter Sewell said afterwards that

he hadn't expected more than a dozen visitors, and thought that the Open Day definitely should be repeated.

Shortly afterwards, unfortunately, Peter was transferred to another department. A new beat officer, Simon Piper, has been appointed, and has recently started patrolling our area.



Mariju Lee discussing security issues with neighbours Simon Agace, François de Hennin and Ned Hetherington.

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A newsletter for the Cherry Trees Residents' Amenities Association 3/2002

Law change stops the dog dirt?

Councils across the country have been found to do very little to solve the problem with dog dirt. However, there are plans to change the current legislation, according to which any fines from negligent dog-owners go to the Treasury. The new law would mean that the fines go to the councils, which may use them to finance anti-dog fouling schemes. This may, hopefully, improve the situation.

A recent survey of councils in England, by the Keep Britain Tidy group, found that a mere 754 dog owners were prosecuted during the past three years for letting their pets foul footpaths and parks. This means an average of two cases a year per council. However, during the same period these councils received 226,000 complaints about dog fouling; and research has found that 95 per cent of the public regard dog dirt as unacceptable.

The survey found that 64 per cent of the councils hadn't prosecuted any owners at all last year, 57 per

cent hadn't issued any verbal warnings, and 49 per cent hadn't issued any written warnings. Although more than half of the councils had the power to hand out £50 on-the-spot fines to dog owners who failed to clean up after their dogs, almost one third of these councils had never done so.

It gets worse: 16 per cent of the councils admitted that they only ever clean up dog dirt if they receive complaints about it, and two-thirds of the councils have not placed one single dog litter bin in the streets or on footpaths.

Dog fouling isn't just unsightly and irritating (especially if you happen to step in it) - it is also linked to a disease called toxocariasis. There are 16,000 cases per year, and 50 of them result in serious eye infections or even blindness.

One reason for the council's reluctance to go after the fouling owners could be that the income from any foul fines currently goes to the Treasury instead of the councils. However, there are plans to reform the legislation, allowing the councils to use money raised from these fines to

improve enforcement (i.e. hire more dog wardens).

As it is estimated that there are almost five million owners who don't clean up after their dogs, the potential revenue is not insignificant. So, if the law changes we may see dog wardens in our streets almost as often as we see traffic wardens - but they would probably be more welcome...

20mph in our streets next year?

The Government intends to cut maximum limits in residential areas from 30pmh to 20 mph as part of a plan to slash speed limits across the UK, in a bid to reduce the number of road deaths.

Each day nine people are killed and more than 100 are seriously injured on British roads. Tony Blair has pledged to cut these figures by 40 per cent by 2010, and ministers believe that the best way to achieve this is to review all speed limits, starting next year. It would be the first overhaul of the system since the 1950's, when the traffic was a fraction of what it is today.

Currently, the local authorities set limits largely according to the speed traveled by 85 per cent of vehicles on a given stretch of road. According to safety experts, this practice is responsible for a high level of accidents and a culture of speed. The new system would mean that borough engineers should set limits that reflect the Government's concern over high accident rates, speeding and its wish to encourage more people to walk and cycle.

Beside cutting the maximum in residential areas to 20mph, the new scheme will mean that many roads can have 60mph limits lowered to 40mph, or 40mph lowered to 30mph.

If this plan is implemented as outlined, it would mean that our local streets east of Church Street would all be limited to 20mph. When this would become a reality, nobody knows yet, but it could happen next year.

Nursing home and dog dirt hot topics at the AGM



After the meeting, Charles Shaw and others were eager to sign the petition regarding Vicarage Gate House, which Huw Thomas (right) afterwards delivered to the Council.

Some 60 CTRAA members attended this year's Annual General Meeting in the Essex Church on the 25th of November. The main issues were the future of Vicarage Gate House (the empty nursing home), dog fouling, traffic and security.

Following the presentation of the accounts, it was decided that the £215 special fund for cherry tree replacements is to be transferred to the general fund, as all tree replacements are currently paid for by the Council. Should the Council at a later date change its position in this matter, the tree fund can of course be reactivated.

