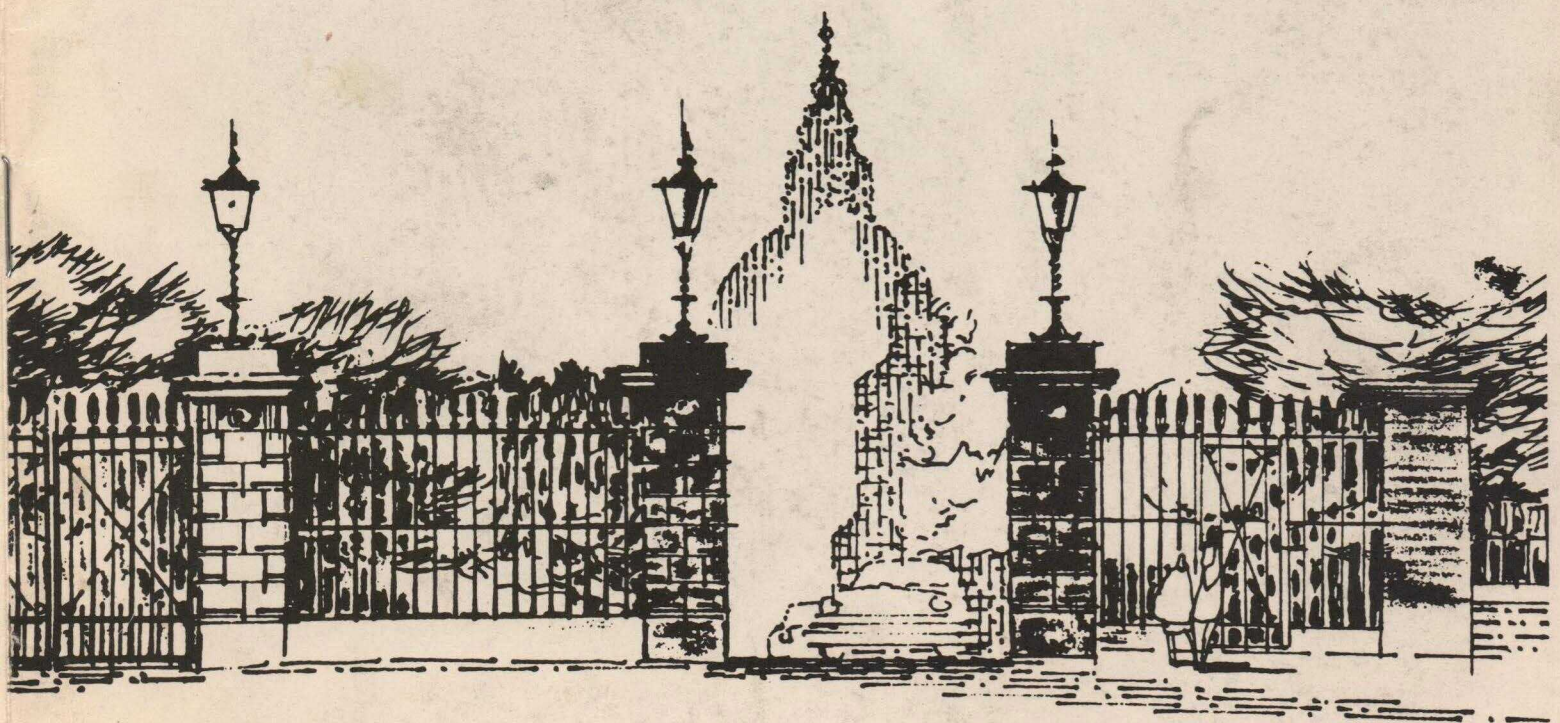
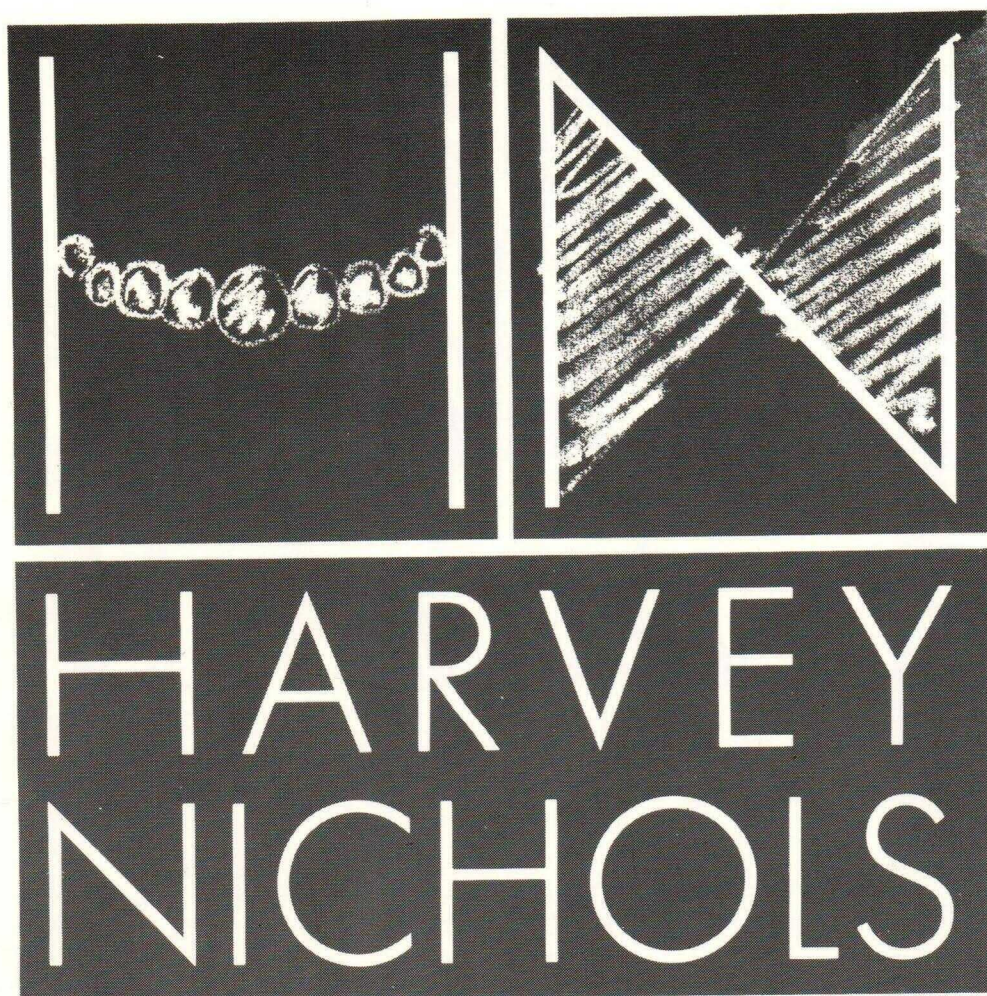


