

THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER

June 2002

This is a brief note to bring members up-to-date on some of the main topics the Committees have been dealing with during the past few months.

1. **NEVILLE LABOVITCH 1927-2002** – It is with great regret that we record the death of Neville on 13th April. He was Chairman of the Association from 1977 to 1997 and President from 1997 until his death. He was instrumental in building the strength and influence of the Association. Warm tributes were paid to him in The Times, The Daily Telegraph and The Independent. A memorial celebration will take place in September, details to be announced in the Press.
2. **HARRODS HELIPAD** – On 17th March the Court of Appeal rejected Harrods bid to overturn the High Court judgement that planning permission would be necessary to allow the chairman to land by helicopter on the store roof. They can seek leave to appeal to the House of Lords.
3. **HARRODS GEORGIAN RESTAURANT** – Following a last minute change in the designated entrances to be used for the proposed Banqueting Suite, Harrods appeal against Kensington & Chelsea's refusal to grant permission for change of use has been deferred.
4. **THE DEPOSITORY, TREVOR SQUARE & 100 BROMPTON ROAD** - Work continues on the conversion of the Depository to luxury flats - completion September 2003 - and the rebuilding of the retail and office building in Brompton Road - completion June 2003.
5. **195/199 KNIGHTSBRIDGE** – Site excavation and foundation works continue. Considerable problems, not to say noise and vibration, have been caused, particularly to properties in the Trevors. Work had to cease at one point whilst additional precautions were taken to safeguard these listed buildings. The Building should be completed and the flats ready for occupation by the beginning of 2004.
6. **1 KNIGHTSBRIDGE GREEN** – Upgrading of this building is virtually complete. The Post Office has re-opened at new premises in Raphael Street; a Japanese restaurant has opened up where the Rib Shack used to be, and we understand that some of the office space has been taken and several retailers are interested in the shop units.
7. **72-74 BROMPTON ROAD/LANCELOT PLACE** – The Prudential have put the whole of this site on the market with planning permission for shops, offices and residential accommodation.
8. **NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM** – Phase One of the Darwin Centre opens to the public on 30th September. There was a presentation of preliminary proposals in April for Phase Two by the Danish architects who won the design competition to build a new home for the Museum's entomology and botany collections. The 'Spirit' Building, immediately to the south of Phase One, has already been demolished and will be landscaped as part of the site's development.
9. **SCIENCE MUSEUM** – Work is well under way on a new building on the Queen's Gate frontage, which will provide a home for the British Association for the Advancement of Science and also be used for meetings and seminars organised by the museum.
10. **V & A MUSEUM** – The museum is seeking the balance of the £150m it needs to enable it to go ahead with the Libeskind "Spiral" and to upgrade some of the exhibition area of the original building. The need to reduce the cost of the

"Spiral" has caused some rethinking of the proposals, including the removal of Aston Webb's screen for storage elsewhere. The Association and other bodies are strongly opposed to any such move, feeling this is no way to treat a Grade II listed building, which would disappear and be forgotten.

11. **IMPERIAL COLLEGE** – Building work has started on the Tanaka Business Management School in Exhibition Road. Plans for a new Administrative Headquarters in Dalby Court, within the South Kensington Campus were submitted in May. A temporary generator has been installed alongside Linstead Hall in Princes Gardens until additional permanent power comes on stream in September. It will operate between 0900 and 1800 hours on weekdays only. Measures have been taken to keep noise levels to a minimum. An application has also been lodged for temporary student and teaching accommodation on the tennis court site. This has been strongly opposed.
12. **ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART** – The design of the "Ellipse" extension to the east of the main building has been developed and will be submitted to the Westminster City Council in June. At a presentation to the Association and local residents in May a number of important details had not been resolved.
13. **ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY** – A start on the Exhibition Road pavilion and basement extension has been delayed due to subsoil problems. It is now expected that site work will commence later this year and the project completed in 2004.
14. **THE ROYAL PARKS** – A series of concerts will take place in Hyde Park in the summer. When we hope – following complaints last year – there will be better control of noise levels. Cycling in Kensington Gardens continues on a "trial" basis, and as was foreseen by everyone but the Royal Parks, has resulted in misuse by cyclists. The Association was amongst those who sponsored the avenue of 70 sweet chestnut trees along the south side of Rotten Row, to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The Serpentine Gallery has erected a temporary metal and glass pavilion for the summer and a display of fibreglass cows, which will be raising money for children's charities.
15. **HYDE PARK CORNER** – The English Heritage proposals for improving the open space at Hyde Park Corner are making good progress. In addition to upgrading the ceremonial route through the Wellington Arch, plans are in hand in the south west corner to erect a memorial to the Australians killed in two World Wars. It consists of an imaginative wall of light and water, which will help to protect the open space from the noise of traffic.
16. **KNIGHTSBRIDGE TUBE STATION** – The Hans Crescent entrance and concourse should be completed by the end of March 2003.
17. **THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE INITIATIVE** – A plaque bearing the names of the donors who contributed to Phase One of the improvements to Brompton Road (the raised pavement between 132 and 188 Brompton Road, is to be set into the pavement. We are now in contact with Transport for London – who have taken over responsibility for Brompton Road, about Phase Two which covers the section between nos. 106-130. Funds have been voted for the preparation of designs.

18. **TRAFFIC** – Westminster City Council, who have consistently opposed congestion charging, have been granted leave to seek a judicial review into the Mayor of London's scheme. The experimental traffic barrier scheme to stop the flow of heavy trucks and coaches and other traffic taking short cuts through the Trevors and Montpeliers has been installed. There have been considerable technical teething troubles and there is a good case to extend access to other residents in the neighbourhood. The scheme is being carefully monitored. Funding was provided by the Prudential in an agreement with the Council as one of the conditions for the approval of the redevelopment of their Knightsbridge site.
19. **STREETLIGHTING** – Complaints about the lack of adequate lighting in the Knightsbridge Ward of Westminster are at last beginning to be taken seriously. Under a provisional programme, lights which have been missing for several years are to be replaced before the end of October. In some areas the strength of lighting will be increased in time for the longer nights. Cleaning of lamps will also be instigated.
20. **LAW & ORDER** – The Committee is currently reviewing the use of Complementary Neighbourhood Policing, and in particular, the possibility / practicality of its introduction in Knightsbridge. We continue to support Neighbourhood Watch and would welcome further Local Organisers and Members.
21. **EVENTS** – Over 90 members and their guests attended our Golden Jubilee Dinner at the House of Lords, hosted by our patron, Lord Marshall of Knightsbridge. Two further events are planned for the autumn, a tour and lunch at the Royal Opera House (details enclosed) and a dinner in November at the Guildhall, by special arrangement with our Chairman who currently holds the post of Chief Commoner.
22. **SUBSCRIPTIONS** – Please make sure that you have renewed your subscription and that your Banker's Order is up-to-date:
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| Single: | £10 |
| Couples/families | £15 |
| Corporate | £40 |
- Life Membership single £100 double £150
- If you are a Life Member, please make sure to cancel your Banker's Order.*
23. **HISTORY OF KNIGHTSBRIDGE** – We have managed to obtain some extra copies of *Knightsbridge*, published by the Survey of London. These are available to members at a discount of 20%. Please ring 020 7823 9103.
24. **NEW MEMBERS** - Your help would be very much appreciated in introducing new members. Please give details to Carol Seymour-Newton on 020 7823 9103.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION
will take place on Monday 9th December 2002 at 6 pm
in the Concert Hall of the Royal College of Music, Prince Consort Road.