THE CHELSEA SOCIETY
REPORT

1993

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James McNeill Whistler by Walter Greaves
1876

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

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

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY
51 Milmans Street,
London SW10 0DA.

Registered Charity 276264

The Annual General Meeting

of the
Chelsea Society
was held at the
Hall of Remembrance,
Flood Street, Chelsea, S.W.3,
on
Wednesday 24th. November, 1993

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

The President opened the meeting by thanking members and guests for attending on such a cold night. He welcomed the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Councillor Desmond Harney, O.B.E., and the Mayoress, Mrs. Harney, also Councillor Andrew Fane, Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee, Mr. Michael French, Director of Planning Services and Mr. Michael Plumb of the Fulham Society.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 25th. November, 1992, were approved and signed by the President.

The President called upon the Hon. Treasurer to present the accounts for the year ending 31st. December, 1992. This he did, with his report. No questions were raised and the accounts were accepted unanimously. The President thanked the Hon. Treasurer for his report and continuing work on behalf of the Society.

As there were no resolutions, the President then called upon the Chairman to deliver his report following which Mr. William Bell asked what action was being taken to maintain the Chapel of the College of St. Mark and St. John. The Chairman replied that the Chapel was a listed building, it was on English Heritage's list of buildings at risk and that the Borough had been pressed by the Society to take action. Mr. French reported that the owners, King's College had agreed to carry out an agreed schedule of essential work which was to start shortly. Councillor Andrew Fane said that the Borough had identified 120 Listed Buildings requiring repair of which about half had been, or were being worked on. He continued that the Borough were hopeful of obtaining greater powers under Conservation Area legislation. He thanked the Society for their work on planning matters and assured them that their objectives were always noted, even if not acted upon. Finally he said that the Borough had no legal right to impose a

Section 106 Agreement in respect of access to Crosby Hall and if they had made it a condition of the planning permission would have lost on appeal.

The President then asked Mrs. Lesley Lewis to talk about the painting of the More family group. The original, she explained, had been burnt but the family had had several copies made of which that in Crosby Hall was one. On moving out of Crosby Hall, the Federation of Women Graduates had put the painting into store, at a cost of £800, and where storage was now costing £144 per quarter. The picture needed re-lining and restoring which would cost about £30,000. An appeal would be launched and it was hoped to circulate a notice of it with the annual Report. She had promised £5,000 and the Federation had promised a further £5,000 so that restoration work could start. It was expected to take 15 to 18 months.

Mrs. Gloria Stacey asked whether alternative tenders had been obtained for restoration. Mrs. Lewis replied that very few restorers had premises large enough. Christie's advice had been taken in choosing the restorer. The firm that had re-lined the Nostell Priory version was no longer able to undertake such a large work but thought the estimate a fair one, as did the Deputy Director of the National Portrait Gallery.

The Mayor immediately promised £100 "to encourage the others".

Mr. Michael Bach spoke about the weekend and night time lorry ban which had been achieved after a great deal of work by residents' societies and with the support of the Borough. This was now threatened by a Bill in the next Session of Parliament aimed at deregulation. Residents were urged to register their support for the bans with all their elected representatives.

Col. R. A. Rubens, the Vice-Chairman, thanked the Chairman on behalf of the Society for the tremendous amount of time he devoted to the work of the Society. This was warmly supported by all present.

There being no further business, the President drew the meeting to a close at 7.40 p.m. when members and their guests adjourned for wine and conversation. There were about 110 members present.

Chairman's Report

Constitution

The Council has decided that it should make such alterations and additions to the Constitution of the Society as seem prudent in the light of the Charities Act 1992. One major change which we have decided to instigate is for the Society to be constituted as a Limited Liability Company; the principal advantage of this is that it will provide a measure of protection for members of the Council in the case of their being prosecuted. This change will in no way affect our charitable status. We are grateful to Nigel Stenhouse who is carrying out this work for us. It is our intention to bring the proposals agreed by the Council to the 1994 AGM for approval.

The Council

Mary Fisher has retired as Activities Secretary. The Society is indebted to her, not just for her work as Activities Secretary but for her long period of service as Honorary Secretary. Stuart Corbyn, whose help with the Chelsea Festival Exhibition was invaluable, has been co-opted onto the Council during the course of the year.

Membership

The current membership of the Society is 1,038.

Affiliations and Conferences

The Society is a member of the Civic Trust, the London Forum of Amenity Societies, the River Thames Society and West London Traffic Reform.

The Society was represented by three members of the Council at the London Conservation Area Conference, held on 25th. November, 1992.

Annual Report

The 1992 Report was another excellent production and the credit for this is entirely due to our Honorary Editor, Tom Pocock.

Newsletter

As a result of a suggestion made at last year's A.G.M., the Council has decided to produce two newsletters per year; one being sent out with the notice of the summer meeting in May or June and the other with the Annual Report in early January. We are grateful to Michael Bach who has agreed to be the editor of the Newsletter. The first edition was produced in June of this year and was extremely well received. We want to improve on this first effort as we see this new venture becoming an indispensible communication with members and also a means of making the work of the Society more widely known.

