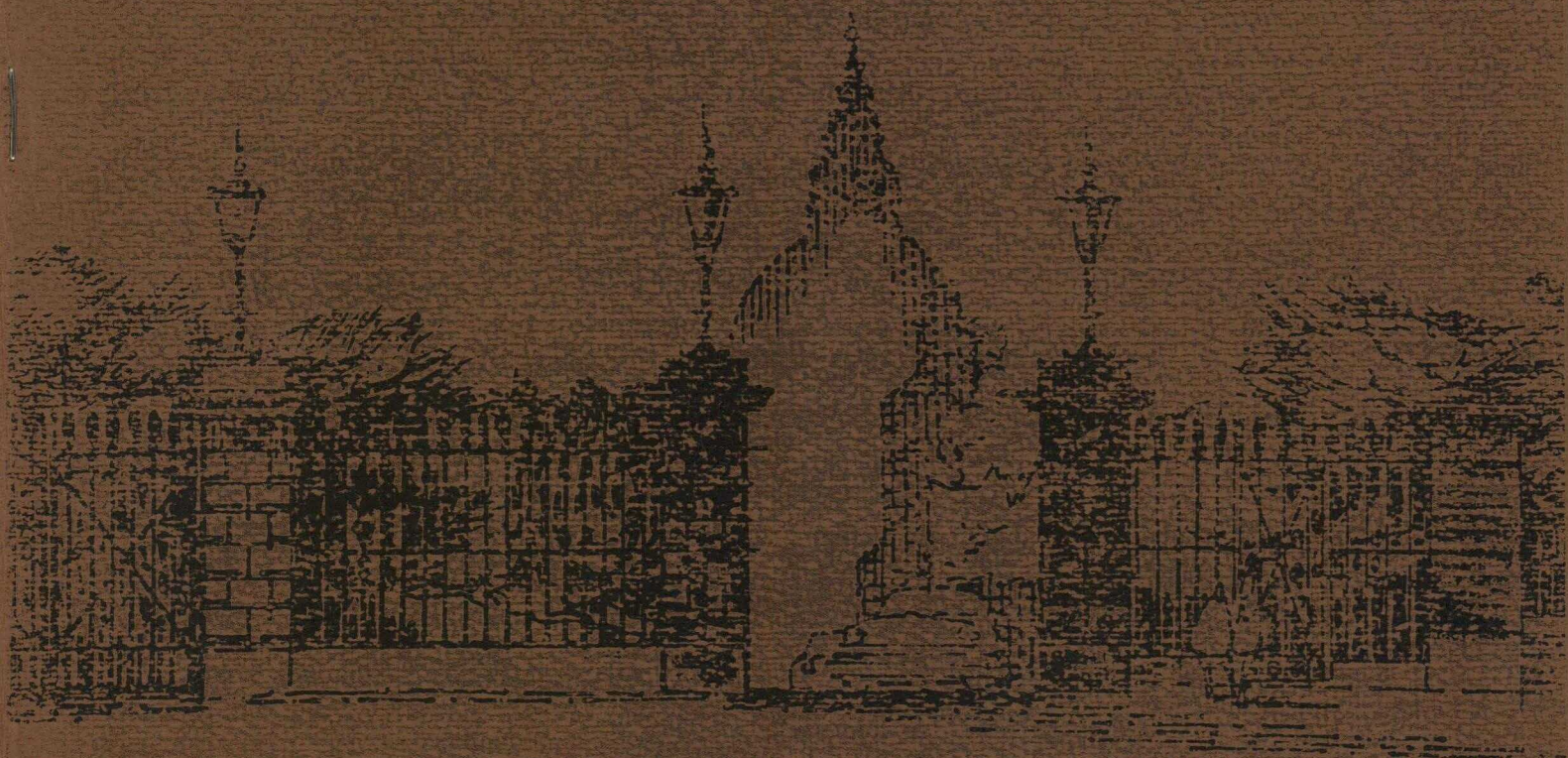
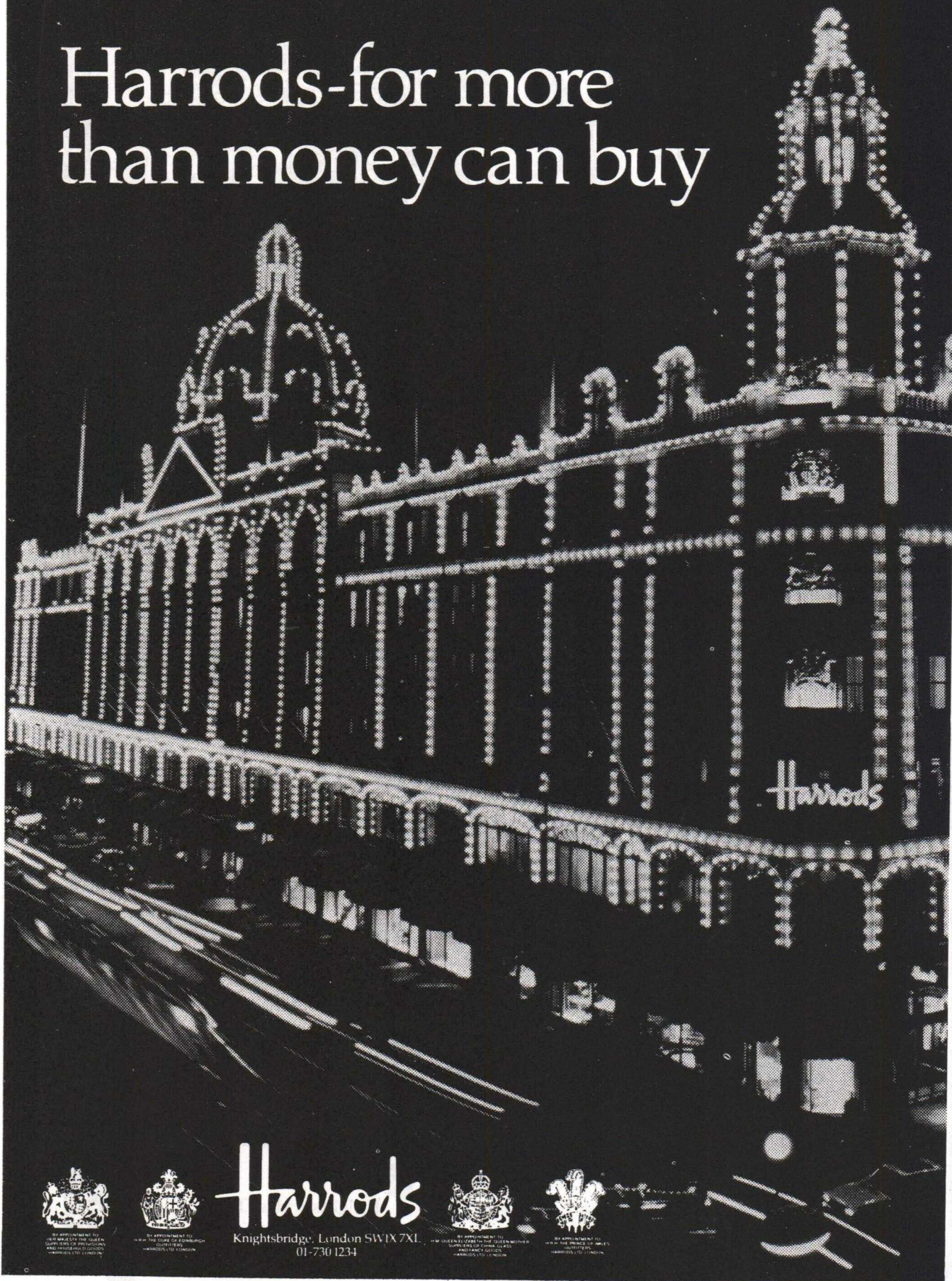


THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT
December 1983



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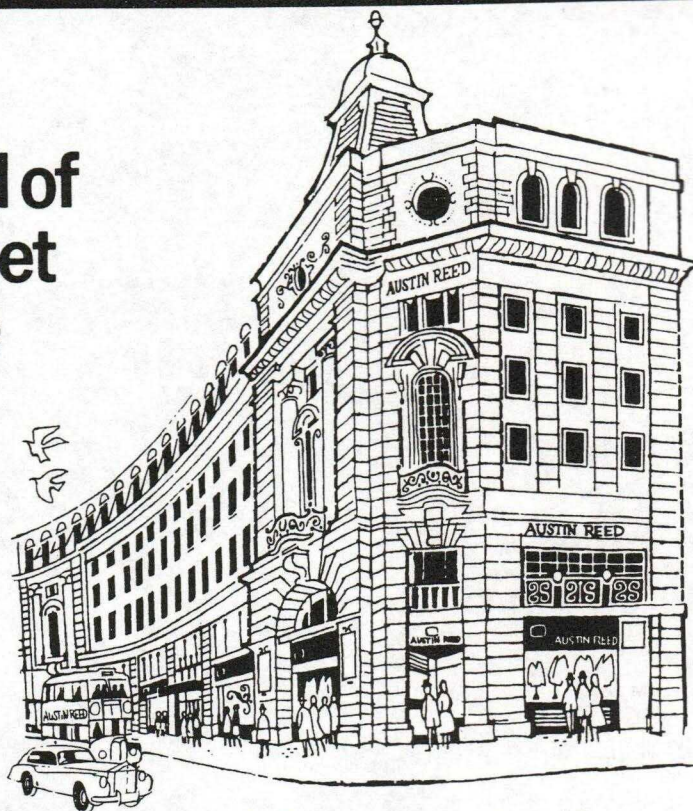


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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The last twelve months have seen a great deal of activity by the specialist Committees of the Association, all of whose members have worked so hard and have given so much of their time on behalf of Knightsbridge. During the period several of the Committees have acquired new Chairmen who have already shown the same drive and dedication as their predecessors.

