

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY
REPORT

1990



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THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

*founded by Reginald Blunt in 1927
to protect and foster the amenities of Chelsea*

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THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

15 Tryon House,

Mallord Street,

London SW3 6AJ.

Registered Charity 276264

The Annual General Meeting

of the Chelsea Society

was held at St. Luke's Church Hall,

St. Luke's Street, Chelsea, SW3

on Thursday, 29th. November 1990

The Lord Gibson, M.A., Hon.D.Litt., President of the Society, took the Chair at 6.30 pm.

Apologies for absence were received from Miss J. Baker-Wilbraham, Mr. J. Barrow, Mr. I. Currot, Miss P. Egerton, Miss S. Fergus, Mr. & Mrs. B. Knight, Mrs. L. Lewis, Miss A. Massingberd-Mundy, The Marquess & Marchioness of Normanby, Mr. & Mrs. A. Post, Mrs. E. Pulford, Col. & Mrs. R. Rubens, Mr. R. Ryall, Miss D. Vey, Miss Wilcox, Mrs. J. Wood and Sir Marcus Worsley.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 29th. November 1989 were approved and signed.

The proposed amendments to the Constitution of the Society already agreed by the Charity Commission, were approved by the meeting.

The President said he had pleasure in announcing that Dr. Eileen Harris, Messrs. Michael Bach, Denis Howard and David Sagar had been proposed and seconded to fill the four vacancies on the Council.

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Ian Frazer, then presented the Accounts for the year ending 31st. December, 1989, and he thanked the Hon. Auditor, Mr. James Macnair, for his very thorough audit.

Mrs. De Ballestero remarked that the cost of the Annual Report was roughly equal to the subscription income and Mrs. Corbet-Singleton wondered whether there was scope for reducing the printing costs. It was agreed that the Society's Report was an excellent publication. The Hon. Treasurer pointed out that income from advertising significantly reduced the net cost of the Report.

On the proposal of the Hon. Treasurer, these Accounts were adopted unanimously by the meeting.

Lord Gibson thanked the Hon. Treasurer for his excellent Report, adding that the Society was extremely fortunate to have Mr. Frazer, who was a senior partner in an international firm of accountants, as its Treasurer.

The Chairman's Report was given by Mr. David Le Lay.

Lord Gibson then invited any questions from the meeting.

With regard to the Cannon Cinema site, Andrew Hamilton said that relatively few objections had been received and he thought it would be helpful if members of the Society looked at the plans and model in the Information Office at Chelsea Town Hall and sent their comments to the Director of Planning as soon as possible.

Professor Sir Anthony Coates informed the meeting that a budget had been prepared for restoring the Embankment lighting which would be voted upon as soon as possible. He also said that the Borough did have some guidelines for the proposed Phase II of the Royal Brompton Hospital and these were virtually a 'Development Brief'.

With regard to environmental improvements to the area around the Earls Court one-way system, the Chairman explained that this referred to such things as the intermittent narrowing of the carriageway, improvements to street furniture and paving and the planting of street trees.

Regarding the future of the Chelsea Farmers Market, the Chairman said that it's site was owned by the Royal Brompton Hospital and the 'Market' was only a temporary use, but he understood that it had recently been granted a further two year licence. Although it was a facility that had become much appreciated by both Chelsea residents and visitors, the Chelsea Society's principal concern must be to ensure that, when Phase II of the hospital is eventually built, it is a well designed building that responds imaginatively to the constraints and opportunities of this important part of central Chelsea; certainly to a much greater extent than does the now completed Phase I building.

There being no other business, the President concluded the meeting by thanking the Chairman and the Hon. Secretary for all the work they did on behalf of the Society.

The numbers present were in the region of 100.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm.

Chairman's Report

Vice-Presidents

The office of Vice-President is conferred by the Society upon distinguished persons who enjoy positions of influence from which they may help us to protect and foster the amenities of Chelsea. For many years we have had two Vice-Presidents; the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the Rt. Hon. Nicholas Scott, M.B.E., Member of Parliament for Chelsea.

The Council recently invited the Earl Cadogan to become a new Vice-President of the Society and we are delighted that he has accepted this

invitation. In addition to the Earls Cadogan having been Lords of the Manor of Chelsea since the eighteenth century, the present Lord Cadogan was President of the Chelsea Society for 18 years, from 1944-1962, and he has, in innumerable ways, generously but quietly supported worthy and deserving causes within our community.

We are also delighted that another of our Vice-Presidents, the Mayor of the Royal Borough, is this year Jonathan Wheeler, who is not only a Chelsea resident and a member of the Society, but a member of the Council of the Society; not since the days of Basil Marsden-Smedley, 30 years ago, have there been such close links between the Society and the Borough Council.

We have noted, with gratitude, how Jonathan has made a particular point in honouring Chelsea's institutions during his year as Mayor. The Council of the Society was especially honoured in being invited to hold one of its meetings in the Civic Suite at the Town Hall and to be entertained afterwards in the Mayor's Parlour.

The Council

Under the rules of our Constitution, the three longest serving elected members of the Council now retire. These are Harriet Cullen, Denis Howard and David Sagar. We thank them for their loyal service on the Council and are delighted that Denis Howard and David Sagar were prepared to serve a further term and have been re-elected.

In addition, a co-opted member of the Council now also retires, and that is Arthur Grimwade. Arthur has served on the Council for 12 years, for five of which he was Vice-Chairman. Probably the most significant mark Arthur has made during his years of service was in initiating, in 1980, a series of winter lectures and then organising this event in succeeding years until 1986. The Chelsea Society's lectures have now become an important and well-established feature of our activities.

One of the Officers of the Council, Dr. Eileen Harris, our Planning Secretary, also recently retired. The work of the Planning Secretary is extremely time-consuming. It requires expertise and judgement and it is probably the most critical and significant function carried out by the Society. Eileen has admirably filled this role for no less than 12 years, for which we are all truly indebted to her. We are glad that Eileen will remain a member of the Council having been duly elected earlier this evening. We are fortunate that Andrew Hamilton, who is at present a member of our Planning Sub-Committee, has agreed to succeed Eileen Harris as Planning Secretary.

During the course of the year, the Council has completed its Inventory of the possessions of the Society; this work has been master-minded by David Sagar. The Inventory will be published in this year's Annual Report.

Upon the recommendation of our President, the Council has prepared proposals for amendments to the Constitution and whilst carrying these out the opportunity has been taken for tidying up various aspects of the Constitution which were either in error or no longer relevant.

Annual Report

The 1989 Annual Report of the Society was, as usual, informative, entertaining and a highly professional publication. Thanks for this are entirely and solely due to its Honorary Editor, Tom Pocock.

Membership

The current membership of the Society is 992, which is the highest it has been throughout the 63 years of our existence. This is an increase of 133 from last year and we are well on the way to achieving our target of over 1,000 members.

Activities

a. Winter Lectures

Our 11th season of winter lectures had as their theme Artistic and Bohemian Chelsea.

On 6th. February Ronald Anderson gave us a fascinating and amusing account of the relationship between two of Chelsea's most famous inhabitants entitled "Whistler and Wilde — a friendship and its end".

On 6th. March, Penelope Le Fanu Hughes, a professional lecturer in art history, and a member of the Society, gave us an illuminating talk on the subject "Augustus and Gwen John — painters of contrast".

Finally, on 3rd. April, Stuart Burge spoke on the "History of the Royal Court Theatre"; as a previous Artistic Director of the Royal Court, he was able to give us some personal insights into this important Chelsea institution.

All three lectures were held in the Lecture Room of the Chelsea Physic Garden, by kind permission of the Curator, Duncan Donald. They were extremely well attended, with about 100 or more people at each lecture.

b. Spring Meeting of Residents' Associations

This meeting took place on 22nd. March in the Hall of Remembrance, Flood Street. The Chairman of the Royal Borough's Town Planning Committee, Councillor Sir Anthony Coates, Bt. and the Director of Planning and Transportation, Miss C. M. Dent, answered questions from representatives of many of Chelsea's Residents' Associations. This meeting was also well attended and it was thought most useful by all concerned. We are glad that this annual meeting has now become a feature of the Society's activities.

c. Summer Meeting

This was held on 16th. July at Stanley House which forms part of the former College of St. Mark and St. John, which is now owned by King's College, London. Our use of Stanley House was made possible by the kind and generous permission of the then Principal of King's College, Dr. Stewart Sutherland. This was a particularly appropriate venue as the future of this important site is, once again, a cause for concern.

During the course of the evening Professor Norma Rinsler, a Vice-Principal of King's College, gave us a short talk in which she explained the reasons why the College finds it necessary to vacate this campus and to dispose of the site once they have obtained planning permission for its development. During my short introduction prior to Professor Rinsler's talk, I was able to use the opportunity to point out to everyone present what an ideal building Stanley House would make for the proposed Chelsea Museum and Arts Centre which this Society would like to see established. The historic associations of the building, its finely proportioned rooms, its magnificent Hamilton Room and the surrounding gardens, to which there is already public access, would all be more suitably used for such a local museum than the commercial office space which is proposed by King's College.

As in past years, a cold buffet supper was served and being a warm and balmy evening, this was generally enjoyed out of doors. We were joined by the Mayor and Mayoress throughout the evening and approximately 150 members attended.

d. Whistler Exhibition

During June, the Michael Parkin Gallery staged an art exhibition to mark the centenary of the publication of Whistler's famous book *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*. Michael Parkin generously agreed to hold a special private evening viewing of this fascinating exhibition for members of The Chelsea Society and this took place on 19th. June.

Western Environmental Improvement Route

At the end of last year the Department of Transport published Stage 2 of the West London Assessment Studies which put forward various alternative proposals for solving the traffic problems of West London, some of which included the Western Environmental Improvement Route, details of which had been previously revealed. The Secretary of State allowed only a very short period for public consultation on this document but he did promise to issue a decision as to his future action by the end of March.

It was a matter of considerable satisfaction to us that the views in respect of this document that were officially put forward by the Royal Borough coincided with our own and with those of practically all of the amenity groups who had an interest in these proposals. This view can be summed up by saying that we all supported greater investment in public transport but we considered that the proposals for new roads as detailed by the Department would attract substantial additional traffic to our area, most notably on Cheyne Walk and Chelsea Embankment. The efforts of both West London Traffic Reform whose Co-ordinator is Betty Wolf and the Cheyne Walk Trust under Thomas Saunders, its Secretary, were especially significant in achieving this united stance.

The fact that our Borough and all of the other boroughs that would have been affected by these proposals, expressed similar views to the

Secretary of State must have played a significant part in his deciding to announce on 27th. March in the House of Commons that he would not proceed with any of the plans for new road building in London, including the Western Environmental Improvement Route. This decision was greeted with a considerable sense of relief by all in Chelsea.

That however is not the end of the matter for we are still left with the wholly unacceptable living conditions suffered by residents in West Chelsea caused by the Earls Court one-way system. We also cannot lose sight of our ultimate aim of securing a reduction in traffic volumes on Chelsea Embankment.

Fortunately the Royal Borough wishes to make positive proposals for relief from the one-way system and has commissioned the Consultants who produced the West London Assessment Study to prepare a report on what could be done. We have had a meeting with the Consultants and as a result of our discussions with them, we have come to the following conclusions:—

- i. That traffic conditions in the Earls Court Road are unacceptable is beyond doubt, but to propose that this street should become a pedestrian precinct is we believe hopelessly over-ambitious.
- ii. With the exception of a possible new road providing a direct link from the Cromwell Road to the Earls Court Exhibition Centre, it is doubtful that any other new roads would be beneficial.
- iii. That the solution to the traffic problems of West London could be as simple as abandoning the Earls Court one-way system and introducing environmental improvements. In addition to its simplicity, such a solution could be cheaply and quickly implemented and therefore provide virtually immediate relief to the residents of West Chelsea.

We look forward to seeing the Consultants' Report which has just been received by the Royal Borough.

Additionally, in an attempt to reverse the downward spiral of blight and decay caused by the one-way system, the Chelsea Society has asked that the Royal Borough considers forming a new Conservation Area in West Chelsea which would comprise the majority of the former Gunter Estate. We have submitted an illustrated detailed report in support of this proposal and await the Borough's response.

Lastly, we have made representations to the Secretary of State for Transport to the effect that he should give a high priority to the construction of the proposed new Chelsea to Hackney underground line, urging him to include a new station in West Chelsea, near to the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, currently in course of construction, in addition to that proposed at Chelsea Town Hall. A final decision on this new underground line has yet to be made.

In respect of endeavouring to secure improvements to the Chelsea Riverside, Nigel Stenhouse, a member of our Council, has prepared a detailed report which highlights the need for much greater liaison between Wandsworth Borough Council and the Royal Borough Council regarding consideration of planning applications on each bank of the Thames. We

believe that a special Riverside Committee should be formed for this purpose comprising Councillors, Officers and representatives of amenity groups from both Boroughs.

This report also draws attention to the currently very poor state of Chelsea Embankment, the remedy of which lies wholly within the hands of our own Council. A particular concern is the embankment lighting; these fine antique lamps were systematically removed from their standards some 18 months ago. We assumed that this had been done in order to carry out a comprehensive programme of restoration and repair. However, there is still no sign of their reinstatement; it would be an act of gross vandalism if the Borough were not to restore these lanterns to their full former glory; they are a feature of Chelsea Embankment which is not just of local interest but of London-wide, if not national, importance.

The Street Scene

In my report to last year's Annual Meeting, I made a reference to the deplorable state of the design, maintenance and cleanliness of our pavements. During the course of the year we have concentrated our efforts on endeavouring to achieve significant and lasting improvements in the design of paving throughout the Royal Borough.

There was a time when the pavements of London were wholly paved in York stone flags with wide granite kerbs. This Society, like every other amenity Society, deplors the fact that in the 1950's and '60's practically all of this York stone was removed and replaced with rectangular concrete paving. Whilst being an infinitely inferior material to York stone, these concrete flags do at least match its scale, and the efficiency with which the York stone was removed meant that this new substitute became the universal paving material in place of its predecessor. However, successive Borough Engineers have thought that they could improve on this substitute and over the past 20 years or so a whole variety of paving materials and combinations of materials in differing designs have been tried out on our streets. The result is visual chaos, meaningless variety and a complete lack of any integrity or discipline.

A similar tale could be told in respect of street lighting and other street furniture since the systematic removal of the Victorian originals.