Activities

(A) Winter Lectures

All of the lectures in our 14th. season were related to the history of Crosby Hall.

On 2nd. February Andrew Saint told us the fascinating story of how this mediaeval building came to be re-erected in Chelsea to become eventually the headquarters of the British Federation of University Women and of the vision of those who fought so hard to bring this about.

Tim Sturgis lectured on 2nd. March on the life and work of Walter Godfrey. Apart from being the architect responsible for the re-erection of Crosby Hall, he re-built Chelsea Old Church after the Second World War.

On 6th. April Angela Cox, a visiting lecturer with the National Portrait Gallery, compared all the various versions of the painting of the Thomas More Family Group based on the painting by Hans Holbein the Younger. One of these contemporary copies was presented by The Chelsea Society to Crosby Hall in 1950, where until recently it hung in pride of place.

All of the lectures were illustrated, they took place in the Small Hall at Chelsea Old Town Hall and were very well attended.

(B) Chelsea Residents' Association Meeting

This annual meeting was held on 4th. May in the Hall of Remembrance, Flood Street when questions were answered by the Chairman of the Royal Borough's Planning and Conservation Committee, Councillor Andrew Fane, and by his Executive Director, Miss Mary Dent. In addition to inviting representatives from Residents' Associations to attend, we also made the event known to the general public in the local press. As usual, the meeting was chaired by your Chairman.

(C) Chelsea Festival

1. *Exhibition*

   The Society's principal contribution to the 1993 Chelsea Festival was arranging an exhibition entitled "Chelsea in Maps and Pictures". This was held at 190 King's Road, S.W.3. from 14-19th. June, during which time it was visited by over 500 people. We were very fortunate to be able to stage this event in such a prominent location; this was due to the generosity of the Cadogan Estate; in addition, the Estate provided five unique maps of Chelsea which had never before been on public view. The majority of the material for the exhibition came from the local history section of Chelsea Library. We were grateful to the Royal Borough for agreeing to make these maps and pictures available and for the help we received from the library staff. On the evening of 15th. June a special private viewing was arranged at which our principal guest was the Mayor of the Royal Borough, Councillor Desmond Harney. This exhibition involved a great deal of work and organisation and we were indebted to John D. Wood who sponsored the event and with whom we very much enjoyed working.

2. *Guided Walks*

   The Society also organised guided walks on each of the weekday afternoons of the Chelsea Festival week.

   On 14th. June, your Chairman led a walk entitled "Chelsea's Two Parish Churches" ending with tea in St. Luke's Vestry. Ian Grant led a walk on 15th. June around Cadogan Square with tea at No. 68. On 16th. June, the walk, which was led by your Chairman was called "The London House in the 19th. Century" with tea at Carlyle's House. He again led the walk on 17th. June, which took in the Christ Church area and Tite Street, including a visit to a Tite Street studio house and tea in Christ Church garden; and on 18th. June, Roderick Gradidge led a walk around Chelsea Park ending up for tea at the Chelsea Arts Club.

   These walks were well attended and in accordance with the rules for participants of the Chelsea Festival, 25% of the profit made was donated to the Festival.

(D) *Summer Meeting*

Our Summer Meeting this year was held at the Moravian Burial Ground. The small museum and chapel were specially opened for us, as was Marit Guinness Aschan's studio. We were given a most warm and friendly welcome by Bishop Geoffrey Birtill and by members of the Moravian church. A splendid buffet supper was served by the catering department of King's College, London, in a specially erected marquee. We were honoured that the Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor Desmond Harney and Mrs. Harney, were able to be with us. About 150 members and guests attended and inspite of the fact that it rained all evening, everyone seemed to have had a thoroughly enjoyable time.

Most members had never previously visited this historic site which is probably the last secret open space in Chelsea. A custom from former Summer Meetings was revived in that historical notes on the Moravian Burial Ground were provided for those attending.

(E) *Autumn Lecture*

A special autumn lecture to mark the sesquicentenary of the birth of Sir Charles Dilke, M.P. for Chelsea, was given by Gerard Noel on 27th. October, Members were especially intrigued to learn of the scandal and subsequent court cases that led to Dilke's downfall. The lecture was held in the Small Hall at Chelsea Old Town Hall and was followed by a reception at the Chelsea Gardener, 125 Sydney Street. 150 members attended.

Chairman's Activities

On 20th. April, your Chairman gave a talk to the residents of Chelsea Court, Chelsea Embankment, on the history of Chelsea; he led a guided walk entitled "Sweetness and Light in Glebe Place" for the National Trust on 7th. July and 4th. August; and on 8th. November he was asked to speak on general planning matters at the A.G.M. of the Sydney Street and District Residents Association.