The Association also maintains local representation through its Area Chairmen: Dr.

Stanley Steel in the Trevors, Joyce Goodman in the Montpeliers, Richard Robinson in the Rutlands, Frances Rice in the Ennismores, Sarah Wills in Princes Gate and Raymond Henley in Queen's Gate/Kensington Gore. These public spirited men and women work to keep local issues in front of the main Committee so that the total strength and influence of the Association can be available to support any part of the area which may be confronted with environmental problems.

THE ENVIRONMENT

It has been a busy year for the Environment Committee, which bears such a large proportion of the Association's work. Westminster City Council refers every planning application in Knightsbridge to the Association for its opinions and all these plans have to be inspected and frequently site visits undertaken. In areas which lie in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea it is necessary for the Environment Committee to take the initiative in inspecting plans and transmitting its views to the Planning Department.

The Association is fortunate to have a group of dedicated people to serve on the Environment Committee. It is particularly lucky to enjoy the expertise of its two Architects, Michael Wright and Jeremy Mackay-Lewis. Early in the year, the highly experienced Chairman, John Wallis, retired due to general pressure of work. This is much to everyone's regret, but of course he remains a very active member. The leadership was taken over by the Vice-Chairman, Richard Robinson, with Raymond Henley as his Deputy.

Richard Robinson and his Committee have worked hard and successfully on behalf of the community. Whilst much of the work is routine, there are many applications of great importance and significance to the area. Sometimes these require the Association to take a stand on behalf of the neighbourhood to protect our environment. Of course, we do not win every battle, but there are many occasions where the action of the Association has prevented unnecessary demolition, helped to improve the standard of design of new buildings and prevented many attempts at over-development and unsuitable treatment.

One of the Association's early successes was the saving of 1/7 Rutland Gate which has now been rebuilt behind its facade and is almost ready for occupation. In their extensive advertising of the building the joint Agents, Hamptons and Sturgis, referred to the work of the Association, in concert with Westminster City Council, in preventing demolition. Now the opposite corner, which with this building makes the entrance to Rutland Gate, facing Hyde Park, is to be redeveloped and it is hoped that new plans suggested by the latest

Albert Court: roof line saved.

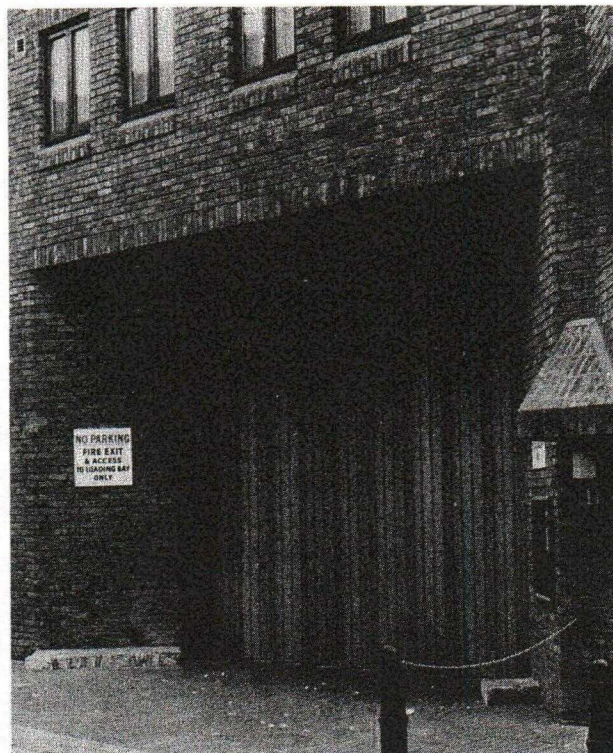


developer will be on show at the Association's Annual Meeting. The Environment Committee is determined that this most important site shall have a building which is suitable and sympathetic to its setting and a compliment to the opposite side.

Last year's review commented upon the support given by the Environment Committee to the Albert Court Residents' Association in resisting an application to build a further 10 flats on the roof of this listed building. It is pleasing to report that during a year which celebrates the work and influence of the Prince Consort, the Association's advice, supported by a Petition organised jointly with the Residents' Association, has been accepted by Westminster City Council and, thus, Albert Court saved from this unsuitable treatment.