We have been urging that the only satisfactory solution to this unacceptable state of affairs is for the Royal Borough to produce and adopt a detailed 'Design Guide' on all elements of the Street Scene for which it is responsible. This Guide would be used throughout the Borough and it would, incidentally, have considerable benefits in terms of efficiency and economy as well as design.

Happily, the Royal Borough has acknowledged that the way in which it currently deals with this important aspect of its responsibilities leaves much to be desired and it has appointed an independent and expert Consultant to prepare a report with recommendations on all aspects of "The Street Scene". We have been fully consulted by this Consultant, as have the Kensington Society and it is obviously helpful to our case that there

is complete agreement between both Societies in this matter. We now await the Consultant's Report; we hope that we will be able to give it our support and that it may be adopted and implemented by the Council as their policy for this crucial aspect of our civic amenities.

Planning Applications

Some of the significant planning applications on which we have commented over the past year have been as follows:—

a. *52 King's Road*

This is the former College of St. Mark & St. John, where we held our Summer Meeting. Earlier this year, King's College submitted proposals for the complete re-development of this site. The proposal retained all of the listed buildings with substantial new buildings erected around them and parking underground. The total floor area of the resultant development would have been virtually four times that which currently exists on the site. Proposed uses for both existing and new buildings was either residential or, to a substantial extent, office use.

We strongly criticised these proposals on the grounds of gross over development, loss of existing open space, adverse affect upon the setting of the listed buildings, unsuitability of uses proposed for the Chapel, Octagon and Stanley House, the amount of office accommodation and the additional traffic which would be generated. These proposals were subsequently withdrawn by the College in order to submit amended proposals in due course. We have outlined to the Borough's Planning and Conservation Department our criteria against which the revised proposals should be assessed; broadly, these are, that there should be no encroachment on the existing open space, sympathetic uses should be found for the Listed Buildings and any new buildings should be residential and should be designed so as to preserve the present character of this historic site.

Members who attended our Summer Meeting will, I am sure, have been both surprised at the extent of the open space on this site and enchanted by its distinctive character, which is akin to that of the garden of a modest country house. For an open space with such a unique amenity value to have survived in Chelsea is remarkable and we would like to see the limited public access which has already been secured significantly enhanced as a condition of granting any planning consent for development.

b. *279 King's Road*

This is an application for the proposed redevelopment of the Cannon Cinema on the South West corner of Old Church Street. Members will recall that last year we opposed the redevelopment of a site on the South East corner of Old Church Street owned by the Church Commissioners. The application for the cinema site is a substantially more reprehensible one than that of the Church Commissioners. Our reasons for saying this are twofold; firstly, apart from the ground floor shops, which is a feature common to both schemes, the Church Commissioners' scheme was for

new residential accommodation whereas that on the cinema site is entirely for office space; and secondly, the King's Road building proposed by the Church Commissioners did attempt to be sympathetic to the traditional domestic character of the area, whereas that proposed on the cinema site is uncompromisingly Modern with virtually 75% of the King's Road elevation being glass with an architectural feature on the street corner which comprises colliding masonry and glass elements; but, probably worst of all, is the monumental scale of the elevations which is totally at variance with the domestic scale of this part of Chelsea.

Such a comparison between these two schemes is valid, for the sites are not only adjacent but are of similar size, they are both within a Conservation Area and neither contains any listed buildings. As the Borough's planning officers recommended that the Church Commissioners' scheme be refused, it is inconceivable that a different recommendation could be put forward in respect of the Cannon Cinema scheme.

c. *49 King's Road*

Earlier this year, an application was submitted for change of use of part of a new development at 77 King's Road from retail to restaurant use. This Society practically always automatically opposes any additional restaurant use within Chelsea; the fact that this application was for a McDonald's restaurant with its particularly unwelcome "takeaway" service meant that our opposition in this case was even more forceful than normal. That application was duly refused.

All of Chelsea was shocked recently to learn that McDonald's had succeeded in acquiring No. 49 King's Road on the west corner of Royal Avenue where, we are assured by the Borough Planning Department, the existing use of the building permits them to establish their particular type of restaurant without the need to apply for planning permission. It is difficult to imagine, a less suitable, or potentially more damaging, location for such a restaurant.

McDonald's will however need to apply for permission for any alterations to the exterior of the building and it is the view of this Society that as part of any consent for alterations, the Planning Department should seek to secure the proper restoration of the external fabric of this fine late Victorian building which some 20 years ago had its ground and first floors totally mutilated. Previously, it had been a famous public house called the White Hart.

d. *14 St. Leonard's Terrace*

The Society gave evidence at a Local Inquiry held into an appeal which sought permission for the erection of a lift tower on the side of this house which fronts on to Royal Avenue. The Society's case was that the proposal would be detrimental to the setting of the Royal Hospital which we considered was a building and landscape composition of national importance. Fortunately, the appeal was dismissed and it was gratifying that the reasons

given by the Inspector for his decision were precisely those which we had promoted at the Inquiry.

e. *Battersea Power Station*

We opposed an application to Wandsworth Borough Council for a commercial development adjacent to Battersea Power Station which in addition to, once again, being detrimental to the setting of the Royal Hospital, would generate an unacceptable increase in traffic congestion over much of Chelsea. This application was given outline planning permission by Wandsworth Borough Council even though their own officers failed to recommend such approval. Our request to the Secretary of State for the Environment that he "call in" this decision was unfortunately turned down.

f. *Chelsea College Site*

This is a site in Hortensia Road which was sold some time ago by Chelsea College to a private development company for redevelopment. Full planning permission was granted and work began on site. However, it soon became apparent that the building being erected was different from that for which Consent had been granted; it was significantly larger and it contained more accommodation at a higher density. A great deal of negotiation extending over a protracted period ensued but eventually the Royal Borough granted retrospective Consent for the building as built.

The Chelsea Society deplores this decision which seems to sanction the all too common practice of applicants getting permission for buildings or extensions which are roughly what they want but then executing what they really want, in the reasonably safe and certain knowledge that they will probably "get away with it". We realise that the Borough fears that it may have costs awarded against it if it behaves unreasonably in such instances, but surely, in an historic urban area such as Chelsea, it can never be unreasonable for a Local Authority to insist that any development is carried out only if it is in strict accordance with a previously granted planning permission.

g. *Royal Brompton Hospital — Phase 2*

With the advent of a new Director of Planning at the Royal Borough, we have repeated our previous request that a Development Brief be prepared in respect of this extremely important site, currently occupied by the Chelsea Farmers Market in Sydney Street. We had hoped that the new Director might take a different view from her predecessor, but in this we were disappointed. This means that when an application is eventually made by the Royal Brompton Hospital, there will be no pre-determined criteria against which it can be judged.

Farewells

As most of you probably know, Duncan Donald who has been Curator of the Chelsea Physic Garden for the past six years is leaving Chelsea to take up a new appointment in Scotland. During his time with us, Duncan has established very close links between the Physic Garden and the Chelsea Society, which have been to our mutual benefit. He has also endeared

himself to everyone in Chelsea and we shall be sorry to see him go, but we wish him every success in his new position.

On September 15th, Felix Hope-Nicholson died. He was one of The Chelsea Society's most loyal and devoted members. This year, for example, in spite of his lameness, he attended all three of our winter lectures and our summer meeting. Felix lived all his life in Tite Street in a house bought by his grandparents in 1892 only ten years after it had been built. The house and its contents were his pride and joy and they are a fascinating and exceptional example of a substantial London home, virtually unaltered since its construction and filled with the accumulated possessions of three generations of an artistic and well-to-do family. The house has been inherited by a nephew of Felix Hope-Nicholson and the Chelsea Society sincerely hopes that despite the punitive effects of inheritance taxation, this unique survival will be preserved intact, as Felix himself earnestly desired.

Chairman

I have now completed my first three-year term as Chairman of The Chelsea Society. I have very much enjoyed this honour, chiefly because of the tremendous support and kindness I have received from the Council of the Society and indeed from the whole membership. The Council have decided to offer me a further term as Chairman, which I have accepted.

Getting in touch with the Society

Subscriptions

Annual subscriptions fall due on 1st January, if you have not made arrangements to pay your subscription by Banker's Order, you should send your subscription (£5 per person, £7 for married couples) to the following address:—

Hon. Treasurer
The Chelsea Society
6 Edith Terrace
London SW10 0TQ

Life members are asked to consider making a donation to the Society.

Membership

Any corrections or amendments to members' names and addresses, or enquiries regarding joining the Society should be addressed to:—

Hon. Membership Secretary
The Chelsea Society
10/12 Elm Park Gardens
London SW10 9PE

Planning

Any queries or concerns regarding applications for Planning Permission should be sent to:—

Hon. Planning Secretary
The Chelsea Society
15 Jubilee Place
London SW3 3TD

Correspondence which does not fall within any of the above categories should be addressed to:—

Hon. Secretary
The Chelsea Society
15 Tryon House
Mallord Street
London SW3 6AJ

The spring meeting of Chelsea Residents' Associations

The second annual meeting of Chelsea Residents' Associations to be organised and chaired by the Chelsea Society took place on Thursday, 22nd. March in the Hall of Remembrance, Flood Street. Each Association was invited to send two representatives to the meeting and to submit written questions beforehand. To answer both written questions and those raised at the meeting were the Chairman of Town Planning Committee, Professor Sir Anthony Coates Bt., and the Director of Planning and Transport, Miss Mary Dent. All of the Borough's Ward Councillors were also invited to attend the meeting so as to take advantage of this opportunity for them to see what planning issues were of concern to their voters.

Paultons Square Residents' Association and the Cheyne Walk Trust asked questions about WEIR and the Borough's response to Stage 2 of the West London Assessment Study. Sir Anthony said that the Borough had consulted widely before making its response to the Department of Transport, they had concluded that as designed WEIR would have too great a capacity which would attract new traffic to Chelsea and it would therefore not give the relief that was sought. The Council were prepared to commission their own study as to how relief could be provided from the present intolerable living conditions in West Chelsea but no decision on this would be taken until the Secretary of State had decided whether or not to proceed with WEIR.

The Paultons Square Association also asked why their proposal that "sleeping policemen" be installed in their Square had twice been refused. Miss Dent said the Borough had recently received no fewer than 80 similar requests and for the moment they were not giving approval for any new schemes as there were many problems associated with them, they were expensive to install and motorists did not like them but, most significantly, they often diverted traffic on to other roads much to the annoyance of residents there. Recently, the Ministry of Transport had approved the use of a new "mini-hump" and the Borough were about to introduce three pilot schemes using these, after which a review would be made as to future policy.

The Ashburnham Community Association said traffic in Lots Road had increased by 40% since the opening of Chelsea Harbour, Miss Dent said a survey was being conducted of Chelsea Harbour traffic from both Chelsea and Fulham; a mini-roundabout at the Lots Road entrance was to be introduced but (in reply to a question from the Chelsea Creek Society) there were no plans for traffic lights at the junction of Lots Road with King's Road.

Several associations, including Wellington Square, Smith Street and Markham Street expressed concern at the recent application for a McDonald's Restaurant at 77 King's Road. Sir Anthony said that the Council shared the apprehensions of residents at this prospect and the

Correspondence

Sir,

We are researching a book about Sir William Nicholson, the painter, and would be glad to hear from anybody who may have, or know of, relevant material — paintings, letters, drawings, photographs or memories.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Nicholson,
25 Powis Terrace,
London, W11 1JJ.
(Fax 071-229 2414.)

A Mayor from Chelsea

The Mayor of the
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea,
Councillor Jonathan Wheeler
describes his busy year

I first became a member of the Council of the Chelsea Society in 1977 and this was one year before being elected to the Council of the Royal Borough as a Councillor for Cheyne Ward. To be nominated for Mayor in Kensington & Chelsea, one has to have served on the Borough Council for at least 10 years and to have been Chairman of at least one major committee. As I had already been Chairman of the Town Planning Committee (1981-1984) and of the Health and Housing Committee (1985-1987) qualifications seemed in order and in May, 1990, I was elected Mayor with my wife Daphne as Mayoress.

Amongst other appointments, the Mayor is a Vice-President of the Chelsea Society and I had great pleasure in attending and speaking at the Summer Meeting of the Society at Stanley House. The post of Deputy Mayor is not by election but by appointment of the Mayor and I chose Paul Warrick, a Councillor for Earls Court, who has lived in Hobury Street, Chelsea, for many years and he, and his wife Lorna as Deputy Mayoress, make up the Mayoral team with the Reverend Francis Anderson, the Vicar of St Saviour's, Chelsea, as the Mayor's Chaplain.

The Mayor is patron, or president, of many organisations throughout the Royal Borough and receives many invitations during his year of office. In the summer there are fetes, fairs and fund-raising charity events where Borough residents have contributed an enormous amount of time, energy and effort to raise money for various needs and it is a pleasure to be asked to attend these either to open the event, draw the raffle or simply to tour the stalls and talk to the stall-holders and organisers. The RNLI, League of Friends of Brompton Hospital, Time and Talents, RNIB Sunshine Fair and Friends of St. Mary Abbots Hospital have been some who have held fairs which we have visited.

From the commercial sector, the Kensington High Street Association and the Chelsea Rotary Club have invited the Mayor to evening events and the Mayoress was present for the opening of the new Marks & Spencer store in Kings Road, Chelsea when a generous donation was made to a Chelsea children's charity of the Mayor's choice (The Friends of Cheyne Centre for Children with Cerebral Palsy was chosen).

Gardening has for a long time been a special delight of mine and as Mayor and President of the Chelsea Gardens Guild, it was a privilege to have been able to present the awards at the annual summer garden party

views expressed in the many letters that had been received would be borne in mind when a decision was taken on this application.

Sydney Street and District Residents' Association asked why Planning Officers seemed to often recommend a particular application be approved even though it seemed to be contrary to the Borough Plan; they said that during the last six months this had happened several times in their area though, fortunately, the Planning Committee had not agreed with the recommendation. Miss Dent replied that Officers took enormous trouble to balance the guidelines in the Borough Plan with the need for development; Councillors and Officers often disagreed but this she considered to be appropriate and healthy — it was all part of the democracy of the planning system.

Dovehouse Street Residents' Association asked about changes of use from residential to hospital use with particular reference to the new Unitary Development Plan. Miss Dent said that the central plank of the UDP was that residential amenity should be enhanced, the Council is therefore generally opposed to any loss of residential accommodation and there were no dramatic changes contemplated in policy in respect of hospitals, certainly no increase in hospital use could be justified as Health Authorities were vacating existing sites.