Chelsea Riverside

On 1st. November, the restored Chelsea Embankment was officially "opened" by the Mayor. This major piece of urban improvement is a great credit to the Royal Borough and has rightly earned it much praise, nationally a well as locally. The Society, too, can feel quietly satisfied by the part it has played in bringing this transformation about.

We also made a practical contribution to the restoration works by obtaining sponsorship of £1,000 each for the 16 new Embankment benches. The response from members of the Society to this invitation was exceedingly generous; and the Royal Borough has agreed to provide further benches if more sponsorship is forthcoming.

The Society entered its Report on the Chelsea Riverside for an "Award for Community Planning" jointly organised by the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Civic Trust; although we were not successful in winning one of the three prizes, we were delighted to have been amongst the 10 groups who were short-listed from a total of 83 entries.

Survey of Historic Street Furniture

This report, which was circulated at the end of last year, was well received by the Royal Borough who have agreed to ask for the listing of more items of historic street furniture. We are also endeavouring to persuade British Telecom to re-erect traditional telephone boxes on Chelsea Embankment. We will be carefully monitoring progress made in all aspects of the street scene.

The King's Road

Earlier this year, the Planning and Conservation Directorate of the Royal Borough called a meeting, at which this Society was represented, to discuss the particular environmental problems of the King's Road. It was decided that the Borough would produce a special report with recommendations. The Society fully supports this proposal and is anxious to help in whatever way it can.

Amongst the things which we shall be pressing for are the creation of a new King's Road Conservation Area to extend from Sloane Square to Moravian Corner, improvements to street furniture (especially bollards and pedestrian barriers), uniformity of paving, the removal of street clutter, improvements to Dovehouse Green, and better facilities for pedestrians.

Conservation Areas

The Department of the Environment is currently reviewing the legislation covering Conservation Areas. The Society fully supports the Royal Borough's view that the development for which planning permission is required in a Conservation Area should be extended to cover, for example, replacement doors and windows, alterations to roofs and boundary walls, erection of rear and side extensions and the painting of brickwork.

Kensington and Chelsea U.D.P.

The Unitary Development Plan sets out the Royal Borough's planning policy against which planning applications are considered. In the event of an appeal against the Borough's determination of an application, the policies of the U.D.P. and their interpretation are a prime consideration in the DoE Inspector's decision of such an appeal.

The Local Inquiry into the Royal Borough's Unitary Development Plan commenced on 26th. January and ended on 20th. July. The task of presenting evidence to such an Inquiry, be it oral or written, is a daunting one and not to be lightly undertaken. The Chelsea Society and the Kensington Society decided that as their concerns in respect of the U.D.P. were the same, it would be sensible for the two Societies to combine their efforts and to jointly employ a professional Planning Consultant to advise and help them. It was also considered that such joint evidence would be more effective in putting forward for views of residents at the Inquiry.

Your Chairman gave oral evidence on the context of the Plan and its principal strategic policies and the Vice-Chairman of the Kensington Society gave evidence on the topic of conservation and development. The Societies relied upon the evidence presented by West London Traffic Reform on the topic on transportation. Written evidence was submitted in respect of the remaining topics.

Some of the U.D.P. policies which favoured residents were eroded by changes made by the Royal Borough during the course of the Inquiry, which made our task even more difficult.

It is anticipated that the Inspector's Report will be issued in February and that the plan will be formally adopted in the autumn.

Wandsworth U.D.P.

On 11th. May the Society gave evidence at the Local Inquiry into the Borough of Wandsworth's U.D.P. Our overriding concern with regard to this Plan was its policies for riverside development and their likely impact on the Chelsea riverside. Nigel Stenhouse presented the Society's case and he called upon Tom Pocock and your Chairman to give evidence . On 7th. July, Hugh Krall represented the Society when the Inspector made a special visit to Chelsea to see our concerns for himself.

Planning Applications

In spite of the recession, when one would have thought that applications would have abated, there has been an increase in the number of representations which the Society's Planning Sub-Committee has made; 124, as opposed to 105 in the same period last year. Whilst the vast majority of our representations are objections to what is proposed, we do sometimes write supporting development. Our success rate is difficult to assess especially as a significant number of applications that are approved were modified as a result of our representations.

While the Society can claim to have had some influence over the Planning and Conservation Committee on minor applications, we seem to fail in respect of major developments such as the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital and the former College of St. Mark and St. John.

As last year, the greatest pressure for change is in the commercial parts of our area represented by the King's Road and the Fulham Road; a total of 37 representations.

In addition, during the year we have made 10 representations against applications for Night Café or Entertainment Licenses, all but one being in the King's Road or Fulham Road. The detrimental impact that these new, or extended, Licenses have on the quality of life for residents in or near to these main thoroughfares is often far reaching: and the depth of concern is amply demonstrated by the fact that in the case of two of these applications, the number of individual written objections were 148 and 121.

Of our representations, 12 were in support of the Royal Borough at Appeal against either planning refusal or enforcement action.

We are extremely grateful to Andrew Hamilton and his sub-committee who carry out this important part of the Society's work.