The redevelopment of Relton Mews is proceeding apace with the scheme which caught the imagination and sympathy of the Committee. This is a good example of how the charm and scale of a neighbourhood can be retained whilst producing a worthwhile result for the developer.

Residents of Cheval Place, so near to this interesting reconstruction, must unfortunately suffer demolition of 21/25 Cheval Place, having only just recovered from the demolition and rebuilding of the old LEB site next door. The small houses to be built are, at least, on a better scale than the brutal building with its great metal door reminiscent of an aircraft hangar that has been wished upon this pretty small scale street with the permission of the Kensington and Chelsea planners. It must be hoped that eventually our many representations can convince all the Authorities that the charm of the neighbourhood must be respected.



Top & centre: 'Brutal' new development contrasted with charming old buildings in Cheval Place.

Bottom: Sympathetic restoration in Relton Mews.

UNDIPLOMATIC BEHAVIOUR

Following the events outlined in the last two years' Reports, the Committee has been studying the problems caused by a concentration of diplomatic buildings in the area. Naturally, the Association welcomes large suitable buildings in open settings being used for this important purpose, but is concerned at a new trend to establish diplomatic buildings in small scale residential squares.

Accordingly a comprehensive study of this and allied problems has been made by Digby Digby-Seymour and it is proposed to publish his Report in the immediate future. There has

also been some concern about the change of policy which precludes the clamping of diplomatic vehicles which are wrongly parked. It would appear that residents have no objection to exceptions being made for the cars of Ambassadors and High Commissioners which usually obey regulations in any case, but there is resentment at the immunity claimed by a large number of minor officials and functionaries attached to diplomatic establishments. Recently Kensington and Chelsea Council called a meeting to discuss this problem, at which the Association was represented.

BROMPTON ROAD AND KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

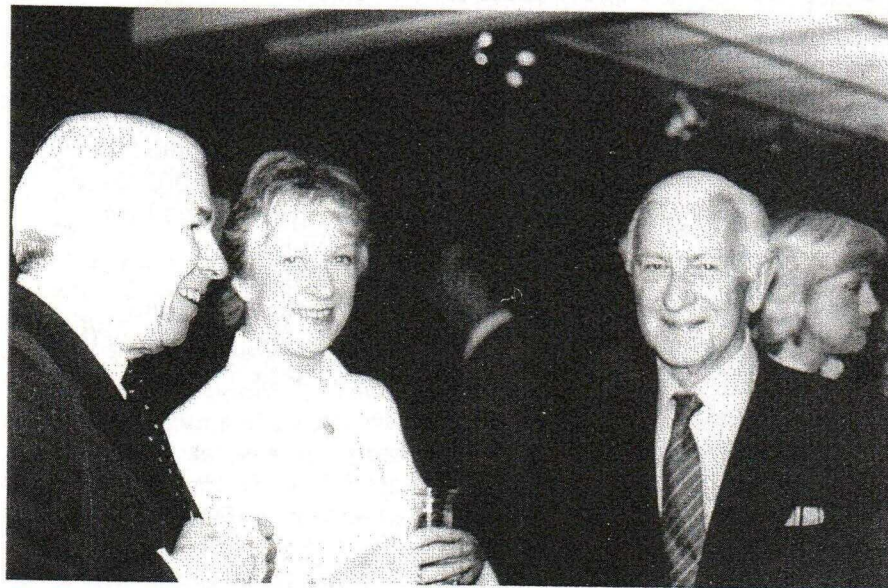
So many of our Annual Reports have chronicled our efforts to have 132/188 Brompton Road (even nos.), 1/11 Montpelier Street (odd nos.) and 1/57 Cheval Place (odd nos.) included in the adjoining Knightsbridge (RBKC) Conservation Area, since its exclusion has long been an anomaly. After resisting this for several years, the Planning Committee of Kensington and Chelsea Council at last agreed to this under great pressure from many architectural and amenity bodies who have acted in concert with the Association. This satisfactory outcome of our long battle was somewhat marred as the Planning Committee immediately gave consent

to demolish some 20% of this new conservation group, being the buildings 150/152 Brompton Road and 21/25 Cheval Place. The Association is sad about the loss of these two houses opposite the entrance to Beauchamp Place. Representations from many learned bodies have failed to have any effect. Since more property is about to come on the market it is essential that strenuous efforts are made to protect the area up to and including Montpelier Street, as inclusion in the Conservation Area is not in itself a guarantee that permission will not be given to demolish attractive and interesting buildings which could well be incorporated in new development schemes.



Montpelier Street: property sales bring fears of redevelopment.