There was a question about educational land use to the effect that, as the Borough was now itself an Education Authority could it not ensure that the former College of St. Mark and St. John remained in educational use. Sir Anthony said that the Borough currently has a high proportion of land in educational use and some loss of such land was therefore acceptable; in the case of the College of St. Mark and St. John, the Borough's policy was, in the absence of any viable educational use, to agree to conversion to residential which would be a beneficial change.

Old Chelsea and Gicbe Place residents' associations asked about the former Chelsea Rectory. The reply was that the Borough considered the future of this building and its garden to be a matter of great concern. The planning permission for extensions would be expiring quite soon and any new planning applications would be considered on their merits.

Councillor Wheeler said many residents suffered loss of amenity when extensions, or roof additions, given consent, were then built so that they were bigger or higher than had been approved; such alterations were usually considered by the Planning Department to be "de minimis" and were allowed; why was this so? Miss Dent replied that one factor was the fear of costs being awarded against the Council if they were taken to Appeal over a minor infringement, they do however "lean heavily" on such applicants and if they are people with whom the Borough deals regularly, they were not allowed to "get away with it" twice.

These are just some of the questions and answers that made up the proceedings. The meeting lasted precisely one and a half hours and all concerned agreed that it had been most useful and worthwhile. There was a brief period after the meeting for residents to question Councillors and Miss Dent in a more informal way.

and prize giving at the Physic Garden in July. I also presented prizes for the gardens competitions organised by the Kensington & Chelsea Residents Association and the Kensington Gardeners Club and visited some of the winning gardens of the Brighter Kensington & Chelsea Scheme. Presenting prizes and opening the Chelsea Arts Society Annual Exhibition at Chelsea Sports Centre.

The Royal Borough has granted Civic Honours to 31 Signals Regiment (Volunteers), London Irish Rifles 4th (V) Bn. Royal Irish Rangers and 10th (V) Bn. The Parachute Regiment and there have been events at the Duke of Yorks Headquarters in Kings Road, Chelsea and at the T.A.V.R. Centre in Hammersmith Road, where 31 Signals are based.

During the Mayoral year there are many opportunities to meet Mayors of the other London Boroughs. The London Mayors Association held a Civic Service at Westminster Abbey with a procession of London Mayors. After the Lord Mayors of London and the City of Westminster, the Mayors of the Royal Boroughs of Kensington & Chelsea and Kingston-on-Thames are next in precedence followed the London Boroughs in alphabetical order from Barking to Wandsworth.

At St Pauls Cathedral the London Fire Brigade held a memorial service in October to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Blitz on London. This included a procession of London Mayors and the Masters of City Livery Companies and was attended by the Princess of Wales. Also during October, there was a State Visit by the President of the Italian Republic and after being entertained at Buckingham Palace and the Guildhall, the President chose as the venue for his banquet in honour of the Queen, the Victoria and Albert Museum in the Royal Borough.

In Chelsea, Founders Day at the Royal Hospital in June marks one of the earlier Mayoral engagements and the Chelsea Flower Show the following May one of the final events. Harvest Festival in the Royal Hospital Chapel followed by an inspection of some of the Long Wards and lunch with the Governor made a memorable day.

As far as Borough Council matters are concerned, the Mayor has an apolitical year and although ex-officio a member of all Committees, in practice attends no meetings except the meetings of the full Council held once every 6 weeks or so. Here the Mayor does not take part in the debates, but chairs the Council meetings and attempts to keep order — rather like the Speaker of the House of Commons. The present Council of 54 members has 39 in the majority (Conservative) party and 15 in the minority (Labour) party and a good opposition will always ensure lively and provocative debates.

When I was first elected Mayor, a former Mayor, David Collenette (a Council Member of Chelsea Society), said to me, "Always make sure you are enjoying yourself then everyone else will enjoy the occasion and enjoy your being there".

The Chelsea Society Archive

An Inventory of Items Owned by the Chelsea Society

During 1989-90, the Council has compiled a list of items which had been acquired by or donated to the Society over many years. A description of them and their present location is below. The names and years stated in brackets refer to the donors and the Society's Annual Reports in which the items are described. Most held at the Chelsea Library are not on public display but are kept in special rooms. Any member wishing to inspect any item should apply to the Chairman of the Society who will make the necessary arrangements with the Chief Librarian.

Items held at the Chelsea Library:

- 1) Four large drawings (19¼" x 14½") of Chelsea by W. Greaves (George Cross; 1950, 1953, 1974);
- 2) One small drawing (8½" x 14½") (The Old Archways-Allidin's Coal Wharf) by W. Greaves (George Cross; 1974);
- 3) Portrait of Sir Hans Sloane, possibly by Thos Murray (George Cross; 1950, 1974);
- 4) Portrait of Reginald Blunt by W. Greaves (purchased by the Society; 1987);
- 5) Collection of old books on Chelsea (H. Murray Leveson; 1950);
- 6) Five albums containing many articles, newscuttings and photos of Chelsea (Ronald Ryall; 1985);
- 7) Three albums of cuttings about Chelsea (Reginald Blunt);
- 8) Three other albums on Chelsea;
- 9) Boxes of old photographs on Chelsea and Carlyle, sundry letters and papers;
- 10) Catalogue of the Society's Porcelain and Watercolour Exhibition of 1927; old guide books, the Society's Summer Meetings' programmes from the 1930s;
- 11) Two visitor's books, June-July, 1951, presumably from the National Trust house, 3 Cheyne Walk;
- 12) Old copies of the Chelsea Society's Annual Reports (N. Blakiston);
- 13) Two radio tapes "Down Your Way" by Leslie Lewis (Interview on the BBC with local residents 1982-84);
- 14) Minute books of the Society's Council Meetings and similar material;
- 15) Set of *The Times of Chelsea*;

- 16) Extensive material on planning items in Chelsea;
- 17) Files on the following subjects of historic interest:—
- Correspondence of Reginald Blunt, c. 1932-42.
 - Chelsea Society's Diamond Jubilee Charity Auction for Physic Garden, 1987. Box file containing catalogues, circulars, correspondence.
 - Sale of letters concerning Elizabeth Montague (Queen of the Blues, 18th cent.) in aid of Blunt Fund in Public Library, 1982. Sale of letter from Virginia Woolf.
 - Miscellaneous correspondence.
 - Correspondence, 1918, Marquis de Ruvoigny. Evidently from Reginald Blunt's papers but relevance unknown.
 - Plan for Chelsea, 1934.
 - Correspondence about Chairmanship, 1981.
 - The Portrait of Sir Hans Sloane.
 - Chelsea Old Church — siting of monuments.
 - Local Government in Greater London — Evidence, 1958-62.
 - Material for Reports, 1977-80.
 - Festival of Britain, 1950 . . . correspondence.
 - Chairman's correspondence, 1975-80.
 - Grinling Gibbons statue for Chelsea.
 - Society's Golden Jubilee Summer Meeting.
 - Greater London Development Plan — correspondence.
 - The Jervoise Memorial.
 - Chronological list of battle honours.
 - Papers on Danvers House.

At Chelsea Old Church:

Drawing of Stanley Memorial in Chelsea Old Church, by Buckler, 1836, (W. A. Martin; 1954).

Whereabouts Unknown:

Silhouette of Viscountess Cremorne: 1740-1825, (Mrs W. F. Pease; 1951).
 Drawing of proposed rebuilding of the environs of Old Chelsea Church by A. S. G. Butler (A. R. A. Hobson; 1951).
 Fragment of the Chelsea porcelain (given by John Pennington, found in his garden at 14 Lawrence St., site of Chelsea Factory; 1948-49).

Evenings at the Carlyles'

Walking down Cheyne Row on one of several summer evenings, a glance through a ground floor window of one old house would have shown a scene pleasantly evocative of its past. Lit by the mellow light of Victorian lamps, people stood talking in a room that had not changed its looks for a century. Later they would be entertaining each other in the drawing-room upstairs by reading aloud, or they would be listening to the sort of music that sounds right in such a setting.

This would have been one of the events that are bringing new life to 24 Cheyne Row, the house where Thomas and Jane Carlyle lived and entertained their friends. Since the new curator, Geraldine Elwes, came to live there two years ago, she has arranged several such gatherings when up to thirty guests have enjoyed such gentle entertainment. There have been readings from Carlyle's *French Revolution* to mark its bicentenary and readings from his, or her, writings about Chelsea and the house itself, and the singing of Victorian madrigals by a group of professional singers.

"There is a real place for this sort of entertainment", Mrs. Elwes believes, "And this house is ideal for it." Those taking part pay a modest charge to cover wine and a little food at a reception beforehand and numbers must obviously be limited by the capacity of the rooms. Next year she has more such occasions in mind, including, perhaps, an evening of Victorian verse and song.

Before coming to Carlyle's house, she had studied his works at the London Library and found an affinity with him that visitors to the house — nearly four thousand each year — find infectious. There is an intimacy about the rooms, which would not survive vast numbers trooping through; so the emphasis is on the quality of the visitors' interest and there are strong links with the Carlyle Society.

"They like to find the house as it was", she explains, "They can sit on Carlyle's chairs, not just look at them behind ropes. The house can look a bit dingy because it was. All that brown varnish is brown varnish on cheap lining paper, not wood — because that it how it was.

"It is still the Carlyles' house. I really do get a sense of his presence and when I am closing the shutters of the drawing-room windows at night, I almost feel that he is in the room, sitting in his chair. I am constantly aware of living in somebody else's house."

(See illustration page 40.)

Carlyle's House, 24 Cheyne Row, Chelsea SW3 5HL (tel 071-352 7087) is open from April until the end of October; Wednesday to Sunday and Bank Holidays; 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Entrance, £2; National Trust members, free.

A Swede in Georgian Chelsea

by Arthur Grimwade

While hanging up my coat in the Society of Antiquaries at Burlington House recently, my eye wandered across to a large bookcase opposite the rack, where a fat red volume caught my eye entitled *Kalm's Visit to England, 1748*, translated by Joseph Lucas in 1892. Getting it out, I turned eagerly to the index to find to my delight two references to Chelsea: "Botanic garden at" and "Chelsea, description of". By a curious chance, browsing a few days later in my favourite Chelsea bookshop I found and acquired a copy of Dawtrey DREWITT'S *The Romance of the Apothecaries Garden at Chelsea*, 1922, to learn that this author, too, had written of the Scandinavian visitor, obviously using Lucas's volume. But since few of our Society today may know of this quite rare book, it seemed to me that, 240 years after the events there recorded, we might well re-enjoy the stranger's experiences.

Pehr (*argilicé* Peter) Kalm was born in 1716 and became a student at Uppsala under the famous botanist Linnæus. He travelled in his own country in 1740, Russia and the Ukraine in 1744 and soon after was elected a member of the Swedish Academy of Sciences. In 1747, he was granted royal permission to travel on behalf of the Academy, eventually reaching London in February, 1748.

Let us now turn to his own account of his journeys. After some time in Essex and Hertfordshire studying agriculture, horsemanship and domestic life in general and making many fascinating observations, he returned to London in that April, where he began sightseeing, recording interesting comments of such obvious tourist attractions as Westminster Abbey and the Coronation Chair which he described as "an old chair, very badly made . . . many a poor old woman with only one room has a better and more handsomely made chair than this". On that busy day he covered the Houses of Parliament, St. James's Park and Palace and "Chelsea *Hortum Botanicum*, which is one of the principal ones in Europe. Here we found the learned Mr. Miller, who is *Horii Præfectus* of the same."

On May 11th., he wrote "In the morning we walked out to see the places which lay on the S.W. side of Chelsea, over the bridge at Fulham. . . . At all places between Chelsea and Fulham . . . and round about Chelsea we saw little else than mere gardens, and especially vegetable market-gardens." He liked Fulham: "In appearance it is a pretty town with several smooth streets. All the houses are of brick, very beautifully

built, some of which belong to gentlemen and 'Lordships' in London . . . round about the country is full of gardens, orchards and market-gardens, both for pleasure and use, and it can indeed be said that the country here is everywhere nothing but a garden and pleasure."

Returning to the Physic Garden the next day he describes the stoves in the Orangeries as "all arranged in the way which Mr. Miller describes in his *Gardeners' Dictionary*, viz: that the smoke comes to pass through several bends backwards and forwards in one of the long walls. In the largest orangery the smoke makes six bends before it escapes" with further remarks by Miller on the advantage of coal over peat or wood as fuel to avoid smell passing into the orange houses. The next day, after seeing the King go to Parliament to close the session, he had an evening out. "I visited Ranelagh House, which is a little out of Chelsea on the London side [scarcely one would think today] where the youth of both sexes and the elder people go to divert themselves. Ranelagh House is reckoned one of the largest halls in Europe. It is built nearly round, and has only a pillar in the middle. Here in the summer there is Instrumental and Vocal Music almost every evening and now and then in the mornings. Those who wish to go in there must pay a shilling. Round about the house is a large garden with many *allées* planted with high hedges on both sides. . . . Men and women find nothing else to do here but to walk about in this large hall and listen to the music, or to sit and *faire bonne chère* in the small rooms or divert themselves in the gardens".

The next day he paints a charming picture of the Chelsea of his day. "Chelsea is a little suburb, or village, situated a couple of miles from London towards the west. The place resembles a town, has a church, beautiful streets, well-built and handsome houses all of brick, three or four stories high. I cannot understand what some of those who dwell here live upon. Some have small haberdashers' shops, but that is not saying much. Publicans, innkeepers, coffee-house keepers, brewers, bakers, butchers and such like, can here make a good living; because a multitude of people from London in fine weather in the summer come out here to enjoy themselves, when such people [i.e. the tradesmen] well know how to charge for what they sell. The principal livelihood of the others seems to be from houses and rooms, which they let to gentlemen, who in summer now and again come out from London to stay and take the fresh air. Rooms are here considerably dearer than in London itself, which is said to be due to this, that they have heavy taxes, and that they get no one in the winter to lodge there, wherefore they are obliged in the summertime to take for both at once to compensate for the loss. Several houses belong to gentlemen who live and reside in London, and only now and then journey out to Chelsea; but, in short, a third of the houses are said to belong to Sir Hans Sloane, who bought them many years ago and now lets them to different people."