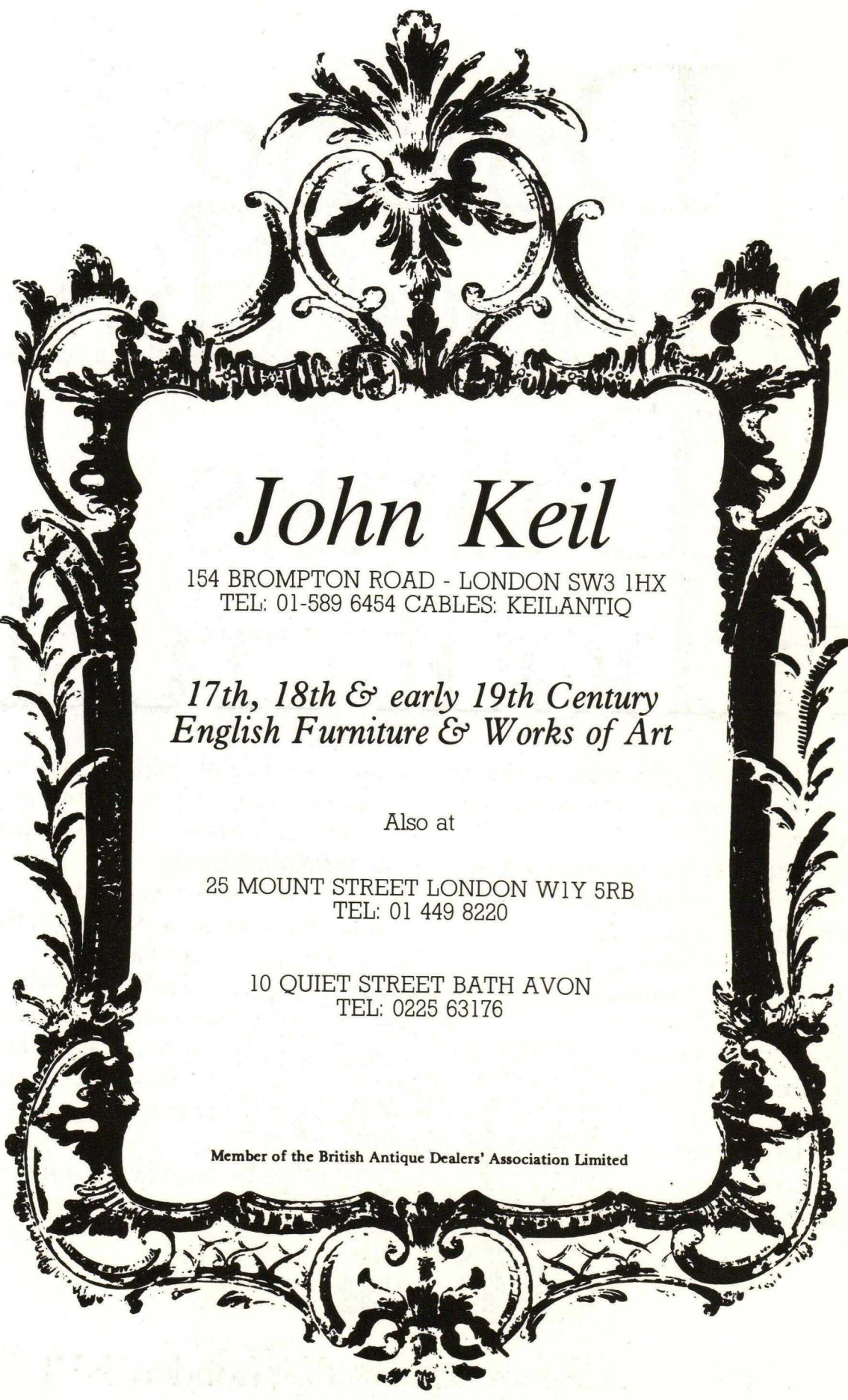
THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT
December 1982