Our local councillor, Christopher Buckmaster, gave an update regarding Vicarage Gate House. The Council is becoming very much aware of the growing need for local nursing homes; a need that is expected to increase drastically during the next 30 years. In light of this, it is likely that the Council will try to ensure that the site continues to be used for a nursing home.

Several parties have expressed an interest to develop a new nursing home there, which makes it increasingly difficult for the owners, the Elizabeth Finn Trust, to get a change of use approved, and thus be able to sell the property at a much higher price to developers of luxury apartments.

After the meeting, everybody queued up to sign a petition, urging the Council to do its outmost to ensure that the site continues as a nursing home.

Dog dirt and refuse bags on pavements were, as usual, popular subjects. It was decided that the CTRAA will urge the Council to pass a bylaw, making it unlawful for dog owners to let their dogs foul streets and pavements or leave dog dirt bags in public places. The CTRAA committee also promised to continue its campaign against those who leave refuse on pavements.

The meeting was attended by our new beat officer, PC Simon Piper, who has just started patrolling our streets. He and Sgt

Colin Wingrove, Holland Sector Deputy, gave a brief update regarding the crime situation in our area, which during the last few months has improved.

Before the meeting was closed, Tuggy Meyer informed about the private security initiative started by a group of residents in our area. So far, some 70 residents have pledged to finance a private guard with a dog, who will patrol parts of the Cherry Tree area and keep an eye on the properties and cars of those who belong to the scheme.



The Golden Jubilee Party was a huge success, even if it had to be held in St Mary Abbots Hall instead of in the vicarage's beautiful garden.

Rainy Jubilee Party and record Autumn Party

In this country, the main unknown factor when planning any kind of outdoor activity is of course the weather.

The Cherry Trees area Golden Jubilee Party on Sunday 26 May was set to have taken place in the vicarage's large and beautiful garden under a glorious sun, but a couple of days of persistent rain had made the soil under the lush green grass so wet and soft that a hundred pairs of shoes very quickly would have turned the garden into something quite nasty and unwelcoming for the new vicar, Father Gillean Craig, to look at when he moved in a few days later.

And as more rain looked likely on the day anyhow, the decision was quickly taken to move the party into the backup venue: St Mary Abbots Hall. Although not as spacious it served the purpose of the party: to let neighbours meet, chat and eat.

The party for the grown-ups was followed by a well attended children's party, with a magician and a martial arts demonstration.



Before the grown-ups were ushered out to make room for the separate children's party, they were invited to participate in a martial arts performance, where François de Hennin gave his all.

Record Autumn Party

The Autumn Party on Sunday 15 September became the largest ever: some 160 people caused Inverness Gardens to almost burst at its seams. Several new neighbours were welcomed, among them Father Gillean and his wife Linda Hirst, and the High Commissioner of the Seychelles, Bertrand Rassool.

The delicious titbits were as usual provided courtesy of Winkworths, and Tuggy Meyer supplied the tasty wine.



The autumn party drew a record crowd of 160 neighbours, and Inverness Gardens almost burst at its seams.

Kensington Palace 1837 - 2002:

"The Aunt Heap" has never been as crowded as today

After Princess Margaret's death, many seem to think that Kensington Palace now stands empty. Nothing could be further from the truth: "the Aunt Heap" has never housed so many members of the extended Royal Family as it does today.

When the young Queen Victoria moved to Buckingham Palace in 1837, the only royal family left at Kensington consisted of her favourite uncle, the book collecting Prince Augustus (the Duke of Sussex) and his second wife, Lady Cecilia Underwood. Augustus, who also was a favourite of the people, known as "Good old Sussex", died in 1843, and - as mentioned in the previous chapter - his death was the occasion of a genuine display of public mourning. His body lay in state in the palace and for one day the public were allowed to pay their last respects. It is estimated some 20,000 found their way out to the palace, which was remarkable in a time of no cars or public transport.