A few days later he "accompanied Mr. Miller to Sir Hans Sloane to pay my respects to him. He lay in bed and looked a picture of old age, and was reported to be now in his 94th. year. . . . He had many years before given up all his public engagements . . . to live at rest and peace at Chelsea

on his estate. He was now rather deaf. . . . On the tongue he had a swelling so that he spoke indistinctly and very slowly. Sometimes a long time passed by before he got out a word." He continued, "One and all looked upon this man with a particular respect, because he was the oldest of all the learned men now living in Europe." Kalm went on to describe the tomb in the churchyard Sloane had erected to his wife and he paid two visits to the Sloane collection of natural history and library and gives lengthy accounts of items and the library, due, of course, to become the foundation of the British Museum.

He went again to the Physic Garden on June 16th., when he commented specially on the four Cedars of Lebanon "which stand out in the garden and are now as large and high as our largest forest firs, although they were not planted there before the year 1683, and stand there in very meagre earth." We learn that the famous statue of Sloane then stood in one of the rooms of the Orange House "in which the plants are set in the winter time, which can not bear exposure in the open air, but still do not require any heat." By 1809, Faulkner in his *History of Chelsea* states that the statue "now stands in the middle of the garden", as it did until lately moved to the British Museum, and Drewitt in his book previously mentioned says it was in fact moved to the garden the very year Kalm saw it under cover. One cannot help feeling some regret that it had not remained indoors, however obvious a centrepiece to the grounds it and its replica have been for so long, or we might still have the pleasure of the original in Chelsea.

Kalm was obviously most impressed by the personality and work of Philip Miller and devotes several pages of his first volume to a portrait of him. "He is, and no mistake, a great horticulturist . . . no nurseryman has so much advantaged himself in learning both the *theorie* and *practique* of his business. . . . If any of the Lords and the great *Herrar* in England wished to lay out a new garden, or to remake an old one, Mr. Miller would always show them how it ought to be done. When the greatest lords drove out to their estates, he often drove out with them in the same carriage."

So Kalm's time passed in Chelsea. He eventually left London on June 30th. that year, boating down to Gravesend, round which he made extensive agricultural observations, until he finally left England for America in August. He married there and returned to London in 1751 for little more than a month, and thus back to Sweden to write his travels, three volumes of which were published from 1753 to 1761, but he died in 1779 before completing them.

A boat at Cadogan Pier

MARTIN SUMMERS re-introduces his to Chelsea Reach

Way back in 1910, Malcolm Campbell, then aged 25, went to see a play by the Belgian playwright Maurice Maeterlinck. It was on at the Haymarket Theatre and was called *The Blue Bird*. Something about the play captured his imagination and he decided that night to repaint his Darracq racing car blue, and to rename it *Blue Bird*. The following morning he drove the car to Brooklands and proceeded to win two races during the day. From then on, all his racing and record-breaking cars, his boats, both pleasure and racing, and his planes were to be called *Blue Bird*. That name, symbolising the elusive bird of happiness has now become part of the English language.

Malcolm Campbell went on to become a successful racing driver and also broke the land speed record many times with his enormous car *Blue Bird*. Notably, 1931 was a spectacular year for him. In February, on Daytona Beach, he achieved a record breaking 241.06 m.p.h. Later that month he was to receive the honour of a knighthood and in May he commissioned the firm of Thornycrofts to build him a 52' cabin cruiser. On July 31st., 1931, an incredible 55 days later, *Blue Bird II* was launched at Hampton Wick by his wife Dolly.

Fifty-five years later I found *Blue Bird II*, virtually derelict, in the Camargue and brought her back to rebuild and relaunch her as *Bluebird of Chelsea*. I discovered that she was one of the Dunkirk Little Ships and had enjoyed a fascinating history. So many interesting stories, anecdotes, photographs, etc., began to emerge that I have written a book called *Bluebird: A Dream of a Boat* which was published by Collectors' Books in October, 1990.

I never had any intention of buying a boat until one day in 1984 I was walking along the Embankment by Cadogan Pier, with my small daughter Tara. Gazing at the boats moored at the pier, by the incomparable Albert Bridge, Tara suddenly asked, "Daddy, why don't we have a boat?". I had no good answer, and this ingenious question provoked a chain of events, which has resulted in *Bluebird of Chelsea* now being moored at one of her original moorings, not more than a few hundred yards from my house.

Knowing precious little about boats, I suggested to my friend Scott Beadle, who knows everything about boats, that it would be fun to find an old boat to keep on the river. The timing was fortuitous as that particular

A quiet place in the sun

by Sue Arnold

week was the only week that *Blue Bird* was advertised for sale. Scott spotted the advertisement and the hunt was on. We flew down to the Camargue where she was lying, only to be bitterly disappointed by the condition she was in. No one had been on board for months and she was rotting.

Eventually I negotiated a sensible price. We dispatched an experienced delivery skipper who with a bit of faith, hope and charity, brought her back through the canals of France and we then put her into the capable hands of H. & T. Marine in Poole for a rebuild. Every detail of her restoration was carefully monitored and a year later on April 21st, 1986, we relaunched her as *Bluebird of Chelsea*.

Since that date we have covered over 7,000 nautical miles and have been more than once through the canals of France and Holland, and have been as far afield as the Western Isles of Scotland. She has the ideal combination of being able to face the open sea and equally to cruise serenely up rivers and canals. In 1989, *Bluebird* was awarded the Thames Heritage Cup for the best restored boat on the river.

Not many weeks go by when *Bluebird* is not to be seen gliding slowly past the Houses of Parliament on her way to Greenwich or up the river to Richmond. She is indeed a dream of a boat.

New at the Library

The annual list of additions to Chelsea Library.

- A collection of four pamphlets on various aspects of the history of
Whitelands College:
- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| COLE, Malcolm | Whitelands College: May Queen festival, 1981 |
| COLE, Malcolm | Whitelands College: the history, 1982 |
| COLE, Malcolm | Whitelands College: the chapel, 1981 |
| HENSTRIDGE, Helen | Whitelands College archive catalogue, 1979 |
| LE ROUGETEL, Hazel | <i>The Chelsea Gardener</i> : Philip Miller 1691-1771. Natural History Museum, 1990 |
| PETTERSON, Melvyn | Four etchings of Chelsea: Cheyne Walk; Battersea Bridge; Chelsea Wharf; Chelsea Old Church |
- These etchings were commissioned by Chelsea Rare Books and were completed in the summer of 1989.

It seemed like a good idea at the time — sun beating down on the King's Road, picturesque pavement café, one empty table outside. We would lunch *al fresco* as they do on the Via Veneto or the Rue de l'Amiral Roussins, such fun to watch the world go by behind a carafe of chilled white wine and perhaps a little *salade niçoise*.

The good thing about this particular stretch of pavement was its width. I squeezed past the row of starched tablecloths in Draycott Avenue the other day where the diners were balancing their side plates on parking meters and a driver backing into a space narrowly missed the wine waiter.

Funny thing is, I didn't notice the hole till after the waitress had brought the bread rolls. It was only when the pneumatic drill started that I realised there was a hole. The man using the pneumatic drill wasn't in the hole, he was making another one some 10 feet to the left of it.

The reason I hadn't noticed the first hole is that it was small and tidy — no great banks of earth piled up on one side and fragments of splintered paving on the other. A young man with a shovel was climbing out of it, followed soon after by a second man carrying a pickaxe. They leaned on their tools in time honoured fashion and watched the man with the pneumatic drill, who had by now dug a trench neither small nor tidy with a great deal of earth on one side and splintered paving on the other.

Assisted by two bare chested menials with spades, he worked quickly, watched with interest by the occupants of the pavement tables as we might a cabaret. Every now and then little lumps of concrete splattered our faces or plopped into our wine. Something brushed my left ear. It was the waitress's lips. She was shouting and to judge by the redness of her cheeks she had been shouting for some time. 'What?' I shouted back. 'TONNO CON FAGIOLI?' she shrieked over the noise of the drill, I shook my head, she disappeared.

It was at about this point that I became aware of the second trench. I know it wasn't there when we sat down, not the bit being dug some 15 feet to our right at any rate. It appeared to be the continuation of an existing trench round the corner and seemed to be heading for hole number one. If the first trench was also heading for the hole, we would be marooned. As if to confirm these suspicions, a man carrying a stack of red and white traffic cones arrived and began blocking off the pavement in front of us.

Everything seemed to happen at once. A yellow Gas Board van pulled up beside the small tidy hole, a white Electricity Board lorry reversed towards the right-hand trench, and a red van bearing the inscription L. Bratsby, Contractors, Ilford, Acton, Croydon and Walton-on-Thames, parked next to the left-hand trench, effectively turning King's Road into a single lane. Suddenly we had a full-scale traffic jam on our hands.

Double-deckers bound for Battersea Garage, Clapham Junction and Tooting were stacking fast behind the LEB lorry, on the back of which two very old men were unloading a roll of cable. Eee Yup, said one. Heave Ho, replied the other. Double-deckers bound for Dalston, Victoria and Liverpool Street were lined up behind the gas van, and a fire engine with siren blasting was trying to get through. Chilled white wine flavoured with exhaust fumes has a curious flavour.

The pedestrians using the pavement between the traffic cones and our tables were also log-jammed. The man placing cones had blocked off the pavement in such a way that people walking west from Sloane Square were being directed straight into the trench. A growing queue of shoppers were piling up behind the trench, the ones in front chattering excitedly as the people behind threatened to push them in.

A man wearing painter's overalls threw himself into the spare chair at our table, placed a tin of white emulsion next to the carafe and dialled a number on his mobile phone. The waitress reappeared silently and put a plate of pink and black spotted pasta in front of me. There seemed no point in arguing.

Apart from the noise in the street, there was now a cappuccino machine spluttering furiously. The painter had got through: 'Wendy? It's me,' Pause. 'Naaah, not much, just having a quiet bite like in this Eytalian caff . . .'

The man reading *Punch* at the next table rose purposefully. 'I'm damn well going to find out what's going on,' he said, pushed his way through the stranded pedestrians and addressed the gasmen. We couldn't hear the ensuing exchange; it involved much shrugging, gesticulating and dark glances at the van belonging to L. Bratsby of Ilford, Acton, Croydon and Walton-on-Thames.

The fire engine screamed past. The man from the next table returned and bellowed that the Bratsby lot were filling in cellars which had subsided but had burst a gas main and the LEB just happened to be a replacing a . . . The rest of his despatch was drowned by a crash as workmen dismantling scaffolding on a building opposite threw a load of poles into a truck.

'THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN VOTING CONSERVATIVE.' It was a loudspeaker on top of a Vauxhall Cavalier slowly cruising past. Good heavens. I'd forgotten it was polling day. We would finish our wine, go to the Town Hall and vote Green immediately. The Greens would solve everything — noise pollution, lead pollution, people before holes, *salades rigoises* (organic) before cables; and then my companion reminded me that there were no Green candidates in Chelsea so we might as well stay here and relax. Ee Yup, sang the old man with the cable.

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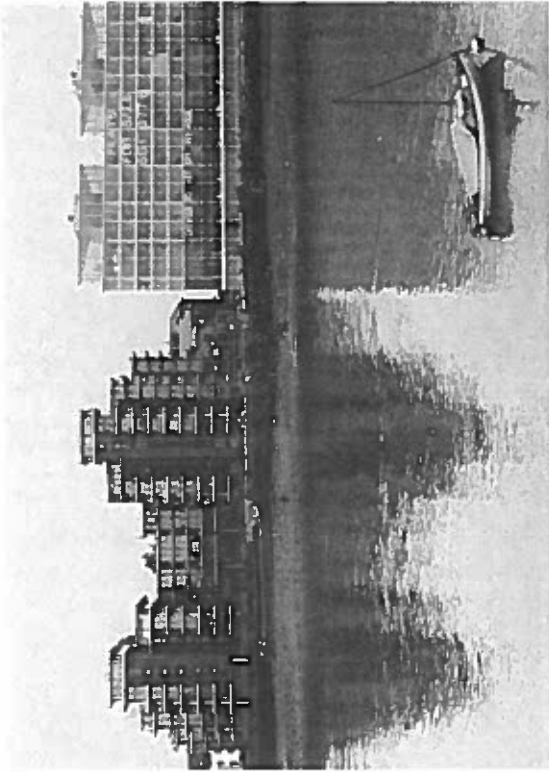
Summer Meeting, 1990. Arthur Grimwade, a former Vice-Chairman of the Chelsea Society, who has retired from the Council, talks to a fellow-member in the garden of Stanley House.



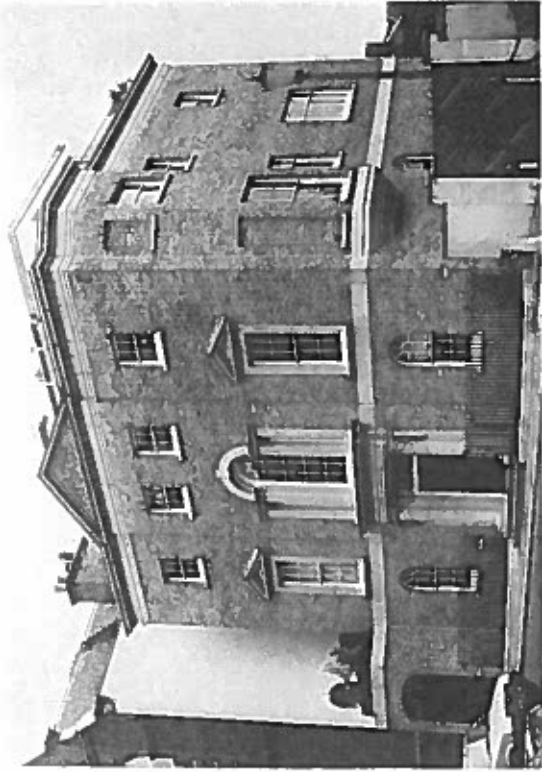
A Mayor from Chelsea: Councillor Jonathan Wheeler, Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in his robes and chain of office (see pages 21-22).



In the garden of Stanley House, where the Summer Meeting was held, members of the Society discussed the uncertain future of the late 17th century house.



New view: the Battersea waterfront seen from Cheyne Walk. Sir Norman Foster's Modernist block of offices and flats (right) is illuminated at night, destroying the "nocturne" lights on Whistler's Reach.



New view: the neo-Georgian house of the site of Whistler's White House, which Mrs. Margaret Thatcher has been considering as a new Chelsea home.



Fifty years on: the ruins of Chelsea Old Church after the bombing, sketched by Clifford Hall, the landscape and portrait painter (1904-73). The drawing has been purchased by the Chelsea Society.