Some of the more significant applications over the past year have been:-

(a) Former College of St. Mark & St. John, 552 King's Road, S.W.10.

In January, 1992, the Planning and Conservation Committee considered applications submitted by King's College, London for massive re-development of this site. The Committee deferred the application asking its officers to seek certain amendments to the proposals. Exactly one year later, the applications were considered again; of the amendments sought, only one was satisfactorily addressed; in spite of this, Planning Services Committee decided it was mindful to grant permission. That permission was subject to direction by the Secretary of State for Transport and, fortunately, he has directed that permission is not granted.

The Chelsea Society strongly objected to these proposals, but in this it was virtually a lone voice. Our principal objections were to the amount of development, its encroachment on to landscaped open space of high amenity value, to which the public has access, the unsuitability of office use for Stanley House and the fact that no provision was made for the possible construction of an Underground station to link the Chelsea-Hackney Line to the existing West London Line.

In respect of this last point alone, the decision of the Planning Committee was both bizarre and inconsistent; for it is the Royal Borough's policy to support the construction of the Chelsea-Hackney Underground line and the construction of a station on this site. A formal objection by London Transport to the planning applications was ignored by the Committee.

The Chelsea Society has always held the view that this important and historic site should remain in the use to which it has been put for the last 150 years, that is, educational. With its purpose-designed buildings and its extensive grounds, it forms a magnificent educational campus that is unique in West London, especially if it were combined with the two adjacent redundant school buildings in Hortensia Road. The fact that a new preparatory school, to be known as the Octagon School, is opening on part of the site in January and that the University of Southern Mississippi has run a highly successful summer school there for a number of years is indicative of the continuing need for an educational facility in this location. Now that the Royal Borough has its own education department, we would urge them to use the 'breathing space' afforded by the Secretary of State's direction to give serious consideration as to how this site could become a strategic educational resource.

(b) 64 Old Church Street

This Listed house, designed in 1936 by Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff is of national importance to the history of the Modern Movement in architecture in this country. In October last year, an application was submitted for re-building the conservatory to the south and erecting an extension on the north side, over the garage. The Society objected to these alterations and extensions as we felt that they compromised the integrity of the original design. To our surprise, both the Royal Borough and English Heritage approved the application. Fortunately, the owner has decided not to proceed with the especially damaging north extension.

(c) *Warwick Road Sites*

Although these major sites, located to the N.W. of the junction of Warwick Road with Cromwell Road, are some way from Chelsea, we have felt bound to object to outline proposals for the massive development that is proposed here because of their likely impact upon traffic generation over a wide area, including Chelsea.

We consider that a major supermarket with some 400 parking spaces would be especially damaging in encouraging people to shop by car in a part of London which suffers from traffic congestion and where shopping in this way is completely unnecessary. The Planning Brief approved by the Royal Borough in May, 1992, did not include retail as a suitable use, nor were these sites identified for retail development in the Deposited U.D.P.

If the Royal Borough is serious about reducing traffic in our street, it would be illogical for it to grant permission for this development.

(d) *Battersea Bus Garage*

We strongly opposed an outline application for a 10-storey block of flats on the Battersea Riverside, directly opposite to Chelsea Old Church and we were glad that the Royal Borough also officially objected. Unfortunately, the London Borough of Wandsworth has granted permission.

(e) *Crosby Hall*

In September of last year a planning application was made for development at this site and for change of use to a single family dwelling. The Society welcomed the removal of the 1960's buildings and the architectural treatment of the proposed new Tudor-style buildings on the Cheyne Walk frontage.

We approved of the idea of implementing Walter Godfrey's original concept for the Hall, which was that it should be set within a courtyard but we considered that a way should be devised of keeping the gate on to Cheyne Walk open during daylight hours so that people passing by could look into the courtyard, as occurs at Oxford and Cambridge colleges.

Our main concern in respect of this application was the question of public access to the Hall. We considered that planning permission should only be granted for this development if it were conditional upon the owner entering into a Section 106 Agreement with the Royal Borough; such Agreement to allow public access to the Hall on at least 60 days per year. In view of the fact that the public enjoyed free access to this building on every day between 1927-92, such an Agreement would have been perfectly reasonable.

Throughout this year we lobbied the Royal Borough to impose this condition but they declined to do so; the only explanation given, being that the applicant would not agree to it. We argued that the likelihood of an applicant's agreement to them should never dictate the conditions imposed on a planning permission.

In June, this planning application was refused by the Royal Borough. After a meeting between the applicant and the Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee, a virtually identical application was submitted in August and this was given permission five weeks later. We note that one of the conditions to this permission does allow for limited public access, but it is not legally enforceable; so the only remaining medieval City merchant's house whose roof is one of the finest surviving examples of English carpentry, a building for which previous generations fought hard to preserve for public enlightenment, will now give only private pleasure.