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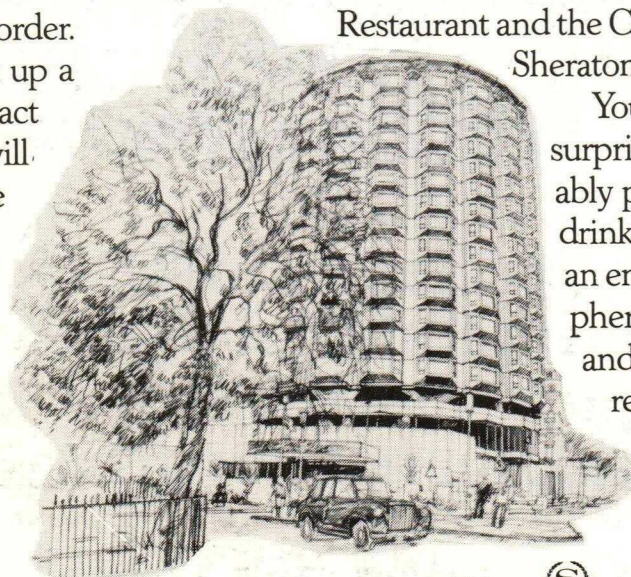
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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Following our well-established precedent, this report combines a review of the year's events; an appreciation of the work of many dedicated members of the Association and its specialist committees; and an appraisal of the challenges that face the Association in the coming twelve months in pursuance of its aims of protecting and enhancing the environment and amenities of Knightsbridge.

As usual, the main committee met at intervals to consider matters of principle and to

receive the reports of the specialist committees which met regularly throughout the year to conduct the detailed work of the Association. This has been a busy and eventful year for the Association which has stretched our resources both in man and woman power and the time available for voluntary effort. Not only have there been the routine planning applications to consider and to comment upon, but also some matters of fundamental importance for the area and its future. These will be commented upon as they arise in appropriate places in the report.

THE ENVIRONMENT

The main burden of work fell, as always, upon the Environment Committee under its indefatigable Chairman John Wallis and a dedicated group of hard-working members including our two distinguished architects Michael Wright and Jeremy Mackay-Lewis. During the year the Committee was strengthened by the appointment of Richard Robinson as vice Chairman. Frances Mackay is retiring from the Committee after many years of long and stirring service to the Association and Libby Gillett, one of the Association's founder members, is also retiring from environmental work but happily is remaining on the main Committee.