The Tecks

For the next 24 years Lady Cecilia lived alone in the palace (besides all the servants, of course), but in 1867, a few years before she died, the Duke and Duchess of Teck (the Duchess was a cousin to Victoria) were allocated the apartments formerly occupied by Victoria's family.

The Tecks had four children, all of whom were born at Kensington Palace. Their first, Victoria Mary, was born on 26 May 1867 and christened at the palace by the Archbishop of Canterbury. She later married the future King George V and as Queen Mary took a keen interest in the arrangement of the palace after it was opened to the public in 1899. In 1883 the Tecks left Kensington to live in Florence.

Princess Louise

Victoria's sixth child, the newlywed Princess Louise (1848-1939), and her husband, the Marquess of Lorne, moved into Augustus' apartments after the death of Lady Cecilia in 1873. Victoria was delighted that one of her children should be living in her old home and wrote to her daughter after a visit: "I can't tell you the feeling it gave me to see my old Bedroom and the old doors - and the very view I knew so well - and then downstairs to the old rooms where so many lived - including dear Papa!" Princess Louise was one of the few women sculptors of the 19th century and by the age of 20 she had exhibited at the Royal Academy. Almost immediately after her arrival at Kensington she built her own studio, one of three that she was to use

there over the years. Her most famous work, a marble statue of Queen Victoria at the time of her accession, stands outside the palace.

Louise was a bit of a wild child in her youth. The marriage to the Marquess had been hastily arranged because of rumours circulating about Louise's unsuitable attachments to men, in particular her teacher at South Kensington Art School, the sculptor Sir Edgar Boehm. The marriage was not a success and in 1880 they moved apart, although they both continued to live at Kensington Palace.

Press scandal

Boehm's sudden death in his Fulham Road studio during a visit by the Princess caused a bit of a scandal in 1890. The press had a field day, of course, and some of its comments were rather suggestive. Louise insisted, however, that he had collapsed while carrying a heavy bust, and this was also the coroner's verdict. Princess Louise stayed in the palace until she died in 1939, 91 years old.

Princess Beatrice (1857-1944), the youngest of Victoria's nine children and her closest companion after the death of John Brown in 1883, had lived with her mother all her life, even after she married Prince Henry von Battenberg. But when Victoria died in 1901, Beatrice moved to Kensington Palace, where she lived until her death in 1944, 87 years old.

The Aunt Heap

In 1917 the enclave of royal ladies at Kensington increased even further, as Princess Helen (the Duchess of Albany), the widow of Victoria's youngest son, Prince Leopold, moved in with their daughter Princess Alice. Alice and her husband, Prince Alexander of Teck (Queen Mary's younger brother, who was born at the palace) made Kensington Palace their permanent home. He died in 1957 and she in 1981, aged 97. It was she who revealed in her memoirs that Kensington Palace was called "the Aunt Heap" within the Royal Family.

In 1955, Princess Marina, the Duchess of Kent, widow of the Queen's uncle Prince George (who died on active service in 1942), moved into the palace with her children. She died in 1969. Her two



The Tecks in the garden; Princess Beatrice; Princess Louise's statue of her mother; Princess Louise herself, posing by another sculpture; and Princess Alice of Teck, who revealed that the palace was called "the aunt heap".

sons, Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, and Prince Michael of Kent, both live in the palace today with their wives Katharine and Marie-Christine.

In the late 1960's, following the separation from the Earl of Snowdon, Princess Margaret moved into the palace with her children, and lived there until her death in February this year.

Princess Alice now oldest

In the 1970's another of the Queen's uncles, Prince Henry, the Duke of Gloucester, and his wife Princess Alice, moved from York House to Kensington Palace. After his death in 1974, Princess Alice spent considerable time at their other home, Barnwell Manor, but she moved permanently to Kensington Palace in 1994, to live with her son and daughter-in-law, the present Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, Prince Richard and his Danish wife Birgitte, and their three children. On Christmas Day 2001 she celebrated her 100th birthday and is now, following the recent death of the Queen Mother, the oldest member of any royal family in the world.