Painting of the More Family Group

Some of us had hoped that if public access had been secured to Crosby Hall, this painting could be returned to its former home. In the event, this is now out of the question and so, together with the British Federation of Women Graduates, we have carefully considered alternative locations. We have decided that its new home should be in Chelsea Old Town Hall and that it should hang in the main hall, in a prominent position at the back of the small platform at the south end of the hall. The Royal Borough has gladly agreed to this proposal. Meanwhile, the painting is in store at the expense of the Federation.

The painting requires conservation and extensive restoration and special measures will need to be made for its security; the costs of this will be substantial. In view of this, it has been agreed that it should be vested in a specially formed charitable trust which will raise the necessary funds and care for its future wellbeing. The proposal is that there should be five Trustees; two being nominees of the Federation and two to be nominees of this Society; with the fifth Trustee being appointed by the other four.

52 Tite Street

As part of our effort to save this unique studio house together with its contents, we drew attention to its plight by means of a press release issued in January. Although we achieved good coverage in the national press, no benefactor with the necessary funds came forward. Unfortunately, the house has now been sold and its contents removed.

Miss Mary Dent

The Society was saddened to learn of the death on 9th. September, at the age of 51, of Mary Dent, the Royal Borough's Executive Director of Plan-ning and Conservation. The Borough was extremely fortunate in having such an able and highly respected chief officer responsible for planning, we very much enjoyed working with her and were touched by the fact that she made a special effort to attend our Residents' Associations meeting and to give evidence for the Council at the U.D.P. Inquiry when we were appearing, even though she was far from well. For several years, she fought the illness which finally overcame her, with tremendous courage.

Appreciation

The more prominent profile and increased activity of the Society involves a great deal of work for the Council of the Society, especially the Officers, and I wish to thank them for all their hard work. The effort that is involved is rewarded by a number of factors: our excellent working relationship with the Royal Borough, the success we achieve from time to time, and the appreciation and support given by members for all that we do.

The residents' associations ask questions

The fifth meeting of residents' associations arranged by the Chelsea Society was held on 4th. May at the Hall of Remembrance in Flood Street. Under the chairmanship of David Le Lay, a crowded meeting put questions to Councillor Andrew Fane, Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and to Mary Dent, the Executive Director, making one of her last public appearances before her untimely death.

Written questions opened the meeting and the first was about public access to the now privately-owned Crosby Hall. Councillor Fane recognised the importance of this but — prophetically, as it has turned out — asked, "But can we enforce it?" The fate of the chapel of St. Mark and St. John has also aroused concern and the Councillor told the meeting that it was seen as a listed building at risk and that unless maintenance work started soon a repairs notice would be served.

Answering a question about lighting on the Embankment, he confirmed that it was being restored in full. As to poor lighting in side-streets, he urged those with complaints to make them to the Council, adding that some people actually preferred dim streets. A rolling plan to replace inappropriate concrete lamp standards had begun.

He told another questioner that his Committee regarded metal poles for parking and other signs in the streets as clutter and he was trying to get rid of as many as possible. He promised that under Council control car-parking would be better ordered by the wardens. But he was not hopeful about the council's power to reduce noise nuisance from helicopters although a projected floating heliport would be subject to control if it was moored within the boundaries of Chelsea. Councillor Fane shared residents' concern about the change of use of commercial premises to restaurants and night clubs as "a very vexed problem". One aspect was that "closing time" was now interpreted as being that for "last orders" and not for customers leaving the premises. The Committee had decided more than a year ago that the King's Road had enough restaurants, so had refused an application for a basement extension to a restaurant but had lost on appeal and been charged with costs. "Each marginal increase can hardly be a sustainable ground for refusal," he said, "So we do not have much real power over this."

Other questions concerned the clutter and litter outside the main entrance to the new Chelsea and Westminster Hospital; Councillor Fane said that this area was-swept four times a day and that the problem was being taken in hand further. There was also the problem of the burning of hospital waste but the Council had no control over hospitals' activities. To the question as to whether there could be more "bottle banks", the answer was that, because of the noise, they were not always acceptable in residential areas. Fast traffic in Old Church Street and the need for "traffic humps" there was mentioned and Miss Dent replied that the fire and ambulance services did not like them but that there were a few more streets where they might be allowed. The quality of air in Chelsea streets had deteriorated seriously of late and one questioner mentioned a refrigerated delivery lorry which would leave its engine running, pumping out fumes, for twenty minutes while parked. Councillor Fane said that air pollution was high on the Council's priority list.

Other questions followed and the meeting ended with Councillor Jonathan Wheeler thanking the chairman of the Chelsea Society for organising it.

Judging the environment . . .

Tom Pocock joins the judges in the Royal Borough

The annual judging for the Borough Council's Environment Awards gives one member of the Council of the Chelsea Society an opportunity to see the theories of town planning put into practice. Improvements to the fabric of the Royal Borough have been submitted and are assessed and some found worthy of awards or commendations.

