



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



The Police

Emergency only 999
Notting Hill Station 7221 1212
Local Beat Officer
PC Simon Piper 8246 0162
Crime Prevention Officer
PC Andy Booth 8246 0169

The Council

Graffiti: Katie Phillips 7361 3235
Town Hall Car Park 7937 7040
Noise (24 hours) 7361 3484
Dog fouling 7341 5284

Neighbourhood Watch

Mariju Lee 7727 0205
Ashley McNeile 7229 3239

Voice-Connect upgraded to Ringmaster

In order to improve communications with members and residents of Neighbourhood Watch, the message service has been upgraded from 'Voice-Connect' to 'Ringmaster'. The service is free, and you can choose to receive urgent messages and information about criminal activity in our area via email, telephone or fax. If

you've been registered with Voice-Connect, you have already been transferred to the new system. Those who would like to receive the service, please contact Charles Frankly, the new Royal Borough Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, on 8246 0822.

Keep the burglars away

Follow these tips to help prevent yourself becoming another burglary statistic – and make a successful insurance claim if you do have a break-in.

- All accessible windows (those on the ground floor and basements, near drainpipes or flat roofs) should have key-operated locks.
- Front doors should have deadlocks that at least conform to BS3621. These locks can only be opened with a key - not with a plastic card or through a broken door pane.
- If you have a large letterbox, fit a letterbox casing. Don't leave car keys and handbags near the front door, as these can be reached by

thieves who stick bamboo canes or fishing rods through the letterbox.

- Always check the identity of unknown callers. Before opening your door fully, ask to see ID if they claim to be officials. Telephone their office if in any doubt.
- Don't make it obvious that you are away on holiday. Ask a neighbour to keep an eye on your home and remove mail from your letterbox.
- List valuable items with serial numbers and a short description. Take photographs of jewellery and other valuables. Get a property marking kit - use your postcode and the number of your house.
- If you're considering installing an alarm system, get advice from your insurers. Many insist that the installation is carried out by companies registered with the National Approval Council for Security Systems (Nacoss).

Keep us informed

Our aim is for a safer neighbourhood. Please be vigilant and alert.

The Cherry Tree

A newsletter for the Cherry Trees Residents' Amenities Association

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The Cherry Trees Residents' Amenities Association

Chairman: Willoughby Wynne

39 Brunswick Gardens, London W8 4AW

Tel: 7727 9786

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, Kensington Mall, and on the eastern side of Kensington Church Street between Kensington Mall and Vicarage Gate.

If you see anything suspicious, contact the Police on 7221 1212. The 999 number should only be used for emergencies. Please also keep your Neighbourhood Watch representatives informed.

Your CTRAA Neighbourhood Watch representatives are Mariju Lee (7727 0205) and Ashley McNeile (7229 3239).



The Cherry Tree

A newsletter for the Cherry Trees Residents' Amenities Association 2/2004

Congestion charge up 60% next year?

The proposed extension of the congestion charging zone, to include most of Kensington, is still undecided, although most experts think that it will eventually go ahead.

At the end of November, the recently re-elected Ken Livingstone added more fuel to the road toll debate by asking Transport for London to plan for an increase of the charge to £8 per day.

The reason given for the 60 per cent increase, which could come into effect in July, is to "maintain the effectiveness of the charge and raise additional revenues."

The congestion charge of £5 per day was introduced in February 2003. If the charge is increased to £8 per day 30 months later, what will the increase be in January 2008, or at least after the next mayoral election? In February 2004 Ken Livingstone promised that the charge wouldn't be increased for at least 10 years, but that was before his re-election...

Three parties in 2005

At the CTRAA Annual General Meeting on 22 November, a popular vote decided that there will be three parties held in 2005, instead of the normal two:

The Spring Party, on Tuesday 24 May at 6.30 pm in Inverness Gardens.

The Midsummer Party, on Thursday 16 June at 6.30 pm in the garden of St Mary Abbots Vicarage.

The Autumn Party, on Sunday 18 September at 12 noon in Inverness Gardens.

At the AGM it was also agreed that the CTRAA membership fee should be increased to £6 for one year or £15 for three years, from the £4/£10 that has been unchanged for eight years.