THE ARCH PARTY AT BONHAMS GALLERY



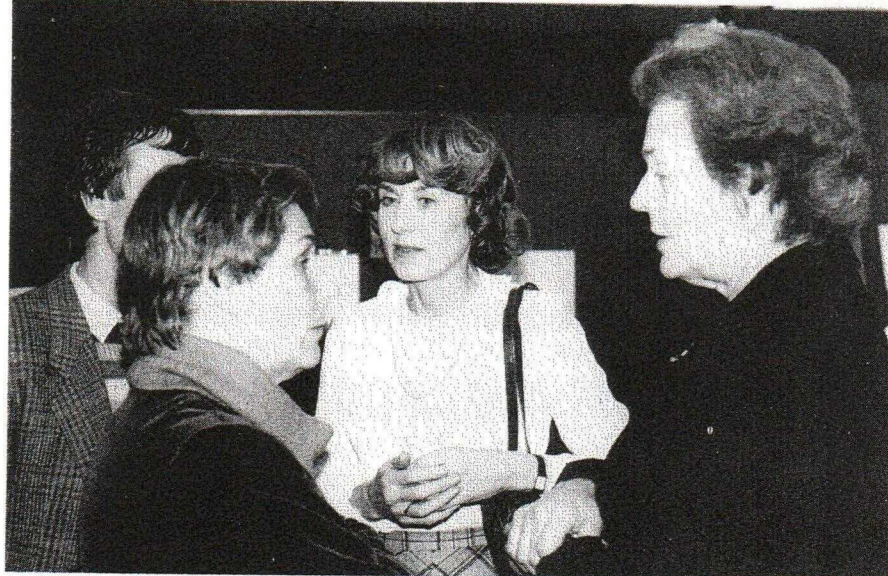
Mr & Mrs Alan Peek & Dr Riddell



Lt Col Sir Julian Paget & Miss Olivia Paget



Mr & Mrs Tony Margo



Dr Acheson talking to Mrs Elizabeth Hawkins



Richard Robinson, Raymond Burton, Megum Mirza



Mrs Athene Crosse, Mrs Billingham & Mrs Lorraine Toeg



Mrs Corry & Mme Reiner



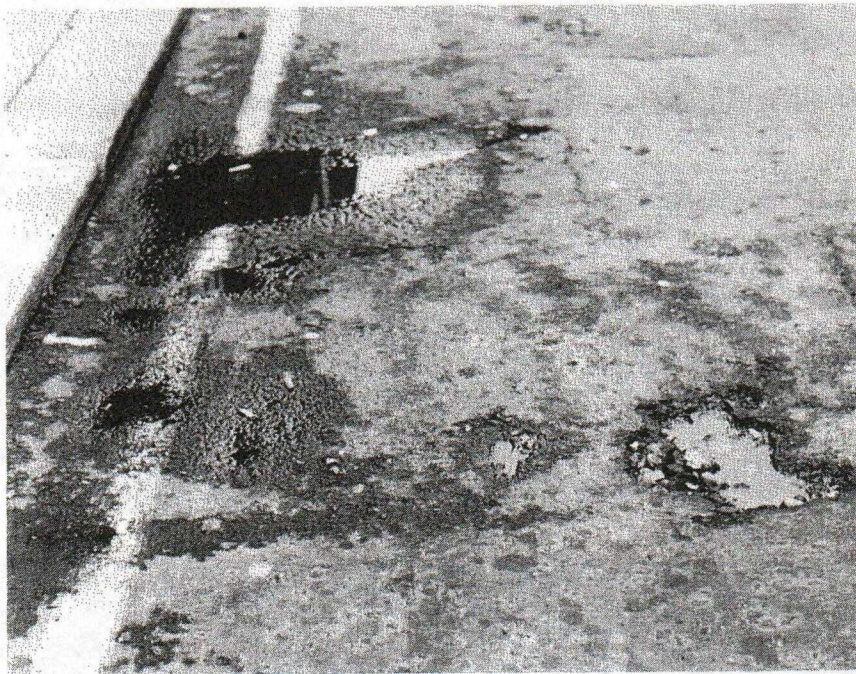
Mr & Mrs Tony Shead



Don Munson & Charles Gray



Damaged pavement in Kensington and Chelsea Council area (above) and broken road surface in Westminster City Council area (below).



CONDITION OF THE HIGHWAYS

There has been much dissatisfaction of late with the condition of the highways and pavements and many members have asked whether the Association could raise the matter with the relevant Authorities.