I have drawn attention in previous reports to the heavy work load of this Committee. Numerous applications for development for the alteration of buildings have to be considered, plans inspected, sites visited, and continuous consultation maintained with the planning departments of the local authorities. Already coping with this prodigious task, in this period the Environment Committee dealt with and commented upon a hundred per cent increase in the number of planning applications over those of the previous year.

The proposed redevelopment of 2-8a Rutland Gate (which was formerly the West German Consulate) has now reached an important stage. Plans were prepared by the developer's architect and discussed with the Environment Committee. Following this a public viewing of the proposals was staged by

the Association in Rutland Gate, by kind permission of the British Antique Dealers Association who lent their premises for the occasion. The views expressed by our members have encouraged the Committee to sustain our efforts to make sure that any new building does justice to this important site. The Association was instrumental in saving the building that forms the eastern entrance to Rutland Gate when it was threatened with demolition, and it is determined that a new building should form a fitting compliment on the western side. It is strongly felt that there is no justification for office content to be allowed to creep further westward into an area clearly zoned as residential in the City Plan.

The development at 191 to 193 Queen's Gate is now nearing completion. Here the Committee has been most active in supporting the interests of our members in Jays Mews who have suffered much damage and inconvenience during the work. The Committee's Chairman has been able to help in producing a climate which encouraged settlements of claims between the builders and residents without recourse to legal proceedings, although some claims remain outstanding.

The Environment Committee met with a deputation from the Albert Court Residents Association led by Major General J. D. B. Smith who sought the Association's support in resisting an application to build a further 10 flats on the roof of this listed building. We are currently opposing this application and have

enlisted support from the G.L.C. Historic Buildings Division, The Victorian Society and our local councillors.

A scheme for redevelopment of the famous Lord Robert Workshops in Brompton Road has been considered by the Committee. This involves offices and residential accommodation to be built behind the existing facade. Retention of the facade is welcome, but there is



The dilapidated Upper Gardens, Rutland Gate.

objection to the alteration of the roof-line and to over-development in the Montpelier Mews which would dwarf the existing Mews houses.

The state of the Gardens in Upper Rutland Gate gives great cause for concern to the residents of this famous square and to the public generally. The Association has requested help and guidance from Westminster City Council and the latest information which has been received is that the garden is once again to be offered for sale.

In Trevor Street the applications for two houses to be built on the site of two garages has

been considered. There is a case for completing the line of the terrace although it seems that the site could only accommodate one extra house successfully.

The Committee is disappointed by the outline planning permission given to erect a penthouse on 1-5 Princes Gate, since this will adversely affect the skyline as seen from Hyde Park. This is a view which should always be considered carefully when applications are made for such roof extensions. Similarly the Committee was unhappy about the permission for an additional storey being approved for 59-63 Princes Gate.

At 76 Brompton Road the Association was able successfully to resist an application for a take-away licence being granted to the existing restaurant as this development was felt to be detrimental to the neighbourhood.

The redevelopment of Relton Mews is now well underway. Here the developers have created a scheme which retains the human scale of the existing houses and which is a good example when placed against the recent developments in the neighbouring Cheval Place. The Environment Committee are very pleased to support imaginative schemes which retain the charm and scale for which this neighbourhood is famous.

A draft paper has been received from Westminster City Council giving guidelines for alterations to mews premises. The Committee is studying the document which shows the importance of London's mews to the capital's townscape, and which affect many of our members in the future.

BROMPTON ROAD AND KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

The future of Brompton Road continues to concern the Association. This is particularly true of the area which lies within the boundaries of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea with whom the Association is anxious to develop the same friendly relations and spirit of co-operation that it enjoys with Westminster City Council. The last three reports have chronicled our efforts to persuade the Royal Borough to place the area of Brompton Road west of Montpelier Street in the conservation area to compliment the buildings in the Westminster conservation

area to the east.

Recently we opposed the application to demolish Nos. 150-152 Brompton road and 21-25 Cheval Place. These houses opposite Beauchamp Place, form a pleasant group which helps to give character to the area and the piecemeal redevelopment of Cheval Place with dark, heavy buildings is banishing much of the charm of the street. Whilst office development must, of course continue, there is so much concern about unlet office space in Central London that it must surely be wise to hesitate before destroying familiar and attractive small-scale buildings in order to build offices in essentially residential areas.

The Association was most grateful for the help and advice of the two local councillors for Kensington and Chelsea Mr. Charles Pender and Mrs. Fitzwilliams in our efforts to save the buildings in Brompton Road.