Princess Diana

And, of course, in 1981 the palace became the world famous home of the newlywed couple that some American media flippantly called



"Chuck and Di". After the separation and later divorce, Diana, Princess of Wales, and the two young princes William and Harry continued to live there until her tragic death in 1997, which, as we all remember, turned the palace into a flower shrine, visited by several hundred thousand mourners.

Six households today

After Diana's death, Princess Margaret became the most well-known resident of the palace, and after her death many seem to think that it stands empty. It is, however, still the home (and offices) of six royal households: Princess Alice; the present Duke and Duchess of Gloucester; the Duke and Duchess of Kent; the Prince and Princess Michael of Kent; and Princess Margaret's son, Lord Linley, and his family. In addition, it has been suggested in the press that the Wessexes (Prince Edward and his Sophie) could move into Princess Margaret's former rooms in order to save money.

Very run down

Although the private apartments at Kensington Palace continued to be used by members of the Royal Family throughout the 19th century, the State Apartments were sadly neglected and were used as stores for various paintings and furnishings



from other palaces. By the end of the century the building was seriously dilapidated with the brickwork decaying and the woodwork infested with dry rot. In 1888, an article in The Queen's Homes described the State Apartments as 'empty - empty, bare, dreary, and comfortless; no carpets, no curtains, no furniture of any kind...nothing but bare walls and bare boards'.

Restoration

Ideas for its future varied from demolition to use as a gallery or museum. It was only Queen Victoria's love for the palace in which she had grown up that saved it: in April 1897, Parliament was persuaded to pay for the restoration of the State Apartments on condition that they should be opened to the public. The restoration of the State Apartments was carried out at great speed but with much care and attention to detail. According to Viscount Esher, the Secretary to the Office of Works, the aim was to restore the decoration 'as far as possible [to] exactly what it was in the reign of George II'.

Opened to the public

The State Apartments were opened to the public on Queen Victoria's 80th birthday, 24 May 1899. The newly restored rooms were hung with portraits and historical paintings illustrative of the periods and the

monarchs associated with the palace. Queen Victoria took a keen interest in the pictures and exhibits, many of which concerned her reign and her image as Queen. For example, the three rooms in the southeast corner of the palace, where she and her mother had lived, were filled with portraits and objects relating to her life.

London Museum

In 1911-12 the State Apartments were given over to the newly founded London Museum for the display of royal relics and objects relating to the City of London. Queen Mary took a keen interest in the museum and it was she who managed to persuade George V that the museum could 'be accommodated, at least temporarily, in the State Rooms at Kensington Palace'.

The King and Queen toured the new museum on 21 March 1912, accompanied by Princess Mary and Prince George (later Duke of Kent). The State Apartments were filled with showcases. In the Cupola Room, for example, there was a splendid display of London silver and several models of ships. There was also a large collection of costume, including Georgian court dress (in the King's Gallery), coronation robes (in the Presence Chamber) and dresses worn by Queen Victoria, Queen Alexandra and Queen Mary.

The public were first admitted to the museum on 8 April 1912 and on the first day alone 13,000 visitors passed through the State Rooms. However, Kensington had never been intended as a permanent home for the London Museum and in 1914 it moved to Lancaster House.

Used by charities

When the museum left, the State Apartments were closed and during the First World War (1914-18) they were used as offices by various charitable organisations. The palace did not reopen again until 1923, the hours then being restricted to Sunday afternoons only; from 1926 they were also open on Saturdays. In 1932 the three rooms associated with Queen Victoria were restored and rearranged under the direction of Queen Mary.

Bomb damage

Bomb damage during the Second World War left the State Apartments badly affected, particularly the Queen's Drawing Room and Dining Room. After a five-year closure, the palace was reopened on 4 June 1949. In the following year the London Museum returned to Kensington and for a quarter of a century (from 1950 until its amalgamation with the Guildhall Museum and its reopening in the Barbican as the Museum of London in 1976) the museum occupied the lower floors originally converted for the Duke of Kent.