In June our six Area Chairmen carried out a street by street, pavement by pavement, survey of the area from Scotch House to Queen's Gate, noting all the holes in the road, broken paving stones, missing street names, broken lamps etc., and in July details were forwarded to the City Engineer at Westminster, and where appropriate to his opposite number at Kensington and Chelsea Council. Westminster have collated all the information and are awaiting their own Inspector's Report. We are continuing to press for action. The Royal Borough have already replaced paving stones on stretches of the Brompton Road and Exhibition Road and have given us a timetable for other scheduled repairs.

We hope members will continue to report matters in their particular areas where they feel that the Association can bring pressure to bear because we rely upon this information from interested residents.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

The Traffic Committee under the chairmanship of Richard Davie has worked closely with the Local Authorities and the Police to try to solve some of the serious traffic and parking problems in Knightsbridge. After some 10 years' discussion and consideration of many different plans, the various Authorities concerned have now dropped plans to dissuade heavy vehicles from entering the area as they believe that they would be unable to enforce the ban. The

Committee regard this as a wholly unsatisfactory situation and will work towards a solution.

Westminster City Council and the GLC have now agreed to install traffic lights at the junction of Ennismore Gardens and Kensington Road, but there is no date yet announced for commencement of the work.

The Committee has supported a suggestion that Raphael Street be made one way, if local

residents agree, in order to solve parking problems. It has turned down a suggestion of one way traffic in Rutland Gate which it believes to be unnecessary and which would lead to a proliferation of street signs.

The introduction of the clamp seems to be generally popular with residents since it has freed residents' parking spaces for their proper use. There is general concern about the recent decision not to clamp diplomatic vehicles, which are some of the most frequent offenders in this area, and this problem is commented upon elsewhere in the Report.

Generally, the traffic flow through Knightsbridge is unsatisfactory and it is one of our prime aims to keep quiet residential squares

free from intrusion by traffic using them as short cuts and from illegal parking. The Committee has throughout enjoyed excellent co-operation from the Police and Traffic Wardens who have listened patiently to our submissions. We are grateful to them.

One of our long-term aims is to see that adequate parking facilities are provided for our great museums which would ease the burden of visitors' parking in this neighbourhood. With the opening of the new Ismaili Centre opposite the V & A the pressure will grow. For a long time the Association has been pressing for a car park to be built over South Kensington station with adequate provision to be made, too, for coaches to park off the streets.

LITTER AND GARBAGE

Street cleanliness in the area has improved considerably during the year due to the efforts of our Litter Committee led so ably and enthusiastically by Frances Rice. This is a demanding and thankless task which those concerned have performed with great credit to the advantage of the neighbourhood.

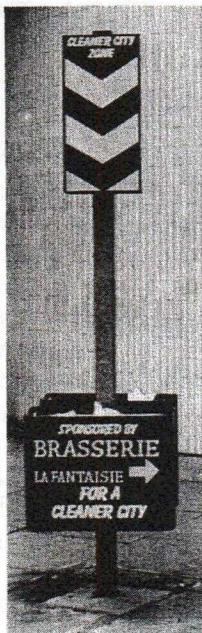
There are still some black spots and the Litter Committee has been concerned for some time with the state of Brompton Road and particularly about those areas which run through the borders of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea.

Conversations have been held with both Authorities and other interested parties and it is intended that a co-ordinated effort to conduct a major

clean up on the Brompton Road shall begin next Spring and plans are now being devised.

Several new bins have already appeared in places where they have been needed and more will follow in due course.

The Committee urges members to set an example in following the rules for litter collection and drawing their neighbours' attention to the proper days and times of garbage removal. Stickers with the appropriate information are available from Frances Rice or other members of the Litter Committee. She would also like to hear from anyone who would be prepared to help with this important work in their own neighbourhood.



LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The nature of the Association's work involves constant communication with the Local Authorities at member and officer level. The majority of our area lies within the borders of Westminster City Council which recognises the Knightsbridge Association as a consultative body on planning matters. Our Committees enjoy an excellent relationship of mutual respect with all departments of Westminster and we would express our thanks for the courtesies which we receive from officers of the Planning Department, the Cleansing Department, the Engineer's Department and many others. We would particularly like to

thank our two Councillors, Mr. Anthony Prendergast, C.B.E., one of the most experienced representatives in Local Government, and his colleague Mr. Arthur Johnston, for all the time that they have given to the Association's affairs during the year.

For some time the Association has laboured to improve our working relationship with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council. This has proved difficult but progress has been made. One of the problems is that Kensington and Chelsea's procedures are different from those at Westminster Council and far from receiving timely and individual

notification and plans of new applications, our members have to apply to the Town Hall in person to inspect them. It will be appreciated that this proves difficult for many members of Committees who are in most cases professional people who are working in normal office hours. Another difference is that the planning meetings at Kensington and Chelsea Council are held in camera so that decisions involving far reaching changes to the neighbourhood are made in secret. As believers in open Government we must hope that those who guide the destinies of the Royal Borough will in time come to believe that a change in procedures is justified.