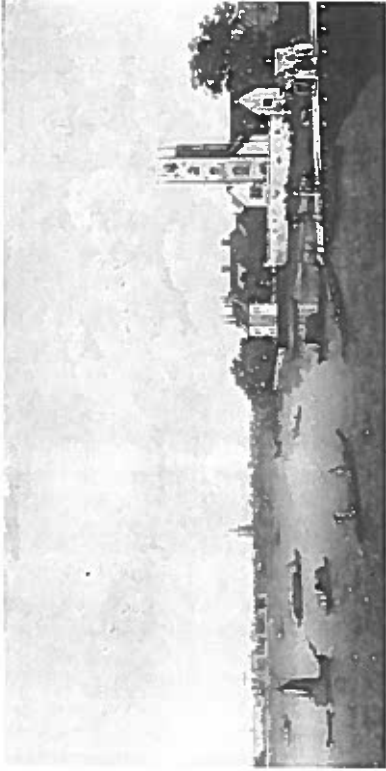
After the raid: the search for survivors in Edith Grove, 1941. One of a collection of Clifford Hall's drawings of the Blitz bought by Chelsea Library.



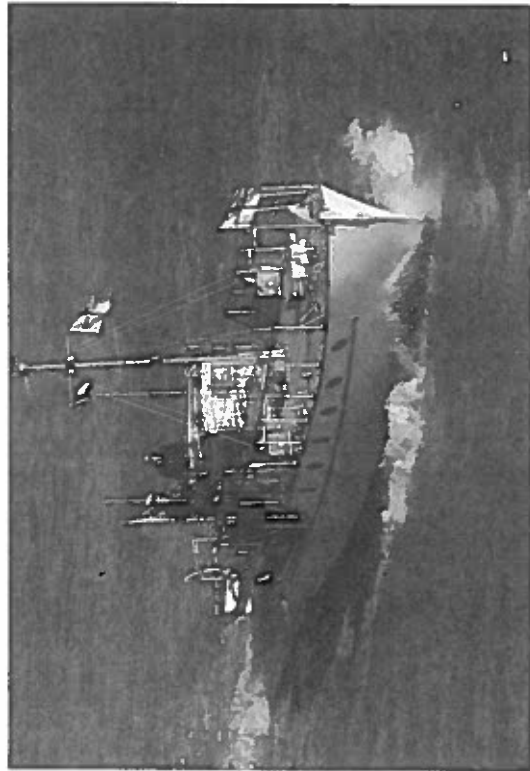
Chelsea in the Blitz. An unexploded bomb closes a street (left) and the scene in Shawfield Street sketched by Clifford Hall (right).



Chelsea 19th. April, 1941, drawn by Clifford Hall (See pages 43-47). Another of the Library's new acquisitions.



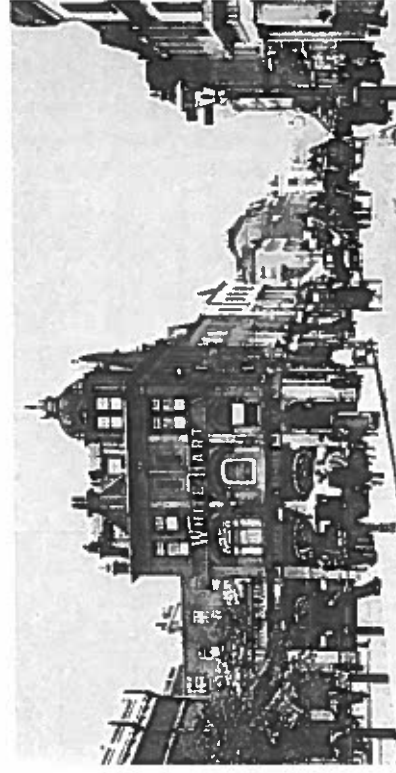
A reminder of the past: an early 18th. century painting of Battersea Reach, showing St. Mary's Church in the foreground and Chelsea Old Church in the distance, which was sold by Sotheby's in 1990.



Another reminder: Bluebird of Chelsea, Sir Malcolm Campbell's historic cruiser, returns to Chelsea Reach with Martin Summers at the wheel. (See pages 29-30).



Whistler's view of the river in 1870: the painter (alone; in top hat) drawn in Cheyne Walk, upstream of Cadogan Pier, by Walter and Henry Greaves (by courtesy of the Michael Parkin Gallery; see Book Review, pages 53-54).



The White Hart on the corner of the King's Road and Royal Avenue as it looked about 80 years ago. Hamburgers are about to be sold there by McDonald's (see Chairman's Report, page 15; photograph by courtesy of John Bignell).

Fifty years on: Chelsea and the war

Half a century after Chelsea underwent the ordeal of the Blitz, we look back at the two decades covering those cataclysmic years. . .

Before

by Tom Pocock

It was a sunny September afternoon in 1933 and I was leaning out of an upstairs window of a corner house in Oakley Crescent, which is now called Oakley Gardens. Across the street, at least half the houses were shabby, with old lace curtains, for Chelsea people were then far more of a social and economic mixture than they are now. Looking down through the leaves of the lime trees in our garden, I could see that there were no cars about, except our own, parked briefly outside the gate before being "put away" at Tankard and Smith's garage in the King's Road, where Waitrose now trades.

Perhaps the lavender-seller was standing in the road, like an Augustus John model in a long gipsy dress, a basket of lavender on her arm, singing "Buy my sweet lavender" in a fine contralto voice. Or the muffin man might have been striding by, ringing his bell, with a wooden tray of muffins and crumpets, covered with green baize, balanced on his head. Or the Walls ice cream man on his tricycle, ringing his bell and calling out "Walls ices — they're lovely!"

What I know for certain is that, as I looked from the window, I heard a distant drone, which grew louder until I saw, above the chimney-pots of Oakley Street a formation of silver aeroplanes. As an eight-year-old, I immediately recognised them as Hawker Hart biplane bombers of the Royal Air Force. Then another formation of small biplanes approached from the direction of Kensington and I recognised these as Hawker Fury fighters. As the two formations drew together, a red flare was fired from the cockpit of the leading fighter and the two squadrons veered apart. Later my father read a newspaper report to me announcing that in the annual exercise of the defences of London, approaching bombers had been successfully intercepted and driven off by defending fighters.



At home with the Carlyles: Mrs Geraldine Elwes, the National Trust's curator of their house in Cheyne Row, reads in Thomas Carlyle's chair. She plans more special events in 1991 (photograph by Ian Hossenbergh). (See page 25).

There was another such exercise five years later but it was very different because it was held at night. We had been told that bombers would be over London and I lay awake in the dark listening to their engines throbbing above. When I looked out of the window, all I could see was the red glare in the sky to the north from the electric sign on the front of the new Gaumont Cinema — which is Habitat today — and wondered whether real fires would look like that. . .

Neighbours were becoming involved in Air Raid Precautions, sometimes being given mysterious titles such as "Warden". One A.R.P. official called at our house to advise on this. I remember standing in the kitchen — a smaller version of the upstairs-downstairs kitchen — with its solid pine table, dresser, new-fangled refrigerator and large, wicker armchair, beneath the flattened cushion of which I knew the maid kept her twopenny romantic magazines. This, he was saying, is the best room to make gas-proof because all you will need is a wet blanket stretched across a wooden frame that can be fitted over the window. In the event my parents decided not to do this. If war came, they thought — although they did not tell me — London would be devastated by bombs and poison gas within a week, so "evacuation" would be best. My father might have to remain at Broadcasting House but the rest of us would go to stay with an uncle in the country.

As the spring of 1939 became summer, a sense of doom and resolution seemed to grow. I remember walking to Sloane Square one morning with my father — myself dressed for school; he in his professional uniform of black homburg hat, grey pin-striped suit and pigskin attaché case — and him telling me that he had been talking to "high-ups in the Government", who had been watching the latest RAF exercise. "They told me that the sky was *black* with our fighters", he said. Such was the British secret weapon: self-confidence.

Barrage balloons, sagging like great, grey elephants, appeared in Battersea Park and when aloft would form a surreal ceiling over London. Concrete and sandbag blast-walls appeared in front of the entrances to Government offices and police stations. There was bustle at the Town Hall, where our neighbours in A.R.P. would look important in their uniforms. Some of them were retired, or were living on modest independent incomes, and they acquired a new look of confidence and purpose. But what would happen we could only guess and imagine after seeing horrifying photographs of the civil war in Spain.

Before it began, we had gone to the country and did not return until the Blitz had ended a year and a half later. There were more dangers to come, of course, but during the first eighteen months of the war, Chelsea had, when seen from exile, an heroic quality. It seemed to be standing on the ramparts. It was.

During

by Frances Faviell

Those first days of the *Luftwaffe's* Blitz on Chelsea were dramatic and tragic, and in them the much-resented and ridiculed air-raid wardens came into their own and showed us the stuff of which they were made. Our Chelsea ones were magnificent! The first to rouse people after the sirens sounded, they hurried to the shelters, ticking off the names of the residents in their areas as they arrived, then back they went to hustle and chivvy the laggards and see that those who chose to stay in their homes were all right. The first to locate and report the bombs to Control, they were the ones to guide and direct the Services sent by Control to the "incident" (a word to which we were to become all too accustomed). It was the wardens who soothed and calmed the terrified and comforted the injured and the dying. They carried children, old people, bundles of blankets, and the odd personal possessions which some eccentrics insisted on taking with them to the shelters. They woke the heavy sleepers, laughed at the grumblers, praised the helpful and cheerful, and performed miracles in keeping law and order during those first dramatic weeks when the Battle of London was being fought in our skies.

One of the first horrors was a direct hit on Cadogan Shelter, a public shelter under a block of flats in Beaufort Street. The blast killed a large number of people as it blew in the sides of the shelter. Our first casualties at F.A.P.5 (*First Aid Post*) were quiet and shocked. None of them wanted to say much — I think the dirt and mess with which they were covered and their anxiety for missing relatives or friends was uppermost. The casualties' indifference to injuries, cuts, and abrasions astonished us just as the dirt upset all our arrangements. The effects of shock when they first arrived, although we had been trained to recognise them, varied very much in individual cases. What did emerge from this first tragedy was a feeling that shelters were not safe — that had the victims stayed at home they would still be alive. To this there was no answer — it was the duty of all Civil Defence personnel to encourage the public to use the shelters. . .

The Blitz was providing something besides bombs. It was making people talk to one another. People in shops, in the buses, in the streets often talked to me now. They opened up amazingly about how they thought and what they thought — how they felt and what they felt. They all liked to see the nurses' uniforms — and were loud in their praise of the nurses, the firemen, and the wardens. But they did not like the indignity of sleeping publicly in a bunk in a shelter with hundreds of others. The Blitz was doing something else — it was continuing the slow difficult process already begun before the war of breaking down class barriers.

Another shelter received a direct hit in our area on the 13th and very early in the morning we had many casualties at the F.A.P. This was the large shelter of Manor Buildings, an L.C.C. block of flats in Flood Street. The water main had been severed and the poor sufferers were soaking wet. We put them all with their feet in hot water and wrapped in blankets until they could be got dry things. They were all filthy and had a lot of cuts and bruises and were all suffering from shock. Shelters were rapidly getting a bad name and some of the casualties said that it was obvious that they could be seen from the air! Residents in Paultons Square had no gas at all as a bomb had severed the gas main. It had also killed one of the wardens in the hut there.

The bomb and everyone's special bomb was still a subject of endless interest and possibilities — but they were coming so thick and fast that everyone had a better story than his neighbour. All over London people were full of stories of the Blitz, but life was going on as usual — in spite of it. September 14th was a date which few of the personnel at Post Don will forget. In a further day-light raid another shelter was hit — this time under a church. The Church of the Holy Redeemer is a massive building and I had been there several times to see the shelter in the crypt because some of our refugees liked the idea of this shelter so much that they wanted to change to it. It was very close to Cheyne Hospital and when, at first, two of them did go there, I had gone to see that they were all right; but we persuaded them that it was too far and that their own was just as safe. It was a very popular shelter — perhaps because, like the refugees, others felt that nowhere would be safer than under the protection of the Church — and at the time the bomb fell it was crowded.

The bomb was recorded by one of us telephonists in the Control Centre at 18.35. The message said that there was a fire and casualties trapped in Holy Redeemer Church in Upper Cheyne Row. Requests followed in rapid succession for ambulances, blankets to cover the dead, fire services, and reports came in that there were many casualties.

The bomb had struck the church at an angle through a window in a most extraordinary way and had penetrated the floor and burst among the shelterers, mostly women and small children. Here George Thorpe, whom we knew as 'Bert', lost his life with those women and children whom he had visited to reassure them — as he always did, although he was not the shelter warden. He knew that they were apt to become nervous and needed moral support in the heavy raids and he used to drop in there to boost up their courage and cheer them up.

The bomb exploded right amongst the shelterers. A woman who was in the shelter told me about it when I visited her afterwards in St. Luke's Hospital. She was badly injured and said that the scene resembled a massacre — in fact, she compared it to an engraving she had seen of the massacre of the women and children of Cawnpore in the Indian Mutiny, with bodies, limbs, blood, and flesh mingled with little hats, coats, and shoes and all the small necessities which people took to the shelters with them.

We often dined at the Café Royal and also at the Royal Court Hotel in Sloane Square. Mr. Wilde, the Manager, had been most kind and helpful. We sometimes remarked on the large amount of glass in the dining-room, the walls of which were almost covered with mirror-glass, giving the illusion of very great space. The hotel had a deep strongly reinforced air-raid shelter for its residents of which Mr. Wilde was justly proud. He himself was always in evidence on noisy evenings when the bombs were near, reassuring the guests.

On the night of November 12th we had dined there rather early and the sirens had sounded while we were having dinner. Richard had to go on fire-duty at the Ministry and I had left him at the entrance to Sloane Square Station and hurried home in case I was called. It was not my evening for duty but several nurses had colds and I had said that I would be available if needed. I had hardly reached home when a terrific thud shook the road, but I could see nothing. The wardens were out, and there was activity in the sky and the barrage was pretty heavy, but the great thud had not been located immediately.

About half past ten the telephone rang and someone called me to go at once to the Royal Court Hotel. The line was very bad, almost impossible to hear, and it was with difficulty that I had got the message at all. As I had only just left the hotel I presumed that I had left something valuable behind there. I rang the F.A.P. and said that I had just been called by someone to go to the hotel, and to my astonishment the V.A.D. who answered the telephone said, 'Yes, Mobile Unit has just gone there.'