In June, 1993, the six judges spent a day touring in a minibus and looking at familiar surroundings through critical eyes. They were Councillor Andrew Fane, Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee; Mary Dent, the Executive Director; Ana Matheson of the Action Disability movement (herself disabled); Robert Vigars, a former Chairman of the GLC Planning Committee, now representing the Kensington Society, Robert O'Hara, an architect nominated by Mary Dent, and myself representing the Chelsea Society.

It was a long and fascinating day, judging the 34 entries. Of these, 10 were in Chelsea and two of them were commended: 118 Lots Road, a new building of Victorian design to match its neighbour, and the new entrance to Wellington Square. The beginnings of the refurbishment of the Embankment were admired but it was thought that judgement should await its completion next year.

No new building was given an award but of the four other awards given — all in Kensington —the most outstanding was the improvement to the Lancaster West Estate north of Holland Park Avenue, where dismal flats had been transformed by roofing over courtyards and refitting them as attractive indoor spaces. Other entries were judged as commercial development, new or improved access for the disabled, restoration and conversion and general improvements. It was particularly gratifying that one of the two commendations for restoration and conversion went to 20 Ladbroke Square, reborn as an immaculate Victorian terrace house, where the architect had been David Le Lay, our Chairman.

This judge was particulary impressed by the knowledge and sensitivity to the issues displayed by Councillor Fane and his Committee's professional adviser, Mary Dent, who sadly died before the presentation of the awards by the Mayor on 27th. September; she will be greatly missed by all who care for their environment.

Lost with all hands

The fate of the RiverBus

Last summer, one of the joys of living in Chelsea was to look down the street to the river, see that the tide was high and that the sun shone and decide to go to the West End, or the City, or Greenwich by water. A glance at the RiverBus timetable would show, to the minute, when it would be necessary to leave for Cadogan Pier. The time of arrival at one's destination could then be calculated with almost equal accuracy.

The Thames RiverBus was, perhaps, the most successful innovation in London's transport since the building of the Tube and the Routemaster bus. How amazing, then, that it should have been allowed to collapse.

There had, of course, been a number of boat services on the river before but those that followed the paddle-steamers which plied between Chelsea and the City at the turn of the century were ill-fated. The waterbuses, which called at Cadogan Pier during the Festival of Britain were underpowered and could not keep to their timetable. There were several other unsuccessful attempts to use the river for passenger traffic before the RiverBus service opened in 1989 to link two new developments, Chelsea Harbour in Fulham and Canary Wharf on the Isle of Dogs.

But it was not until January, 1992, that the new catamarans stopped at Cadogan Pier, although that was potentially the most lucrative catchment area for aquatic commuters in London. However, there was almost no advertising beyond a few leaflets pushed through letter-boxes in and around Cheyne Walk. During the first year, few Londoners seemed to know about the new service and on several occasions when the Underground was shut by a "security alert", Embankment station was crowded with commuters unaware that there was a RiverBus service running every 20 minutes (later, every 30) from Charing Cross Pier just across the road.

What a service it was! On the dot, the boats would run alongside Cadogan Pier as deftly as *vaporetti* on the Grand Canal, whisking their passengers to the West End in less than 15 minutes. It was said to be expensive but most journeys were about twice the price for the same journey by bus or Underground, twice as quick and infinitely more reliable, comfortable and enjoyable and half the cost of a taxi.

Despite the lack of advertising, business improved. The boats filled with early morning commuters at Chelsea and, throughout the day, tourists crowded on board at Charing Cross for trips down to the Tower and Greenwich. New, quieter catamarans were being brought into service and their strength of 10 boats with 55 crewmen was to be increased.

Once financial disaster had struck Olympia and York, the Canary Wharf developers, the RiverBus service was in danger. But it was becoming a necessity for Londoners and tourists alike. It was also seen to be becoming commercially viable as it became ever more firmly established. Nicholas Scott, M.P. for Chelsea, took up its troubles with Steven Norris, the Minister for Transport in London, who replied that he saw the RiverBus "essentially as a commercial venture and one that must make its way without reliance on the taxpayer for support." One feels the Greater London Council, whichever party was in power, would never have allowed it to die.

But die it did last August, suddenly. The river fell silent again and those Chelsea people who had become accustomed to strolling down to Cadogan Pier for one of the most enjoyable experiences of their day, would stop and remind themselves that again they would have to join the traffic fumes and jams on London's roads.

Other great cities — Paris, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Istanbul, New York, Hong Kong, Sydney and of course, Venice — use their waterways for transport, so why, oh why can't we?

Tom Pocock

The five friends who were not forgotten

A new memorial at the Old Church

Winifred Bottley has never forgotten her five friends who died when the Old Church was bombed in April, 1941. Nor has she forgotten that, but for a chance of fate, she and her husband Percy would have died with them.