Back issues of the Cherry Tree

If you want to read previous issues of the Cherry Tree, all issues since 2/1999 can now be downloaded as pdf files from the internet – and whilst the printed version is in black and white, the later internet versions are in colour. Just go to <http://homepage.mac.com/cherrytreelondon>



The Vicarage Gate House luxury flat development has been rejected by the Council. If the owners decide to appeal, their case will probably not be heard by the Planning Inspectorate until next autumn.

Luxury flat development rejected Final decision next autumn?

When the Council's Planning Committee met in October to consider Northacre's application for building a block of 12 luxury flats on the site of the Vicarage Gate House nursing home, the committee's unanimous rejection came so quickly that the attending public had hardly had time to sit down.

The main reason for the rejection was the expected; that the proposal involved a loss of elderly persons' accommodation and therefore didn't comply with the Council's policies in these matters, especially as the Robson Rhodes study, commissioned by the Vicarage Gate Action Group, "indicates that a viable [nursing or care home] scheme could be provided on the site", according to the report laid before the committee.

However, the committee also rejected the application for another, rather unexpected, reason. The Unitary Development Plan requires developers of sites with 15 or more flats to provide affordable housing within the site. With 12 flats, Northacre's project is below that limit, but the committee chose to interpret the UDP regulation as meaning sites that can accommodate 15 or more flats, and concluded that this could easily be done at the Vicarage Gate House site, and that it therefore must provide some affordable housing as well - something the potential buyers of the luxury flats probably wouldn't be very thrilled about...

The objections from the Vicarage Gate Action Group, the Kensington Society and others are well known by now, but the report also included some previously not published objections against Northacre's plan from the West London Architectural

Society, the Crown Estate and the Norwegian Embassy (a close neighbour).

After the Council's refusal, Vicarage Gate Ltd (the company set up by Northacre for this project) will have to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. Such an appeal will probably not be considered until next autumn, and it is expected that this will take the form of a big public hearing in the Town Hall, instead of a small meeting at the Inspectorate's headquarters in Bristol.

Meanwhile, Northacre's troubled finances seem to worsen. On 12 November, the company published its latest six months' result, showing that the income has gone down and the expenditure has gone up. In fact, the losses have increased so much that they now are higher than the turnover. The income in the period was £1.3 million, and the loss was £1.5 million, due to the fact that the administrative expenses (mainly salaries) were almost twice as high as the income. In September the company sold its own offices for £2.8 million, in order to pay a loan to Coutts & Co, but the remaining debts payable within a year will still be almost £3 million.

With no substantial income in sight, Northacre continues to live on borrowed money, putting all its hopes on a positive ruling by the Planning Inspectorate, almost one year from now...



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12 Old Bond Street, London.

From John C. Horsley

There can be a no more fitting Christmas card for the Cherry Trees area than John Callcott Horsley's. It was the world's first mass-produced Christmas card, published in 1843 and designed in Horsley's home at 128 Kensington Church Street (or 1 High Row, as it was then known). Through our very good contacts upstairs, we asked John to send a card to his future neighbours, which he was delighted to do...

The cosmopolitan lady who wouldn't be ladylike

In the autumn of 1826, a 42-year-old widow moved into rooms at 6 High Row (today's 138 Kensington Church Street). At a time when women of good families could hardly venture outside their own home alone, her neighbours must have viewed her both with awe and some apprehension. She had travelled the world alone, had written several books about faraway places, and had just returned to England from Brazil, where she had been governess to Donna Maria da Gloria, the 7-year-old princess who had just become Queen of Portugal.

The more intellectual part of London's society quickly flocked around her, attracted by her wit and sharp intellect. Most attracted was the famous Royal Academy landscape painter Augustus Wall Callcott, who lived just around the corner. This man, who had been known as "the handsomest young man in Kensington", had finally found a woman worth giving up his 47 years of bachelorhood for.

The feeling must have been mutual, for the same year they were married and she moved into his family home in The Mall (which wasn't The Mall we know today, but a short cul-de-sac going down today's Palace Gardens Terrace from its junction with today's Mall).

Daughter of a Naval officer

Her maiden name was Maria Dundas, and she was born in 1785. She hadn't seen much of her father during her childhood and teenage years, as he was one of the many

naval officers that the illustrious Scottish family has raised through the years. George Dundas (not to be confused with the much more famous naval officer George Heneage Dundas) was made post-captain in 1795 and saw quite a lot of action as commander of HMS Juno, a 32 gun frigate, between 1798 and 1802. In 1803 he was given the command of HMS Elephant, a 74 gun 3rd rate that had been Nelson's flagship during the Battle of Copenhagen in 1801, and took her down to Jamaica to patrol the Caribbean waters until 1806.