The square presented an amazing sight — two great flaming jets guarded the pit which had once been the station. The bomb had severed the gas main, the firemen shouted to me as I tried to pick my way across to the Royal Court Hotel, and the newly built station had just disappeared into the depth below. They were already bringing out the first dead and injured and carrying those requiring immediate treatment into the hotel.

Mr. Wilde and the staff were splendid. Table napkins, towels, blankets, and rugs all appeared as we laid the injured down in the lounge and hall. It was a pretty grim business — and again the appalling dirt was the most striking thing. It was evident that getting the bodies out was going to take all that night and many more. The bomb had fallen as a train was leaving the station, and the rear carriage was caught directly — the remainder of the train was shot by the blast almost to South Kensington station. This incident was ghastly as regards the holocaust of human flesh. Identification was almost impossible — and bodies were put together roughly on to stretchers and some of them taken into nearby houses to be pieced together later somehow. The worst casualties were the Underground staff who had been in the canteen on the station when the bomb fell. There were fourteen men, one conductress, and two attendants in the canteen. By the following Saturday — the bomb having fallen on the Tuesday previously — there had been thirty-eight stretchers of human flesh pieced together — but there were still seventeen people to be accounted for. . .

The smell of explosions was very pungent, and one that stuck in the nostrils afterwards. The dust and plaster smelt, too, an ancient timeless smell and in Sloane Square there had been a terrifying smell of gas. All round it buildings were damaged and the square strewn with wreckage and glass. Only the ultra-modern, newly designed Peter Jones building stood proudly without a pane of its acres of glass broken. This was explained by the caving in of the station itself so that the blast went up the Underground tunnel and the actual explosion was muffled. At first they did not realise that it was so near, and the cries of those below on the station were muffled too by debris which had descended on them from above. . . .

On 16th April, 1941, another heavy raid began:

That it was our worst night yet was on everybody's lips — and when news came in that the Old Church had gone it seemed the climax to the mounting horrors. The Old Church — I thought of it on that Sunday of March 23rd with all those Sea and A.T.C. Cadets in it — with the daffodils coming out around More's and Hans Sloane's tombs. 'It's a pile of dust,' one of the stretcher-bearers said. 'The whole of that bit — all Petyt Place seems to have disappeared — and the fire-watchers with it.'

Soon after we digested this it was quiet — and at long last the welcome distant sirens sounded far away — then nearer — and then loudly our own from the Albert Bridge proclaimed that the raid was over.

The All Clear had sounded at five minutes to five; it had been one of the longest raids we had known — all but eight hours. In the cold pale morning light we surveyed the appalling havoc of what had been our small colony in the Royal Hospital Road. How we had ever emerged from the mess that had been our home seemed incredible — it was one huge pile of rubble, and more had fallen since we had left it . . . but close at hand a blackbird was singing gloriously.

Picking our way across the piles of glass was perilous, and when I saw in the mass something which looked like a garment and found it was a very old camel-hair coat of mine I fell upon it as if it were the most valuable mink. It was indescribably filthy — but it was a coat, an old friend, and as far as I could see we had no material possessions left in the world. My dress had been blasted off below the hips and I had only an overall — the coat was warm and the early morning air struck chill. . . .

It was not easy to drive anywhere — the streets were blocked by great mounds of fallen masonry, glass and debris. All along the Embankment the firemen's hoses lay across the wide street and houses sprawled with the vitals and bones spread out. The Old Lombard Restaurant had been almost demolished and men were digging on it as we passed. The top stories of Cheyne Hospital appeared to have been badly damaged, but as we came to the Old Church we stopped appalled, and got out of the car. I had heard about the horror of the night there — but its reality surpassed imagination. One great mound of dust was all that was left of the lovely little church — and men were digging all over it! The sun shone on the

gap where Petyt Place had been — removed as if with giant tongs. The vicar was safe — but the entire fire-watching party, including seventeen-year-old schoolboy Michael Hodge, home for the holidays, had all perished with the exception of one member.

All up Old Church Street there were smoking ruins and masses of glass and debris sprawled everywhere. A heavy acrid smell lingered in the air in spite of the breeze from the river — the smell we had come to identify with the Blitz.

There were many stories of the night of April 16th — already known as 'the Wednesday'. The German parachutist had actually landed almost on the church and had given himself up to the wardens, who were at first at a loss to know what to do with him. There had been parachute mines on Cheyne Walk, Cranmer Court, the Old Church, and our one on Cheyne Place, as well as the Royal Hospital Infirmary, Dovehouse Street, and Sutton Dwellings, and high-explosive bombs on the Elms Garage, Post E in Cale Street, Chelsea Square, and many off the Embankment, as well as hundreds of incendiaries. There had been a very large number of casualties and terrible damage. Several firemen had been killed and many wardens injured. . . .

Chelsea's last heavy raid of the eight months' Blitz came on May 10/11th. There had been bad incidents on the Saturday following 'the Wednesday', but it was on May 11th, when the Houses of Parliament were hit, that Chelsea suffered most. The Red Cross and St. John's did magnificent work on both these occasions and were warmly praised, with the whole A.R.P. Services. On May 11th a heavy bomb fell through the operating theatre of St. Luke's Hospital, killing two doctors and several nurses and wrecking two wards, the radiography and kitchen departments, and most of the reception halls as well as the doctors' quarters. The hospital had to be closed for the simple reason that it could no longer be run. . . .

Thousands of incendiaries were showered on Chelsea during that raid and many high-explosive bombs fell in the river. Work was hampered by a blazing barge loaded with paper outside Phillips Mills and the air was thick with little pieces of black charred paper like a black snowstorm. The acrid smell of burning paper was quite overpowering and suffocating to the firemen and wardens fighting the blaze. The shower of charred paper like a flickering curtain silhouetted against the flames was an eerie and unforgettable spectacle.

The closing of St. Luke's Hospital, combined with the loss of more friends both in the R.A.F. and at sea, was for me another landmark in the war, but although we did not know it at the time, May 11th was to mark the end of the eight months' Blitz on London. Three years were to elapse before Chelsea's foundations were to be shaken by an 'incident' (February 23rd, 1944), the magnitude of which was to make all the preceding ones seem small. . . .

Extracts from "Chelsea Concerto" by the late Frances Faviell, published by Cassell in 1959.

(See illustrations pages 36-37.)

After

by John Watney

I returned from the wars, as the saying goes, more or less intact, and took, in 1946, a small room in Bywater Street. The little houses in this cul-de-sac were the worse for wear and tear after six years of war-time neglect. There was a veterinary surgeon's animal hospital at the end of the street, which was so under-staffed that when owner's brought their pets for treatment they had to "do it" themselves.

A few yards round the corner in the King's Road, stood the Markham Arms, a well-known meeting place for artists and writers. It was an old-fashioned Victorian building, and had a Public Bar, where beer was a penny cheaper than in the Private Bar. Sandwiched between these two, and completely screened off was a narrow Ladies' Bar. The walls of this discreet enclosure contained louvres which could be pressed open from inside so that the ladies taking refuge there could keep an eye on what was going on in the other bars, and receive the occasional port that a gallant gentleman might offer. Although only women were allowed in the Ladies' Bar, they could, if they wished, enter the other two bars. Girls did, but elderly ladies who believed that it was unladylike to be seen in a general bar, preferred to anonymity of the Ladies' Bar.

The whole edifice was controlled by Mrs. Andrews. Ma Andrews was a solid lady, who had a face that looked as if it were made of brown paper which had been scrunched up and put hurriedly together again. She did not serve drinks herself but sat on a sort of throne at the back of the bar to keep an eye on the barmaids and to decide whether or not to cash a cheque or enter on a huge black slate the drinks of someone who had come out without any money. She had violent likes and dislikes, and would not hesitate to throw out anyone she did not like. On the other hand she would do anything for those she did like. Such a one was Sir John Squire, poet and sometime editor of the *London Mercury*.

Jack Squire was mad about cricket. Before the war he had taken part in the famous cricket match at Fordcombe, which A. G. Macdonald described in his book *England, Their England*. Jack was determined to revive the cricket team and with the help of Patrick Howarth, a demobilised Intelligence Officer and budding author, cajoled, threatened and persuaded sundry characters to join the team. He called it "The Markham Arms Cricket Club". A fact that so delighted Ma Andrews, that whenever the team set forth she would slip Pat Howarth £40 "to keep the teams' spirits up", as she put it.

Although Jack Squire had a considerable range of acquaintances and friends, he always had great difficulty in getting eleven "good men and

true" on to the cricket field at any one moment. Sometimes there would be real cricketers. I remember that when we played Meopham in Kent, we fielded Percy Fender who also played for England. Sometimes Jack would recruit an author like Nigel Balehin who was also a county player; and Pat Howarth was reasonably proficient. But the rest of us were of very doubtful value.

One was a Russian painter whom Jack had recruited at the Chelsea Arts Club called Sosonov. Sos and I were last and one but last batsmen, and as he approached the wicket, he said, "What do I do?" There wasn't much time to explain the whole game to him, so I told him to stand in front of the stumps and hold his bat in front of him; which he did, looking rather like the sentry at Pompeii waiting for the molten ash to engulf him. As it happened I was bowled to a cow-shot, so that Sos retired from his one and only cricket match with the commendable score of: 0 not out.

One of our keenest players was in fact a Cambridge rowing blue called Bertie Boret. He, like Jack Squire, liked to anchor himself in a quiet corner of the out-field. Unfortunately for Bertie, we once played an eleven, whose cricket field was perched on a hill. A road ran from the field's boundary down to a small stream. Bertie had, as usual, anchored himself in this remote part, unaware that the local opposition, aware of the existence of the road, invariably aimed their shots in his direction. There was a bye-law that on that side of the field there was no boundary line, so that while Bertie trotted, puffing, up and down the hill, the local batsmen scored seven or eight runs. He was so incensed, and exhausted, by this, that he engaged a local youth with a bicycle to do the running and fetching, and this saved himself much breath, and cut down the local run-getting from seven to three.

We had to bring an umpire and two scorers. The scorers were girlfriends, but the umpire was Robin Green, an archaeologist, who spent most of his time paddling around Chelsea Reach looking for medieval coins. His umpiring was somewhat erratic as he used these coins to count the number of balls in an over. On one occasion he disappeared completely during the tea break so the match went on without him; until an irate woman stormed on to the field, and said that one of our cricketers was digging up her cabbages. Jack rushed to the woman's garden, and there, sure enough, was Robin digging up her cabbages.

"You mustn't dig up this poor lady's cabbages," said Jack.

"Cabbages be damned," said Robin, "there's a wonderful medieval dump under here."

Jack, always kind, bought all the cabbages from the poor woman, and we trudged back to Chelsea each of us carrying a cabbage.

We never won a single match, but this did not dampen Ma Andrews' interest in what she referred to as "my cricket club".

Acquiring food was a greater problem than getting paint and canvasses. Rationing was still in force and very few of the studios, such as those in Glebe Place and Trafalgar Studios, had adequate, if any, cooking facilities. Indeed, it was cheaper and easier, especially if you had children, to eat

out in one or the other of the numerous little restaurants that lived on, as far as one could see, almost nothing, all over Chelsea. There was Caletta's in the King's Road. It was staffed by incredibly old waiters dressed in black morning coats, striped trousers, starched "dickies" and cuffs on which they calculated, with a stub of a pencil, the bill. The menu consisted of one dish: spaghetti and mince, which was usually rabbit or even the awful whale-meat, a hang-over from the war, but at least for a few shillings you could feed the whole family, and the atmosphere was always happy.

Down by the river there was the Blue Cockatoo, which was more of a bun-house than a restaurant, and a favourite rendezvous place for artists and writers. Close by was the Pier Hotel which had a restaurant on the first floor where businessmen would take authors and artists to discuss contracts. The tables were set by the large Georgian windows with a beautiful view of the bridge and the river.

Another favourite place was the Queen's Restaurant off Sloane Square. It was run by a cheerful Italian family and consisted of two large rooms. The first room which led in from the square was an ordinary-looking place catering for the normal passers-by. It was the second, inner room that was interesting. It was reached by an archway, and in its rather dark interior — it appeared to have no windows — there were only two or three large round tables. The one on the right was Augustus John's table. The celebrated painter presided over a number of admirers, mainly female.

Opposite was the Journalist's Table. This was usually presided over by Brian Chapman, who was then an editor of the *Daily Express*, and lived nearby. The unusual feature of the Journalist's Table was that the meals were paid for by those journalists who were working, and not by those who had been sacked or were "resting". The turn-over of staff in Fleet Street was so considerable at that time that editors and sub-editors hardly dared go out for lunch for fear of finding a hard-faced man sitting at their desk, and saying, "Yes, and what can I do for you?"

Another refuge was The Pheasantry at 152 Kings Road. It consisted of an amalgam of large working studios. In one of them Hein Heckroth designed the sets for the film *The Red Shoes* with Moira Shearer in the leading role. In the basement was a small restaurant that was originally created to cater for the appetites of the artists working in the studios above.

It was run by a fiery, shock-haired Italian called Remy, who had a somewhat unorthodox view of the financial running of a club. He would charge nothing to indigent artists, particularly if they had children, for a meal, and treble to successful or wealthy artists and visitors. Next to the first room, which had a bar, was a second room which had a minute dance floor (music supplied by an ancient wind-up gramophone), and here he would charge a stiff "dancing fee"; so that you could either sit and have a cheap meal, or if you felt liked dancing, pay a fee.

Remy himself would often have a meal there with some friend of his. One of his close friends was the singer Mario Lanza. Whenever Mario Lanza was having dinner with Remy you could expect a drastic change from the old records that Remy usually supplied; Mario having a habit

the top of his voice which would effectually drown the tinkling of the gramophone and make the diners think they were going deaf.

Chelsea seemed to be teeming with artists. There was Matthew Smith, a mild-looking man who painted very lurid compositions. On the other hand, there was Sir Alfred Munnings, who painted horses. Munnings hated Stanley Spencer, who painted grossly indecent scenes, and apparently reported little Spencer for painting grossly indecent pictures. Whether he ever, in fact, did so is open to dispute but the Chelsea intellectuals thought so and that was enough to bring the artists and their supporters out in strength.

One day, Sir Alfred was scheduled to address a meeting at Chelsea Town Hall. His critics assembled outside in the King's Road to barrack and hoot at him. Many of the demonstrators appeared on horseback. Some of the girl demonstrators dressed in almost as scanty attires as the famous Lady Godiva. The King's Road was completely blocked with semi-nude horsewomen and enthusiastic pro-Spencer supporters. The police were out in force stopping the traffic from interfering with the commendable demonstration, and preventing outside forces from interfering with what was essentially an important, if private, dispute among artists.