Trevor Street, site of the proposed new houses.

HERITAGE

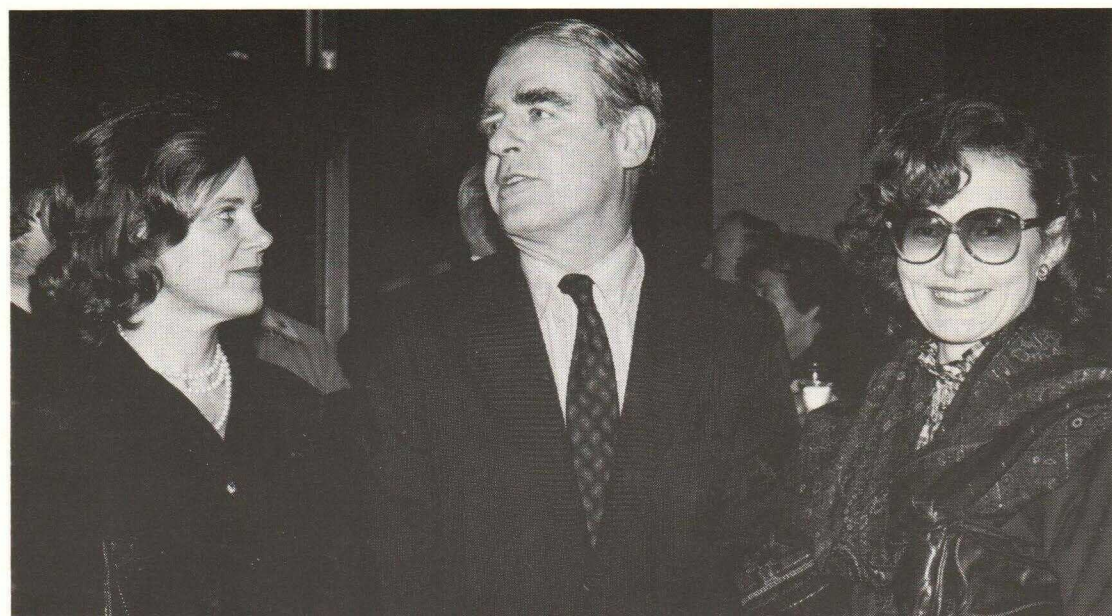
The Heritage Committee under Richard Robinson is concerned with the long-term protection of the neighbourhood and in attempting to replace some of the outstanding features that have been lost in the past. In this connection a study is being made of the possibility of replacing railings round some of the squares and replacing some of the old lamps which stood on pillars both in the squares and at the entrances to the residential areas which border on Knightsbridge facing the park. This is essentially a long-term plan which will require much study as well as, eventually, some substantial funds.

The Committee is very pleased to report that Ennismore Gardens is to receive an award from Westminster City Council for the delightful state of the gardens and the Committee wishes to express its congratulations to the Ennismore Garden Committee for their efforts.

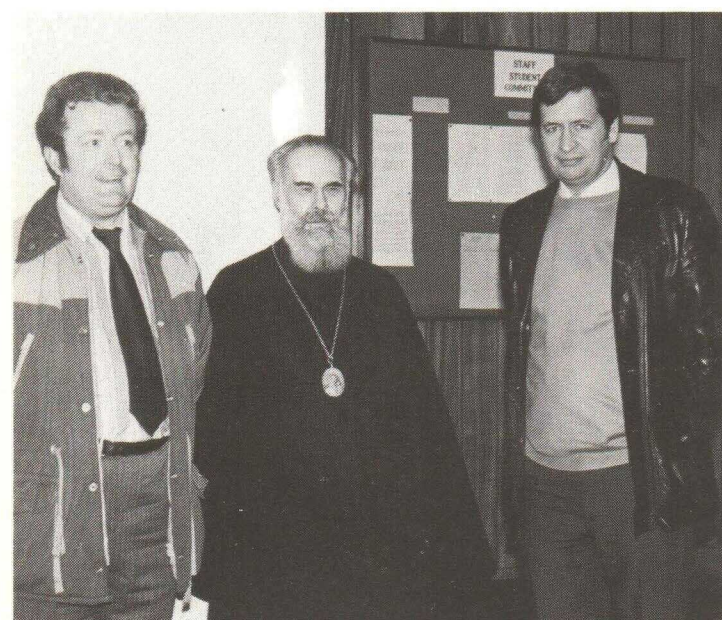
The Heritage Committee has very profound misgivings about the future of Brompton Road and is studying most carefully possible further developments in that area. In co-operation with interested parties, The Georgian Group, the G.L.C., The Civic Trust, it is examining ways in which protection may be afforded to the buildings which stand outside the conservation areas.