Travelled to India

In 1808 his sea-fighting years were over and he was made head of the naval works at the East India Company's dockyard in Bombay, and brought his now 23-year old daughter along. During the long trip Maria fell in love with a young Scottish naval officer aboard, Thomas Graham, third son to Robert Graham, the last

laird of Fintry. They married in India in 1809.

In 1811, the young couple returned to England, where Maria published her first book, "Journal of a Residence in India", followed soon afterwards by "Letters on India".

A few years later her father was appointed Commissioner of the naval dockyard at the Cape, where he died in 1814, aged 58, having been promoted rear-admiral just two months earlier.

Translator and book editor

As all other naval officer's wives, Maria spent several years ashore, seldom seeing her husband. Most of these years she lived in London. But while other officers' wives spent their time with domestic chores, she worked as a translator and book editor. In 1819 she lived in Italy for a time, which resulted in the book "Three Months Passed in the Mountains East of Rome, during the Year 1819". Being very interested in



Maria Callcott, painted shortly after the marriage, by her husband, Augustus Wall Callcott. She was known for her wit and sharp tongue. Once, when a group of people discussed the use of the word "female", she said, "As for me, I would rather be called a bitch than a female".

the arts, she also wrote a book about the French baroque painter Nicholas Poussin, "Memoirs of the Life of Nicholas Poussin", in 1820.

In 1821 Maria was invited to accompany her husband aboard HMS Doris, a 36 gun frigate under his command. The destination was Chile, and the purpose was to protect British mercantile interests in the area.

Widow in Chile

In April 1822, shortly after the ship had rounded Cape Horn, her husband died of a fever, so HMS Doris arrived in Valparaiso without a captain, but with a distraught captain's widow. All the naval officers in Valparaiso – British, Chilean and American – tried to help Maria - one American captain even offered to sail her back to Britain – but she was determined to manage on her own. She rented a small cottage, turned her back on the English colony ("I say nothing of the English here, because I do not know them except as very civil vulgar people, with one or two exceptions", she later wrote), and lived among the Chileans for a whole year.

Later in 1822, she experienced one of Chile's worst earthquakes in history, and recorded its effects in detail – something nobody had done before.

Tutor to the princess

In 1823 she began her journey back to Britain. She made a stop in Brazil and was introduced to the Brazilian emperor and his family. The year before, the Brazilians had declared independence from Portugal and had asked the resident Portuguese crown prince, Dom Pedro to become their emperor. It was agreed that she should become the tutor of the young princess Donna Maria, so when she reached London, she just handed over the manuscripts of her two new books to her publisher ("Journal of a Residence in Chile during the Year 1822. And a Voyage from Chile to Brazil in 1823" and "Journal of a Voyage to Brazil, and Residence There, During Part of the Years 1821, 1822, 1823"), collected suitable educational material, and returned to Brazil the same year.

She stayed in Brazil until 1826, teaching the young princess and becoming a close friend to the

empress, Archduchess Maria Leopoldina of Austria, who passionately shared her interests in the natural sciences.

In March 1826, King João VI of Portugal died. His son Pedro inherited the throne, but as he preferred to remain Emperor of Brazil, he abdicated the Portuguese throne in favour of his six-year-old daughter. So, Maria Graham's little chubby pupil had suddenly become Maria II da Gloria, Queen of Portugal. With her pupil sailing off to Portugal, Maria Graham had no more reason to stay in Brazil, and returned home.

Having arrived in London, Maria Graham took rooms in Kensington Gravel Pits, which was something of an artists' enclave. There lived the Royal Academy painter Augustus Wall Callcott and his musician brother John Wall Callcott, but also painters like John Linnell, David Wilkie and William Mulready, and musicians such as William Crotch (the first principal of the Royal Academy of Music) and William Horsley (John Callcott's son-in-law). In addition, this closely-knit group was frequently visited by artists like John Varley, Edwin Landseer, John Constable and J.M.W. Turner.

Befriending the neighbours

Maria's lodgings very quickly became a focal point for London's intellectuals, such as the Scottish poet Thomas Campbell, Maria's book publisher John Murray and the historian Francis Palgrave, but her keen interest and knowledge of painting (she was a skilled illustrator of her own books, and had written the book about Poussin) made it inevitable that she would quickly become part of the artists' enclave as well.