Not far away, in Old Church Street, was the Chelsea Arts Club, favoured by James McNeill Whistler at the end of the nineteenth century, which carried on the controversy while it's members played snooker. The club was still an exclusively male artists' establishment and was known locally as The Hospital, for it succoured artists in distress. Each member had a key to the front door, and if thrown out of their homes by their womenfolk, which seemed to happen quite frequently to painters, they let themselves into the club, and finding an empty bedroom quietly put themselves to bed and rested peacefully until woken by the smell of bacon-and-eggs telling them that the club's excellent breakfast was ready.

It was here that the annual Chelsea Arts Ball at the Albert Hall on New Year's Eve was conceived and planned under the energetic inspiration of a handsome sculptor called Loris Reay, who would on the Eve itself lead the cortege of floats usually dressed as a Roman emperor. The floats, beautifully constructed during the year had a short life. As soon as the parade was over and the New Year rung in they were torn to pieces by the hundreds of costumed revellers; and Loris would return to the club and start planning next year's Chelsea Arts Ball.

He hoped that it would go on forever, but the invaders were already on the move. The first to arrive in Chelsea were the smart little restaurants which served up French and Italian dishes. They quickly took over from the cheap-eating places such as Caletta's and The Unity. The next were home-hungry young couples who saw in the dilapidated working studios, ideal homes — once, of course, they had been modernised. Finally came the trendy boutiques from Carnaby Street, who quickly took over any existing vacant shops. The artists fled, many of them to addresses around Finsbury Park, where there were large, empty houses with huge rooms that could be quickly adapted as studios.

Chelsea never changes. Seventy-five years ago, my mother and father had a house in Walpole Street. He was an apprentice architect in Sir Edwin Lutyen's office, until the war came to drive him into the Services. She was an artist. So, naturally, they wanted to live in Chelsea. This has continued ever since. Creative people, whether painters, writers, restaurateurs or boutique owners, have always gyrated to Chelsea, and will no doubt continue to do so within the foreseeable future.

John Watney is the biographer of the Chelsea artist, writer and poet Mervyn Peake.

One-gun salute

An extract from *In Remembrance*, a memoir of the Rev. R. H. Davies, a Victorian vicar of Chelsea Old Church, published a century ago.

In the Fifties there were in the congregation a few who formed curious little links with events of more than a hundred years ago. One of the sidesmen, a man of humble origin, enjoyed the distinction of having been Nelson's ship-carpenter on the *Victory* at the battle of Trafalgar.

A God-fearing old man, he fulfilled his functions every Sunday with all that sense of duty which had probably been inculcated by his naval commanders. But a day came when the "ship-carpenter" and the "churchman" strove for ascendancy. It was difficult for his simple but loyal spirit to decide whether it was compatible with his duty to depart from a long standing, although self-imposed, rule in his life. One Sunday he announced that he should not be at church on that day week. As he seemed to regret very much the thought of being away from his weekly office, my father inquired the reason for his intended absence.

The reply was, that it would be the 21st of October, which day, since the year 1805, he had always devoted to the memory of the hero under whom he had served. He added that to commemorate the date, he always fired off a pistol at mid-day, the hour when the great battle began, after the well-known signal had been given. It was the nearest approach to a real salute that lay in the power of the carpenter. Mr. Davies felt that such a touching tribute to the late Admiral must not be ruthlessly set aside as a piece of sentimental folly, and after listening to a long yarn about Nelson and the carpenter's sea-faring days, he bade the latter do just what he thought right.

The following Sunday saw the sidesman in his accustomed place. He subsequently told Mr. Davies that on thinking over his conversation in the vestry, he had recognised that the better way to fulfil his duty was to postpone the pistol-shot until his return from the morning service.

Review Book

The Gentle Art of Making Enemies by J. M. Whistler (*Michael Parkin Gallery; de luxe edition with original etching by Walter Greaves, £150; standard edition, £50.*)

One hundred years after its initial publication, J. M. Whistler's *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* still retains its unique place balanced between art and literature. Judging by the title alone, the book could only be a product of the *fin de siècle* period, when the decadent movement was in full swing and the boundaries between art and literature were becoming blurred. To this decade belong Oscar Wilde's essay 'The Decay of Lying' and his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* which experiment with the traditional dichotomy between fine art and literature both in form and in content. Characteristic of the 'Nineties were the short-lived periodicals which linked the two arts, such as *The Whirlwind*, *The Yellow Book* and *The Savoy*. It is within this cultural climate that Whistler compiled his book, whilst living at 21 Cheyne Walk in Chelsea.

The Gentle Art of Making Enemies can be read as one artist's defence against the prejudiced Victorian values of the English art establishment. Yet, by reading between the lines, the book proves to be more than a history of Whistler's battles with the press, and reads as an autobiography of the artist, another self-portrait. As Max Beerbohm later wrote: '... Read any page of *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, and you will hear a voice in it, and see a face in it, and see gestures in it. And none of these is quite like any other known to you. It matters not that you never knew Whistler, never even set eyes on him. You see him and know him here. . . ' (*The Metropolitan Magazine*, Sept. 1904)

The book comes closest to a self-portrait by Whistler than any other piece of writing. In Whistler's attempt to 'set the record straight', he took on the role of editor with a flourish, cutting, polishing and annotating the text to suit his purposes. From his vast pile of press cuttings he extracted a history of 'Whistler versus the Art Critic', which gave shape to his portrait of the misunderstood artist. In his final entry to the book, *L'Envoi*, a speech written for a banquet held in Whistler's honour the previous year, he concedes to such an interpretation:

... It has before now been borne in upon me, that in surroundings of antagonism, I may have wrapped myself, for protection, in a species of misunderstanding — as that other traveller drew closer about him the folds of his cloak the more bitterly the winds and the storm assailed him on his way. . .

Originally the project was conceived by the American journalist Sheridan Ford. But gradually as Whistler's interest in the book grew he

Obituaries

Felix Hope-Nicholson

Charles Felix Otho Victor Gabriel John Adrian Hope-Nicholson died, quite suddenly, on 15th. September, aged 69, whilst visiting his elder sister in Southern France. He undoubtedly lived up to his eccentrically royal number of christian names.

Felix lived all his life at More House, 52 Tite Street, a substantial studio house which had been bought by his grandparents in 1892, only ten years after its construction. He went to Eton, followed by Christ Church, Oxford. Although he was highly intelligent and extremely able, with the exception of a very brief period in the Army and teaching abroad, he never worked, nor earned a living. But his was far from being a wasted life for he cultivated the social arts and lived a highly ordered and purposeful life which one suspects few of us would achieve if we were not for the disciplines that work imposes.

Whilst Felix was still at Eton, his parents separated. He stayed with his mother in Tite Street while his two sisters went to live with their father. It was the enthusiasm of Felix's mother, Jacqueline Hope-Nicholson, for her illustrious ancestors which first initiated the creation of More House as a repository for pictures, books, furniture, ornaments and memorabilia associated with the Hope family. When she died in 1972, Felix continued this tradition and he inherited from her a passion for genealogy; his memory for the intricacies of family relationships amongst the nobility was quite astounding.

More House is far from being a museum, however, for its contents reflect, not only past ancestors, but the lives, character and interests of the three generations who have lived there. In his later years, More House became for Felix the main interest in his life. Upon meeting him at a party, if he took a liking to you, he would say, "Would you like to see my house? Why not give me a call — but I must tell you that I don't answer the telephone before at least noon — I'm not an early riser." If you decided to accept this offer, you would be warmly received and would be given what was virtually a standard guided tour of the main rooms of the house. Each room had particular pictures, furniture or objects which would prompt Felix to recount some interesting anecdote related to them. Although the tour and anecdotes were virtually always the same, they were nevertheless delivered on each occasion with fresh enthusiasm and characteristic wit. More House contains many collections of objects with sentimental associations and numerous relics reflecting the passion for the Stuart cause and the Roman Catholic Church shared by Felix and his mother.

Fortunately, Felix's younger sister Marie-Jacqueline Lancaster, completed an inventory of the contents of More House earlier this year. This

ousted his collaborator, only to discover that Ford was determined to have the book published in a pirated edition. Always one for controversy, Whistler, in the authorised version, included extracts from various papers elucidating these piratical attempts, thus providing an appropriate introduction to the book. By chalking Ford up as yet another enemy, Whistler kept to the theme of his book; given the title and the dedication: 'To the rare Few, who, early in Life have rid Themselves of the Friendship of the Many, these pathetic papers are inscribed.'

With Whistler, life was subjected to his art, and likewise, friends were subjected to his enmity. The act of writing *The Gentle Art* gave Whistler the opportunity to apply the last sting, thereby embalming his enemies for eternity.

Amongst those victims he sacrificed were Ruskin, Wilde, and Swinburne. Perhaps the saddest story to be told in the book is about the latter's review of Whistler's 'Ten O'Clock Lecture'. Swinburne had reluctantly agreed to it, and wrote a review which did little to favour his friendship with the artist. Whistler's response is telling, in that, he regarded Swinburne as a brother artist.

... Do we not speak the same language? Are we strangers, then, or, in our Father's house are there so many mansions that you lose your way, my brother, and cannot recognise your kin? ...

Swinburne, the poet who had once set verses to Whistler's painting *The Little White Girl*, had been a valued friend, who dated back to his early association with the Pre-Raphaelites. With Oscar Wilde, Whistler was less sentimental and matched him witticism for witticism in their battle of words. Whistler, unfortunately, did not know when to set his weapon down, and many of his letters to the press have that wearying effect of a last futile thrust at an opponent, who has already won the match.

Whistler's relationship with Ruskin was of a different nature altogether and the history of his trial against the art critic is told in extracts from papers which recorded the event. Yet, as omnipotent author, Whistler was able to create his own context, as expressed in the marginalia, his footnotes for posterity.

Throughout the book, Whistler maintained this control, or artistic licence, balancing each criticism with a carefully selected letter to the press. Seen by Whistler as another work of art, he spent hours perfecting each page, from the spacing of the text to the positioning of the frolicsome butterflies, as they stung and danced across the pages.

Yet, judging from the need for a second edition in 1892, and the later reprints of the twentieth century, the book has reached an audience as appreciative of his writing as they had been of his paintings and etchings. It is perhaps for this reason that *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, a century after its conception, remains for the reader, another view of Whistler, another self-portrait.

Anne Koval.

inventory is far from being just a list, as a detailed history of each item is included; and in this, Felix played an indispensable part.

Felix had little interest in the practical or commercial aspects of modern life; consequently, the electrical and plumbing installations at More House are still largely those that were originally installed, and he would contend that it was not necessary to clean a house nearly as often as was generally believed.

He was above all an honest, kind, gentle and generous man; and these were the virtues he admired in others. He had many friends who were each year informally invited to a Crib Party at More House on, or just after, Twelfth Night, to admire the Christmas Crib which had pride of place in the Studio.

Felix loved Chelsea and he was undoubtedly one of its great characters; he will be sadly missed by the very many.

D. Le L.

Ley Kenyon, D.F.C.

With the death of Ley Kenyon in November, Chelsea lost one of the dwindling number of artists who inspired its artistic and bohemian character over the past century. Those who saw him on his bicycle, around the shops, at the Old Church or in the Chelsea Arts Club, were amazed to hear that he was aged 77 for he had remained upright and slim with a boyish shock of hair and a breezy charm. He will be remembered not only as an accomplished painter but as a teacher of art students and as an enthusiastic helper at the headquarters of Operation Raleigh in Alpha Place.

The son of a Kensington undertaker, Kenyon was educated at Marylebone Grammar School and at art schools in London and Paris. During the war, he volunteered for the R.A.F., served with Bomber Command as a bomb-aimer and air gunner and was awarded the D.F.C. In 1943 he was shot down and, while a prisoner in Germany, escaped and got as far as the Spanish frontier before being arrested.

While in prison camp he painted scenery for the prisoners' theatrical productions and painted portraits of his fellow-prisoners. One of the best of these was of a Fleet Air Arm officer, Commander John Casson; he brought it back to England, met Casson in a Chelsea street, found they were neighbours and gave him his portrait.

After the war, he worked as an artist in oils and water-colours and as an illustrator, one of the books he illustrated being Paul Brickhill's account of his own prisoner of war experiences, *The Great Escape*. He also became fascinated by aqualung diving and worked with Jacques Cousteau as an underwater photographer.

A former Chairman of the Chelsea Arts Club, a member of the Sketch Club, he was at the forefront of much artistic activity in Chelsea. He was also an active member of the congregation at Chelsea Old Church. Ley Kenyon was married twice and in his more recent unmarried years became known as a generous and charming man-about-Chelsea. He died suddenly while on a visit to the United States.

T.P.

Mr. John Armstrong C.B., O.B.E.

John Armstrong, whose wife Barbara is a Life Member of the Chelsea Society, died on 3rd. October, 1990, at the age of 80 while on holiday in Corfu. He was a barrister, a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn and became Master of the Court of Protection. This appointment, involving the management of the estates of those unable to look after their own affairs, gave scope not only for John's great administrative and legal ability but also for his kindness and sensitivity in human affairs. He also had a distinguished military career and, as a pre-war Territorial, rose to commanding a regiment in the Normandy landings. He and Barbara were very staunch supporters of the Chelsea Society, came to its functions and took a lively interest in its affairs. With their son and two daughters the Armstrongs lived for many years in Chelsea Park Gardens but in retirement they went to Cumbria.

Miss Jo Jones

Jo Jones, who died on 3rd. December, 1989, was a member of the Chelsea Society and had a long association with Chelsea through her close friendship with Augustus John and his family. He certainly had some influence on her work, especially her drawing, but she was a true original who went her own way. From the home of her father, Bishop of Lewes and Archdeacon of Chichester, she went to Paris as an art student and thereafter pursued her own career as a truly professional painter. She painted in Jamaica, Spain and Morocco until in her latter years she spent much time in her secluded Dorset cottage.

Her most successful period was probably during the 1950s when she was living among Spanish gypsies, producing brilliantly coloured paintings and an illustrated book, *The Gypsies of Granada*. Her diminutive size, apparent fragility and gentle manners concealed a will of iron, and many were the friends who found themselves doing most unexpected things for her. She was holding exhibitions till shortly before her death, getting her pictures hung exactly as she thought they should be, and negotiating sturdily with dealers. Art galleries all over the world have specimens of her work.