Looking towards Trevor Square from Trevor Place.





Mrs Carol Seymour
Newton with Mr & Mrs
Kerman Gorman.



P.C. Gooderson,
The Metropolitan
Anthony of the
Russian Orthodox
Cathedral,
P.C. Bennie.



Mr. Algernon
Asprey



Miss Rosemary
Burgess, Mrs. Box-
Granger, Miss
Mary Elliston.

RECEPTION AT THE LECTURE "KNIGHTSBRIDGE REVEALED"



The Hon. Sarah
Wills, Mrs.
Elizabeth
Hawkins, Mr.
Julian Mathews.



The Mayor of the
Royal Borough of
Kensington &
Chelsea with Mr.
Neville Labovitch.

*Pictures by
Joanna Goodman*



Mrs. Margaret
Riddell and Mr. &
Mrs. Alan Peek.

The Department of the Environment's History of Buildings of Special Historical and Architectural Interest is very incomplete nationally and nowhere is this more apparent than in Westminster. A number of buildings of fine quality have been missed and tragically often the first one hears of it is when the demolition men move in. This area was last assessed in 1959, and criteria have changed substantially since then.

In view of this the Heritage Committee has made a number of applications for spot listing

this year. Nos. 235-241 Knightsbridge were submitted and spotlisting was awarded on 239 and 241 and an agreement in principle that the whole terrace would be listed when building work has ceased. This was rather an odd reply in our view, and has been questioned by both the Association and Westminster City Council. We were also successful in getting Nos. 71-79 Knightsbridge listed. This is a fine block built at the turn of the century by the celebrated Victorian architect W. D. Caroe. It stands opposite the French Embassy and is worth close inspection.

DIPLOMATIC

This is the first year for some time that there have been no applications for diplomatic or quasi-diplomatic buildings in Knightsbridge. This is a long-term problem which is of considerable concern to residents and the study being made by Digby Digby Seymour is nearing completion and should be ready in the New Year.

It is gratifying to be able to report that 60 Ennismore Gardens, the former Gambian Embassy, is now reverting to residential use. There is also a similar application pending in respect of 48 Ennismore Gardens, the former

Iranian Consulate.

The Association, together with Kensington and Chelsea Council had resisted the establishment of a quasi-diplomatic building for Malaysia in Ennismore Gardens and Brompton Square. This was because of the number of similar diplomatic buildings in the neighbourhood. The objections were overruled by the Department of the Environment and the building conversion has taken place. It must be said that the work is excellent and the rebuilt and refurbished edifice is a credit to the neighbourhood.