The Bottleys were also firewatchers, protecting the Old Church during the Blitz, and were to be on duty on the night of 16th.-17th. April. Then, at their office in Old Church Street, from which they dealt in geological specimens, an urgent order arrived for certain types of stone from Wales. It being wartime, they would have to get it themselves and arranged to exchange firewatching duties with their manager, Fred Winter, and Sidney Sims, who worked for them as a lens-maker. These two would join another neighbour, Yvonne Greene, a newly-married Canadian (nicknamed "Canada"), Henry Frankland, a carpenter also working in the street, young Michael Hodge, who was about to join the Black Watch, and Arthur Mallett, a lorry-driver, at the Old Church that night. When the Bottleys returned from Wales they were told of the tragedy. The Old Church had been almost destroyed by two parachute mines and of the six firewatchers only Arthur Mallett survived.

Years passed. The Old Church rose again like a phoenix, in the porch a memorial to the five firewatchers. But the Bottleys wanted their own memorial to their friends. Now one of their customers was a sculptor, Alfred Lyndhurst Pocock, who had become a friend. Although his early work had been on the vast Victoria Memorial outside Buckingham Palace, he had taken to carving in semi-precious stones, buying his materials from the Bottleys and selling his work through Carl Fabergé, the only Englishman to do so. Pocock was a man of strong religious convictions and Winifred and Percy were struck by his relief carving of the Crucifixion, called "Excelsior". They bought it and, in 1954, presented it to the Old Church in memory of their five friends.

There was still much to do in the restoration of the church and the Bottley's plaque was stored in a vestry cupboard to await a decision as to its eventual display. Time passed, much else occupied the minds and time of the parishioners, and it was not until this year that Winifred — now a widow; still a regular worshipper at the Old Church — happened to mention the carving to a friend. The plaque was discovered, still in its brown paper parcel.

The site now chosen for the plaque was in the vestry, just inside the 14th. century window so that it can be seen from within the church itself. Finally, at Parish Communion on 3rd. October, 1993, the vicar, the Rev. Peter Elvy, dedicated the memorial and afterwards, during the usual gathering in the vestry, it was seen and admired by the congregation. Winifred Bottley was present, of course, and she said happily that the occasion seemed to bring her friends of 1941 very close.

(See illustration, page 36) Reprinted from *The Chelsea Anchor* with kind permission.

Festival in Chelsea

Derek Watson, the Rector of Chelsea, recalls the 1993 celebration and looks forward to 1994

How did it all begin? Some people remember Chelsea Week in former days. An old programme describes the old-time music hall, the river races, the mid-summer masque — and the flower show at the Royal Hospital. Chelsea Week was the inspiration of the Chelsea Flower Show, but not directly of the 1993 Festival. This came out of a church weekend, when a group from the parish of St. Luke's and Christ Church were away together at a house near Winchester. We were reviewing the past and planning for the future when we realized how little we knew about our neighbours and what was going on elsewhere in Chelsea. We had to admit our ignorance of the wider community in which we lived. This sowed a seed in my mind. If only we could all get together to do our own thing in one particular week of the year, we would be so much better informed about our neighbourhood and much more aware of all the good things going on around us. A church exists, in part, to serve its local community, and we could help to bring people of all sorts together in a common enterprise.

The idea of a festival took root and was enthusiastically received by all kinds of local groups. In January, 1992, we had our first meeting, bringing together artists, actors, writers, musicians, gardeners, police and local councillors. Everybody recognized the opportunity. Every organization, or interest, could set out its stall and proclaim its wares. No wonder the suggestion snowballed and more and more people wanted to join in. From the beginning it was clear that we were establishing a community festival, celebrating the whole of Chelsea, past, present and future, and drawing on local talent, rather than an arts festival, concentrating on cultural events with imported performers.

At our first public meeting we formed an executive committee to address fundamental issues of administration, financing and publicity. We had to set up an office and appoint a paid administrator. Here we were very fortunate. From a large field of applicants we were able to appoint Anita Jackson, who has been a mainstay of the Festival ever since, and we received generous financial backing from the Cadogan Estate, who provided an office and in due course a shop front in the King's Road. This meant that in our first year we were spared serious financial anxiety, which was a real godsend, given all the other uncertainties of a new venture cutting its teeth. It gave our treasurer, Ian Frazer, some space to wrestle with the Charity Commissioners, who were surprisingly slow to recognize our claim for charitable status. Eventually this was secured. We had to learn as

we went along, and some lessons were hard learning. Perhaps we had most to learn about publicity, about producing a printed programme and promoting its contents. We discovered how little people read and remember, particularly when the information arrives in a freebie magazine. The Festival only dented the public consciousness when the banners went up in the King's Road and adjoining streets. Even then we realized that the media are only interested in celebrity names.

The Fashion Show, which attracted major designers like Vivienne Westwood and Catherine Walker and well-known spectators like Ivana Trump, commanded considerable press coverage. An anonymous donation of over £60,000 collected no column inches whatsoever because it was anonymous. We ought to have realized that big names count for far too much today. We will not forget this in 1994.