Despite her independent and exotic life Jo retained the strictest probity and decorum in all her doings.

L.L.

Athene Seyler, C.B.E.

John Casson, the son of Sir Lewis Casson and Dame Sybil Thorndike, remembers the actress, who died on 12th. September, 1990, at the age of 101.

When, in 1921, the Cassons were running a season of Grand Guignol at the Little Theatre in the Adelphi, Athene Seyler joined them in a horrifying little piece called *The Old Women*. The three of them might have met earlier, but this was the beginning of a friendship that lasted all their lives. It was in 1923 that she and Nicholas ("Beau") Hannen took the lease of a house in Chelsea Manor Street and, from then on, Athene and Beau were almost part of our family.

Beau had been with Lewis in Robert Lorraine's production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* just after they had been demobbed in 1919. We, the Cassons, had moved into 6 Carlyle Square in 1921 and so we were now all Chelseans. What I myself remember best about the four of them together — Lewis, Sybil, Beau and Athene — is the splendid arguments and discussions they used to have about theatre, religion and endless politics. Athene's daughter, by her first marriage, told me that she remembered coming home to Chelsea Manor Street and hearing Athene's voice rising higher and higher with excitement, with my father's deep, rumbling, bass voice firmly in opposition.

When, in 1937, Lewis and Sybil moved to Swan Court they were only a couple of hundred yards away from Beau and Athene. The four of them would walk down the street to Christ Church on Sunday and have more arguments over lunch. Sybil and Athene were great letter-writers and wrote regularly to each other, even though they were both on the telephone and lived in the same street.

They all stayed in Chelsea during the war and when the Old Church was bombed, Beau and Athene helped to clear the rubble and one day were seen, towels in hands, beginning to rebuild the shattered walls.

Sadly, in 1961, they had to move house because their home was to be demolished. They moved to a flat above an old coach-house, overlooking the river at Chiswick. It was there that they both died; Beau in 1972 and Athene a few weeks ago. In her last years, my wife and I used to visit her there, calling up to her as she sat in her window, and she would throw the key down to us with a gay wave of her hand.

Almost the last time we spoke, she said, "Oh, I do miss my Beau so much". She was a most lovely lady of wit and a bubbling sense of fun. And it is now we who miss *her* so much.

Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to report that my forecast, made at last year's Annual Meeting, that the 1989 accounts would be in surplus has proved to be correct. As you will see from the accounts, it amounts to £3,959 (against a deficit for 1988 of £748) which is after crediting a legacy of £3,500. Without that, the surplus would have been £459.

We are indebted to the Executors of the Will of the late Mr. Ernest Dawe for the legacy of £3,500. Mr. Dawe left his Executors with discretion as to the payment of certain legacies to societies or institutions and as Mr. Dawe had been a member of the Society for many years and his association with Chelsea went back to the first World War, the Executors felt the Society would be a very worthy recipient.

The number of members who have kindly given the Society a Deed of Covenant is relatively small; hence our tax recovery is only £159 for 1989. If any member would like to join the list of Covenantors, do please let me know.

You will note that Advertising revenue has increased marginally but there has been a substantial leap in interest received, mainly due to the higher rates available in 1989. The funds in reserve now stand at £18,570 so, once more, I am not recommending an increase in subscription levels for 1991.

May I again thank Mr. James Macnair for his kindness in acting as the Society's Honorary Auditor. He carries out a very exacting audit and we are all very grateful to him.

My Lord President, I beg to present my report and the accounts for the year to 31st December 1989. If there are any questions, I shall be pleased to answer them.

Ian Frazer
Hon. Treasurer

28th November 1990

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 1989

Income and Expenditure Account — General Fund

	1989	1988
	£	£
<i>Income</i>		
Annual Subscriptions	2,680	2,129
Donations Received	540	930
Legacy Received	3,500	—
Income Tax Recovered on Convenants	159	228
Advertising Revenue in 1989 Annual Report	658	525
Deposit Interest Received	968	460
Sundry Income	74	42
	8,579	4,314

Less: Expenditure

Excess of Expenditure over Receipts from Meetings	605	321
Cost of Annual Report	2,633	2,368
Stationery, Postage and Miscellaneous Expenses	925	736
Cost of Annual General Meeting	271	204
Subscriptions to Other Organisations	128	29
Painting Purchase and Restoration	—	480
Bank Charges	3	4
Survey Fees — West Environmental Improvement Route	—	920
Gift of Print	55	—
	4,620	5,062
	£3,959	£(748)

Surplus/(Deficit) for the year

Income and Expenditure Account — Life Membership Fund

Balance of Fund — 1st January 1989	4,540	4,088
Income National Savings Bank Account Interest	573	452
	£5,113	£4,540
<i>Balance of Fund — 31st December 1989</i>		

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 1989

	1989	1988
	£	£
<i>Current assets</i>		
Debtors	1,814	1,330
Balance in National Savings Bank Accounts	5,919	5,346
Balance on Bank Current and Deposit Accounts	14,399	10,288
	22,132	16,964
<i>Less: current liabilities</i>		
Creditors	3,513	2,839
Subscriptions Received in Advance	49	87
	3,562	2,926
	£18,570	£14,038

Represented by:

Balance of Life Membership Fund	5,113	4,540
<i>Add: Balance of General Fund</i>		
1st January 1989	9,498	10,246
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	3,959	(748)
	13,457	9,498
	£18,570	£14,038

I. W. FRAZER, *Honorary Treasurer*

REPORT OF THE HONORARY AUDITOR to the members of THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

I have reviewed the above balance sheet and accompanying income and expenditure accounts. I consider that on the basis of the books and records and of information given by the Honorary Treasurer, they present fairly the financial affairs of the Society at 31st. December 1989 and the income and expenditure for the year then ended.

Dated: 1990
London SW10

J. MACNAIR
Chartered Accountant

CONSTITUTION

1. The Chelsea Society shall be regulated by the Rules contained in this Constitution.
2. The Objects of the Society shall be to preserve and improve the amenities of Chelsea particularly by—
 - (a) stimulating interest in the history, character and traditions of Chelsea;
 - (b) encouraging good architecture, town planning and civic design, the planting and care of trees, and the conservation and proper maintenance of open spaces;
 - (c) seeking the abatement of nuisances;
 - (d) making representations to the proper authorities on these subjects.

OBJECTS

3. Subject to the provisions of Rule 7, membership of the Society shall be open to all who are interested in furthering the Objects of the Society.

MEMBERSHIP

4. **THE COUNCIL**
 - (1) There shall be a Council of the Society which shall be constituted in accordance with these Rules.
 - (2) The Society shall elect not more than twelve members of the Society to be members of the Council.
 - (3) The members of the Council so elected may co-opt not more than four further persons to be members of the Council.
 - (4) The Officers to be appointed under Rule 5 shall in addition be members of the Council.
 - (5) In the choice of persons for membership of the Council, regard shall be had, amongst other things, to the importance of including persons known to have expert knowledge and experience of matters relevant to the Objects of the Society.
 - (6) The Council shall be responsible for the day-to-day work of the Society, and shall have power to take any action on behalf of the Society which the Council thinks fit to take for the purpose of furthering the Objects of the Society and shall make and publish every year a Report of the activities of the Society during the previous year.
 - (7) The Council shall meet at least four times in each calendar year.
 - (8) A member of the Council who is absent from two successive meetings of the Council without explanation which the Council approves shall cease to be a member of the Council.
 - (9) Three of the elected members of the Council shall retire every second year, but may offer themselves for re-election by the Society.
 - (10) Retirement under the last preceding paragraph shall be in rotation according to seniority of election.
 - (11) Casual vacancies among the elected members may be filled as soon as practicable by election by the Society.
 - (12) One of the co-opted members shall retire every second year, but may be again co-opted.

OFFICERS

5. (1) The Council shall appoint the following officers of the Society, namely—
 - (a) a Chairman of the Council,
 - (b) a Vice-Chairman of the Council,
 - (c) an Honorary Secretary or Joint Honorary Secretaries,
 - (d) an Honorary Treasurer and
 - (e) persons to fill such other posts as may be established by the Council.
- (2) The terms of office of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be three years and those of the other Officers five years from the date of appointment respectively. Provided nevertheless that the appointment of the Chairman shall be deemed to terminate immediately after the third Annual General Meeting after his appointment.
- (3) The Officers shall be eligible for re-appointment to their respective offices.
- (4) Nothing herein contained shall detract from the Officers' right to resign during their current term.
- (5) By Resolution of a majority of its members the Council may rescind the appointment of an Officer during his term of office for reasons deemed substantial.

PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

6. (1) The Council may appoint a member of the Society to be President of the Society for a term of three years, and may re-appoint him for a further term of three years.
- (2) The Council may appoint persons, who need not be members of the Society, to be Vice-Presidents.

SUBSCRIPTIONS*

7. (1) The Council shall prescribe the amount of the subscriptions to be paid by members of the Society and the date on which they are due, and the period in respect of which they are payable.
- (2) Membership of the Society shall lapse if the member's subscription is unpaid for six months after it is due, but may be restored by the Council.
- (3) Members may pay more than the prescribed minimum, if they wish.
- (4) Members may pay annual subscriptions by banker's order or by Direct Debit.

GENERAL MEETINGS

8. (1) In these Rules "General Meeting" means a meeting of the Society open to all its members.
- (2) The Council shall arrange at least one General Meeting every year, to be called the Annual General Meeting, and may arrange as many other General Meetings, in these Rules referred to as Special General Meetings, as it may think fit. Notice of the date of such meetings shall be given not less than 35 days ahead.
- (3) General Meetings, the agenda for which shall be circulated not less than 21 days in advance of the meeting, shall take place at such times and places as the Council shall specify.
- (4) The President shall preside at any General Meeting at which he is present, and if he is not present the Chairman of the Council or some person nominated by the Chairman of the Council shall preside.
- (5) Any election to the Council shall be held at a General Meeting.
- (6) No person shall be eligible for the Council unless—
 - (i) he or she has been proposed and seconded by other members of the Society, and has consented to serve, and,
 - (ii) the names of the three persons concerned and the fact of the consent have reached the Hon. Secretary in writing at least 28 days before the General Meeting.
- (7) If the Hon. Secretary duly receives more names for election than there are vacancies, he shall prepare voting papers for use at the General Meeting, and those persons who receive most votes shall be declared elected.
- (8) The agenda for the Annual General Meeting shall include—
 - (a) receiving the Annual Report; and
 - (b) receiving the Annual Accounts.
- (9) At the Annual General Meeting any member of the Society may comment on any matter mentioned in the Report or Accounts, and may raise any matter not mentioned in the Report, if it is within the Objects of the Society.
- (10) The President or chairman of the meeting may limit the duration of speeches.
- (11) Resolutions by members may be made only at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special Meeting as permitted under sub-section (12) of this Section of the Constitution. Any member who wishes to make a Resolution shall give notice of such Resolution by sending it to the Society to reach the Honorary Secretary at least 28 days before the date of the meeting. The Resolution, if seconded at the meeting by another member, will be put to the vote.
- (12) If any 20 members of the Society apply to the Council in writing for a Special Meeting of the Society, the Council shall consider the application, and may make it a condition of granting it that the expense should be defrayed by the applicants.

AMENDMENTS

9. (1) These Rules may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at an Annual or Special General Meeting, if a notice in writing of the proposed amendment has reached the Hon. Secretary at least 28 days before such a Meeting. Provided that nothing herein contained shall authorise any amendment the effect of which would be to cause the Society at any time to cease to be a Charity in Law.
- (2) The Hon. Secretary shall send notices of any such amendment to the members of the Society 21 days before the General Meeting.

WINDING-UP

10. (1) The winding-up of the Society shall be subject to a Resolution proposed by the Council and approved by a two-thirds majority present at a Special General Meeting.
- (2) In the event of the winding-up of the Society the available funds of the Society shall be transferred to such one or more charitable institutions having objects reasonably similar to those herein before declared as shall be chosen by the Council of the Society and approved by the Meeting of the Society at which the decision to dissolve the Society is confirmed.

*The current rate is £5 annually payable on the 1st January. The annual husband-and-wife rate is £7.

List of Members

An asterisk denotes a life member. The Hon. Membership Secretary should be informed of correction or changes in name, address or title.

J. ABEL
 *MRS. J. ABEL
 *MRS. A. ABLES
 T. K. ABLES
 MISS B. M. ADKINS
 PAUL V. AITKENHEAD
 S. G. ALDER
 ROY ALDERSON
 R. ALEXANDER
 *MRS. R. ALEXANDER
 *MISS D. C. ALLASON
 *LT.-COL. J. H. ALLASON
 *MRS. NUALA ALLASON
 C. ALLEN
 *MRS. C. ALLEN
 *MRS. ELIZABETH AMATI
 *THE AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUB
 *MISS SOPHIE C. M. ANDREA
 *DOUGLAS H. ANDREW
 *MISS G. P. A. ANDREWS
 *THE MARQUESS OF ANGLESEY
 MISS MARY APPLEBY, C.B.E.
 PAUL ARBON
 *MRS. PAUL ARBON
 J. N. ARCHER
 *MRS. VICTORIA ARCHER
 ROBERT ARMITAGE
 *MRS. ROBERT ARMITAGE
 *MRS. JOHN ARMSTRONG
 PETER ARMSTRONG
 *DAVID ACHAN
 *MRS. M. G. ASCHAN
 *MARTIN ASHLEY
 *THE HON. NICHOLAS ASSHETON
 *MRS. R. J. V. ASTELL
 *MRS. PHILIP ASTLEY, O.B.E.
 MISS KATE ATTIA
 *MRS. DOUGLAS AUCHINCLOSS

*MRS. JULIAN BARROW
 SIMON BARROW
 *DEREK BARTON
 *MRS. DEREK BARTON
 *MRS. ROGER BASSETT
 MISS V. F. BAUMGART
 SIR PETER BAXENDELL
 LADY BAXENDELL
 DR. J. H. B. BEAL
 *MRS. J. H. B. BEAL
 *MISS VIVIEN BEAMISH
 *E. V. BEATON
 *J. BECKER
 *MRS. NUALA BECKER
 ROBERT BECKETT
 *MRS. ROBERT BECKETT
 *MRS. PATRICIA BEHR, M.V.O., M.B.E.
 *WILLIAM BELL
 *MRS. B. E. BELL-BURROW
 SIMON BENDALL
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