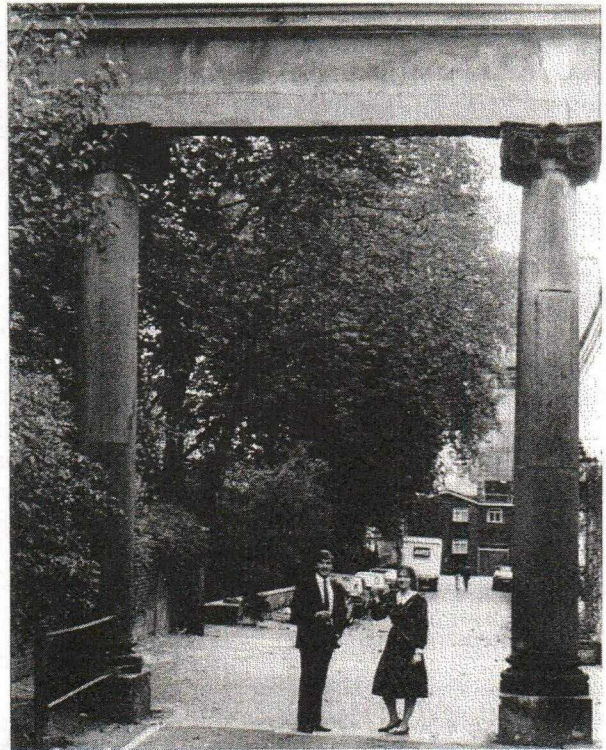
Our representations to the Planning Committee have been greatly helped by our Councillors, Mrs. Joan Fitzwilliams and Mr. Charles Pender, whose assistance in trying to preserve the 18th Century buildings on the Brompton Road was much appreciated.

We are happy to welcome the Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea to social occasions and we hope that many more such visits will take place in the future.

So many matters affecting Knightsbridge are today outside the scope of the Local Authorities and are dealt with by other bodies including Whitehall. In these circumstances we have, as always, enjoyed the help and support of our Member of Parliament, Mr. Peter Brooke. He has always been assiduous in attending to our affairs and spares the time, in a very busy schedule, to attend many of our functions. We would like to congratulate him on his recent appointment as a Minister of the Crown.

FINANCE

The Honorary Treasurers, Diana Jenkins and Elizabeth Manzoni have presided over the Association's finances and the balance is still satisfactory as the Financial Statement reveals. However, expenditure still exceeds our income and would do so much more seriously if it were not that so many Committee members bear a great deal of the administration expenses themselves. The modest membership fees can never adequately cover the amounts necessary to meet professional fees and long drawn out campaigns. The local community is quick to support efforts sponsored by the Association on behalf of others and it will soon be necessary for the Association to hold some fund raising event on its own behalf.



HERITAGE

John Wallis, to whom the Association owes so much for his work both as a previous Chairman of the Association and until recently as Chairman of the Environment Committee, has now turned his efforts to schemes to restore some of the pleasant embellishments of Knightsbridge. Recently he and Digby Digby-Seymour have joined with members of the Ennismore Gardens Garden Committee to organise the replacement of railings round the gardens missing since the War. The Association supports this and other imaginative projects of restoration and it is hoped to have an optimistic report on the situation in future reviews.

We should like to congratulate the Royal College of Art on cleaning their houses in Jay Mews so nicely and hope that their example may be copied elsewhere.

A major concern to residents has long been the state of the arch at the end of Ennismore Gardens Mews. Unfortunately this edifice straddles the border between Westminster City Council and Kensington and Chelsea, and as in many other border matters, suffers from the fact that it is not possible to find anyone to accept responsibility for its upkeep. Kensington and Chelsea informed us that they would be prepared to help if the Association could find some money from the area. Estimated expenditure was about £1,500. Accordingly the Association held a Wine Tasting at Bonhams in aid of the arch and it proved such a success with members that the Association will be able to donate at least £1,100 to the restoration.

KNIGHTSBRIDGE BARRACKS

Earlier this year the Chairman represented the Association at the dedication of a memorial in Hyde Park by Her Majesty the Queen Mother to the soldiers and their horses killed in the bomb outrage last year. At this sad occasion the Commanding Officer of the Household Cavalry asked again for his appreciation to be conveyed to the members of the Knightsbridge Association for their many expressions of sympathy and donations to the memorial funds.