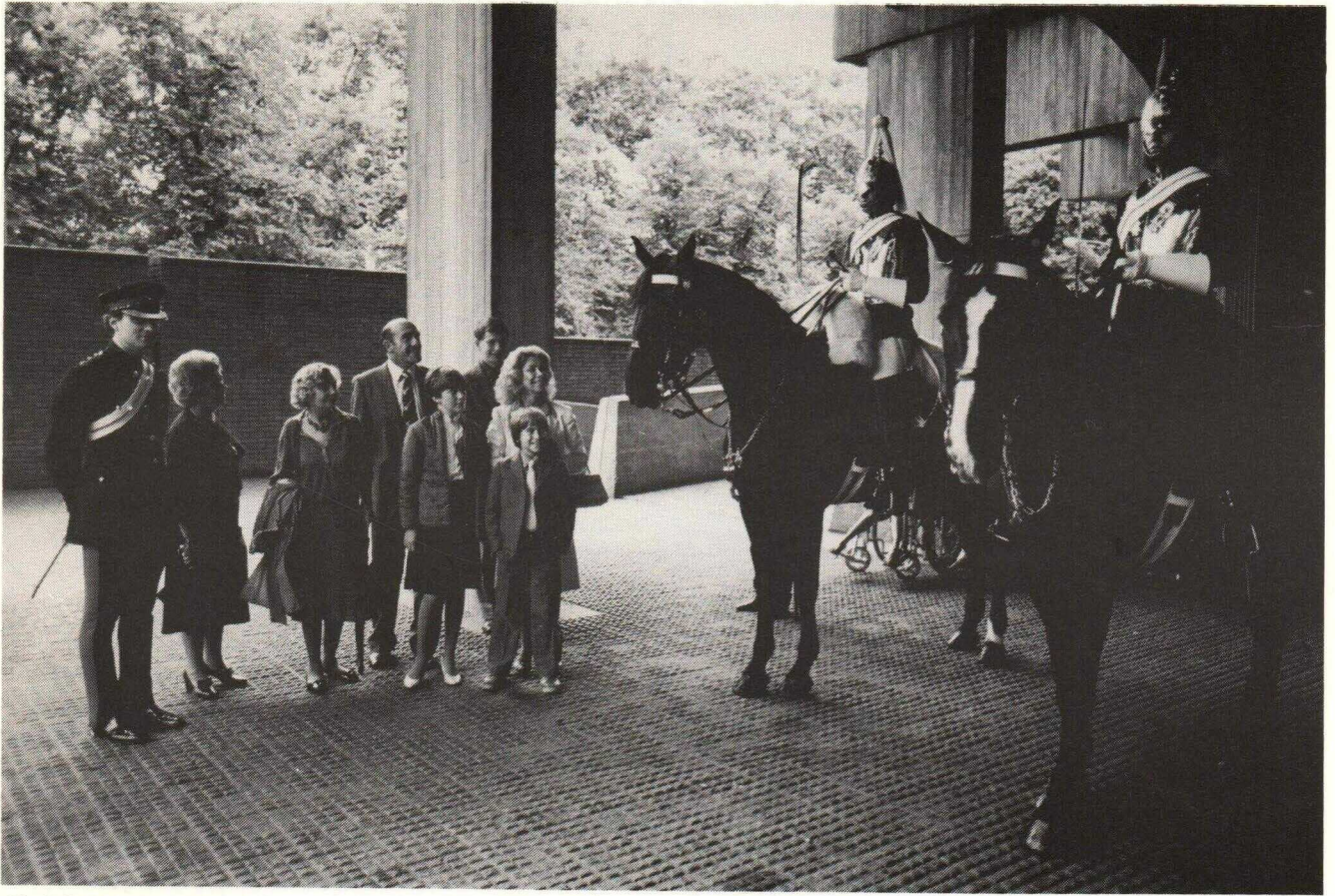
RUBBISH

There is no more important function than that undertaken by the Rubbish and Litter Committee headed by Frances Rice. It is our ideal to have Knightsbridge completely free of litter and garbage, but this will rely as much upon the co-operation of all residents and traders in the area, as upon the efforts of the local authorities. The Committee has disseminated much information in the neighbourhood about the times of refuse collection in order that the streets should be free of litter sacks at all other times.

During the year, the Lord Mayor of Westminster opened the new cleansing depot in Relton Mews. The Association had fought hard for the retention of this depot in the reconstruction of the Mews and this view

fortunately prevailed and the new depot was provided by the developer as a planning gain for the neighbourhood. The Committee maintains excellent relations with the Cleansing Department at Westminster City Council and with the local staff, and co-operation is increasing in this important work.

Whilst improvements are becoming apparent in the squares and residential areas, the litter in the shopping streets is worse. Next year the Association is planning a special effort in co-operation with the local authorities. This is a battle that has to be fought and won every day of the year and the brave members of the Litter and Garbage Committee deserve the constant appreciation of us all.



**Knightsbridge Barracks at Home to the Knightsbridge Association:
a party of members during the tour preceding the reception.**

TRAFFIC

The motor car continues to be one of the most intractable problems of the neighbourhood. The routing of through traffic by way of quiet residential squares and streets is an attack on the peaceful enjoyment of our homes, whilst parking, the illegal parking by non-residents, and the lack of it for the local population, is a constant irritant.

The Traffic Committee under Raymond

Burton has been trying to find some solutions to these problems that are generally acceptable, but this is a very hard task. A notable contribution to its efforts has been made by Richard Davie who is taking over from Raymond Burton who inaugurated the Committee and did so much to get to grips with its problems.

WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

The Association enjoyed its customary good relations with Westminster City Council in all departments and particularly with the planning department with which it has so many dealings. The unfailing courtesy and helpfulness of the officers has made an onerous and time consuming task that much easier for members who are naturally all working on a voluntary basis.

We are, as always, grateful to our two councillors Mr. Anthony Prendergast and Mr. Arthur Johnston for the enormous amount of work that they continue to do on our behalf, and also to the Member of Parliament for Westminster, Mr. Peter Brooke, who always takes a great interest in the Association's affairs and manages to attend so many of our meetings.