It must have been love at first sight when Maria Graham and Augustus Callcott met, because they married on his 48th birthday, 20 February 1827, just a few months after her arrival from Brazil. They immediately left for a year long honeymoon to Italy, Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. It was his first trip abroad, and he obviously enjoyed it. From then on he would travel extensively, both to Europe and the Middle East, with Maria as well as with friends like Turner.

Invalid in Italy

In 1831, during a trip in Italy, Maria Callcott ruptured a blood vessel and became an invalid. She could no



Augustus Wall Callcott, painted by his nephew John Callcott Horsley, who lived in 1 High Row (128 Kensington Church Street).

longer travel, but she could continue to entertain her friends, and could continue her writing.

Immediately after her return from Brazil in 1826, her publisher, John Murray, had asked her to create a book about the famous and recently completed voyage of HMS Blonde to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii).

King Kamehameha II of Hawaii and his Queen Kamamalu had been on a visit to London in 1824 when they both died of the measles, against which they had no immunity. HMS Blonde was commissioned by the Government to return their bodies to the Hawaiian Islands, with the cousin of the poet Byron in command. The resulting book contained a history of their visit to London, a résumé of the discovery of the Hawaiian Islands and visits by British explorers, as well as the story about Blonde's journey. Maria wrote it with the help of official papers and journals kept by the naturalist Bloxam.

Little Arthur's History

In 1828, immediately after returning from their honeymoon, she published "A Short History of Spain", and in 1835 her writings during her long convalescence resulted in the publication of two books; "Description of the chapel of the Annuziata dell'Arena; or Giotto's Chapel, in Padua", and her first and most famous book for children; "Little Arthur's History of England", which has been reprinted numerous times since then (already in 1851 the 16th edition was published, and it was last reprinted in 1975). "Little Arthur" was followed in 1836 by a French version; "Histoire de France du petit Louis".

In the mid 1830's her description of the earthquake in Chile 1822 started a heated debate in the Geological Society, where she was caught in the middle of a fight between two rivaling schools of thought regarding earthquakes and their role in mountain building.

Besides describing the earthquake in her "Journal of a Residence in Chile", she had also written about it in more detail in a letter to Henry Warburton, who was one of the Geological Society's founding fathers. As this was one of the first detailed eyewitness accounts by "a learned person" of an earthquake, he found it interesting enough to publish in "Transactions of the Geological Society of London" in 1823.

One of her observations had been that of large areas of land rising from the sea, and in 1830 that observation was included in the groundbreaking work "The Principles of Geology" by the geologist Charles Lyell, as evidence in support of his theory that mountains were formed by volcanoes and earthquakes. Four years later the president of the Society, George Bellas Greenough, decided to attack Lyell's theories. But instead of attacking Lyell directly, he did it by publicly ridiculing Maria Callcott's observations.

Backed by Darwin

Maria Callcott, however, was not someone who accepted ridicule. Her husband and her brother offered to duel Greenough, but she said, according to her nephew John Callcott Horsley, "Be quiet, both of you, I am quite capable of fighting my own battles, and intend to do it".

She went on to publish a crushing reply to Greenough, and was shortly thereafter backed by none other than Darwin, who had observed the same land rising during Chile's earthquake in 1835 aboard the Beagle.

In 1837 Augustus Callcott was knighted, so Maria became Lady Callcott. Shortly afterwards her health began to deteriorate, however, and in 1842 she died, 57 years old. She continued to write until the very end, and her last book was "A Scripture Herbal", an illustrated collection of titbits and anecdotes about plants and trees mentioned in the Bible, which was published the same year she died.

Augustus Callcott died two years later, at the age of 65, having been made "Conservator of the Royal Pictures" the same year.



The Callcott houses, where Augustus' family had lived for generations, were a row of four houses where the Christian Science Church stands today. Some history books want to place them on the site of today's Essex Church, but maps from the period show that they were in the Mall cul-de-sac. They were pulled down in the 1870's, when the little village of Kensington Gravel Pits was swallowed up by the metropolis.



Maria Graham-Callcott was also a skilled illustrator of her own books, which these three pictures show: of Cuesta da Prado in Chile, of slave trade in Rio (she was much opposed to slavery), and of a dragon tree on Tenerife.