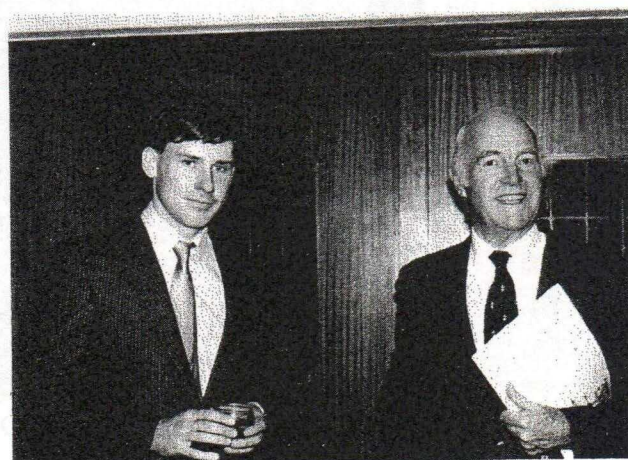
SOCIAL AND EVENTS

There is little to report on open meetings and social events this year, due mainly to the lack of volunteer help to organise them, a deficiency which it is hoped will soon be made up. Recently a most enjoyable party was held in support of the restoration of the arch at the entrance to Ennismore Gardens Mews, a local landmark. This took place in the oil painting gallery at Bonhams, by courtesy of Mr. Nicholas Bonham, and took the form of a wine tasting, together with other drinks. The wines for tasting were offered by David Sandeman, the pizzas were kindly supplied by Pizza on the Park, and many members contributed to the Home Produce Stall run by Nina Wallis. Two magnificent cases of wine were donated by the owners of the properties on either side of the arch and these were raffled on the night. Many donations were received from members, including a very generous gift from Imperial College.



The party was a great success and was attended by very large numbers of local residents. We are grateful to all those who helped in the organisation of the evening. Not only was this a popular event, but due to the generosity of members who attended, as well as those who were not able to attend, but who were generous enough to send a donation, over £1,100 was collected for the Restoration Fund. It is hoped that the Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea will accept the cheque at the A.G.M.

At the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 6th December there will be an address by Chief Inspector Donaldson on "Neighbourhood



AGM December 1982, top to bottom: Councillor Joan Fitzwilliams, Digby Digby-Seymour & a guest; Carol Mappin & John Woodfield; H K Goldstein, Councillor C A Prendergast & Neville Labovitch; P C Angus Angus & Richard Davie.

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PREMISES

Our last Report drew attention to the fact that the Association was losing its home due to redevelopment and that it was necessary to find a new Headquarters. It has not yet been possible to find a permanent office, but by the courtesy of Hobart Slater, Estate Agents, we have been granted an accommodation address in their offices at No. 3 Cheval Place, and we are most grateful to them for their generosity.

MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Committee now has a Chairman in the person of Digby Digby-Seymour who has begun to re-organise this important body. A new membership drive will begin shortly and members can help greatly by introducing new neighbours to the work of the Association. Literature and copies of the Report are available from the Membership Committee Chairman or the Membership Secretary.

APPRECIATIONS

Apart from those mentioned already in the Report, there are so many others who deserve the thanks and appreciation of all who live in Knightsbridge for the time and devotion that they put into supporting the work of the Association. Raymond Burton and Joyce Goodman have helped greatly with the production of this Report and Joanna Goodman took many of the photographs which illustrate it.

There is no way adequately to express the debt of gratitude to our incomparable and irreplaceable Honorary Secretary Carol Seymour-Newton who is responsible for the smooth working of the administration and for so many of the achievements of the Association in defence of the environment.

I am grateful, too, to the public spirited people who make up the general body of our members. It is only with such support that it is possible to maintain a body such as the Knightsbridge Association dedicated to maintaining the standards and the heritage of this unique corner of London.

Neville Labovitch
Chairman
December 1983.



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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.

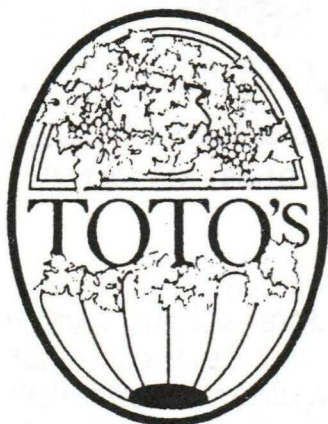
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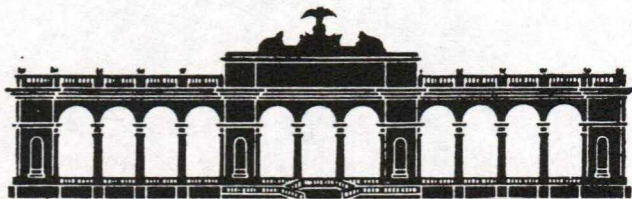


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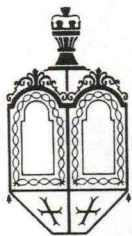


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