SOCIAL AND EVENTS

In June the Association paid a delightful visit to Knightsbridge Barracks by kind permission of the Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel A. H. Parker-Bowles. The Officers and

**Mrs. Alicia Salter delivering her lecture
"Knightsbridge Revealed."**



Men of the Blues and Royals were gracious hosts and conducted members around the barracks and stables in groups finishing with a most enjoyable party in the Mess. The arrangements for the visit were made by Georgina Greene and it must count as one of our most successful social events.

It was shortly afterwards that the horrific bomb attack upon members of the regiment took place. The Association expressed its shock and horror at the event and received an appreciative reply. Due to the initiative of Sarah Wills an appeal was launched by the Association and contributions were sent to the fund established for the wounded and the families of those killed in the tragedy.

It was with pleasure that the Association was able to repeat a lecture on the history of Knightsbridge by one of members, Alicia Salter, who lectures at the Victoria and Albert Museum. This talk proved so popular when it was first given that there were many requests for it to be delivered again and so it took place in the Lecture Hall of the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Imperial College in Exhibition Road by kind permission of the Rector, Lord Flowers. Once again the event was very well attended and the lecture entitled "Knightsbridge Revealed" was a huge success.

FINANCE

The Accounts which are circulated with this Report show a healthy balance in favour of the Association, but members will see that it is being depleted because of the fact that our expenses exceed the Association's income and have done for the past two or three years. In fact the deficit would be very much larger if it were not for the fact that so many expenses of administration are borne personally by members of the Committee. Whilst the Association's capital may seem adequate it must be understood that each time there is any sustained effort in defence of buildings or against unfortunate and unsightly developments, funds have to be provided for

professional help and this is substantial in relation to the Association's funds. For instance, the Embassy Brief which has now been prepared has to be submitted to Counsel and the fees for that should be in the region of £500. With inflation still proceeding, though at a reduced rate, it is obvious that the Association will have to undertake a major fund raising operation some time next year and it is hoped that this could be a pleasant occasion for members to enjoy. It should also be noted that many members are still paying a historically small membership fee by bankers order and it would be appreciated if they could raise the figure to what is now the average

membership fee. If members could see how much work is put in by, for instance, members of the Environment Committee who give so willingly of their time and expertise, I am sure that they would feel that their small subscription was well spent.

PREMISES

During the last few years the Association has enjoyed the use of 21 Cheval Place both as a postal address and a place to store our records. This has been due to the kind hospitality of Lorraine Buckland who occupies the building. Now due to the proposed redevelopment of that building following the decision by Kensington and Chelsea Council, the Association must look for a new headquarters.

The Association is truly grateful to Lorraine Buckland for her generosity and public spirit in giving the Association a home for so long.

THE FUTURE

Every year the coming twelve months shows the same picture. A continuing battle to preserve this pleasant corner of London for the benefit of the residents and traders of Knightsbridge and the many visitors who come to shop and just to look at our pleasant streets and squares.

The benefits of modern civilisation bring their burdens and it requires constant vigilance on behalf of those who love Knightsbridge to preserve much of our heritage and its quiet enjoyment.

I am grateful to the members of the Committee who have laboured so hard during the year and given so much of their so called spare time to work for the Knightsbridge Association and particularly, as always, to Carol Seymour-Newton our Honorary Secretary, on whom so much of the burden falls.

May I say, too, how much I am grateful to the general body of members of the Knightsbridge Association without whose support and encouragement it would be impossible to accomplish our work.

Neville Labovitch — *Chairman*,
November 29, 1982

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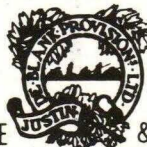
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Knightsbridge is our main speciality — the prime residential location that we have concentrated on for many years — as well as Chelsea, Belgravia, Mayfair, Kensington, Holland Park and Campden Hill.

Knightsbridge property is always in demand, however the volume has increased sharply over the past few months to the extent that we are experiencing a relative shortage of suitable property to satisfy the demand.

We are pleased to report that almost record prices have recently been achieved for our Vendors, and we are confident that with the most recent falls in interest rates, and increased confidence shown in the residential market prices will rise by between 10% - 15% in the forthcoming months.

We see all Vendors and Purchasers ourselves which we feel is essential in order to gain a clear understanding of their requirements and every effort is put in to ensure that these are met.

Our Offices are open Monday to Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. However, we can be available at any other time by prior arrangement.

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