Given our humble origins and limited objectives the first Festival went extremely well. There were grand events like the opening service at St. Luke's with the Bishop of London present and Lord Wilson of Tillyarn giving the address, and some spectacular sell-outs like the fashion show and the military band concert at the Duke of York's Headquarters. There was a great range of music from the concerts in St. Luke's and Holy Trinity to the jazz in Sloane Square and the fringe events on Dovehouse Green. Theatre was provided by the Royal Court, a community play at the World's End and Joan White's Next Theatre Stage Company. The Chelsea Society, the Chelsea Arts Society and the Chelsea Arts College vied with each other with their exhibitions of "Chelsea in Maps and Pictures" and of work by their members and students. Other exhibitions included John Bignell's superb photographs, hats from Kensington and Chelsea College and art in the local schools. The London Sketch Club opened its doors to non-members and we gained privileged access to private garden through the Chelsea Gardens Guild. Hospitals and churches made special arrangements for visitors, and the Chelsea Society organized guided walks. There were literary events thanks to P.E.N., whose offices are in Dilke Street. All in all, we covered a fair slice of Chelsea, past and present. So much so that one letter of appreciation said "There will be nothing left for next year".

Not so. Next year's programme looks even better. Most of last year's participants will be contributing, but there will be an enlarged programme with some new features, including films. Many more people want to take part and we must take care to safeguard the quality and avoid overloading the programme. The enthusiasm is most encouraging. It demonstrates what a lively place Chelsea still is and our pride in being part of this community. Now we need financial sponsorship — for individual events or for the Festival as a whole — to ensure that it actually takes place in 1994.

(See illustrations, pages 38-9)

The scandalous Member for Chelsea

Gerard Noel examines the case of Sir Charles Dilke

Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke was born, and lived most of his life, at 76 Sloane Street, where he died in 1911. He represented the then new Parliamentary borough of Chelsea from 1868 to 1886. So successful, so famous and so popular was he as M.P. for Chelsea, that he was known, in his own lifetime, as well as to posterity, as "the Member for Chelsea".

Dilke had an unconventional upbringing in that ill health prevented his going to school. But, by the age of 19, he was well enough not only to go up to Cambridge, which he did in the year 1862, but there, at Trinity Hall, to achieve the triple distinction of being senior legalist in the law tripos, President of the Cambridge Union and stroke of the boat which was head of the river in that year.

Cambridge was followed by an eventful trip around the world taking a whole year, during which he wrote long and numerous letters home. These letters became the basis of a remarkable book — a classic in its own way — published in 1866, entitled *Greater Britain*. In the words of Dilke's distinguished biographer, Lord Jenkins, the book gave him "not only considerable politico-literary reputation, but also a wide range of new contacts". The book was something of a "square circle", exhibiting Dilke as both an advanced radical and republican, and also a convinced imperialist. It was while working on this book that Dilke, now aged 24, was adopted as the Liberal candidate for Chelsea, a Parliamentary borough which, at this time, extended from just beyond his Sloane Street house on one side, as far as Hammersmith and Kensal Green on the other.

His climb to office was slow and, as Jenkins puts it, "laborious", partly due to internal rivalries within the Liberal Party, and partly due to the complicated political issues of the day. Having served as Under Secretary for foreign affairs from 1880 to 1882, he joined the Cabinet in the year 1882, as President of the Local Government Board, which at that time, was an important portfolio relating largely to Parliamentary reform. Dilke's great achievement at this period — and it took a considerable amount of skill, Parliamentary expertise, sheer determination and powers of persuasion — was to pilot through the House of Commons a bill for the redistribution of Parliamentary seats along more democratic — or, at least, less undemocratic — lines.

He was, in fact, at the peak of his powers, both mentally and physically, when, on the evening of July 18th., 1865, he returned home in high spirits from the Reform Club. A banquet had been held in his honour, to congratulate him in the piece of legislation just mentioned, the Redistribution Bill. Cheers were still ringing in his ears as he arrived at his house in Sloane Street, only to find, awaiting him there, a note from a certain Mrs. Rogerson, a close friend, or someone whom he then thought to be a close friend, asking him to call on her on the following morning as she had some grave information to give him. He went early on the next morning and learned that a certain Mrs. Donald Crawford, the young sister of his brother's widow, had confessed to her husband that soon after her marriage, Dilke had become her lover; and that Crawford in consequence, was proposing to sue for divorce and to name Dilke as co-respondent.

It was a shattering blow for Dilke. It was thought probable, at this time, that the ageing Prime Minister, Mr. Gladstone, might soon relinquish the leadership of the Liberal Party. Dilke was the obvious "heir apparent". Now all his dreams seemed to have been shattered.

Virginia Crawford, a kinswoman, as already noted, was 22 at the time. It was known, but not subsequently thought to be of crucial importance, that Dilke, many years earlier, had enjoyed a romantic dalliance with Mrs. Crawford's mother, Mrs. Eustace Smith. It is sometimes — *but almost certainly, wrongly* — supposed that this earlier liaison on Dilke's part may have, to some extent, motivated Mrs. Crawford in her accusations. It must be admitted, moreover that Dilke was known to have had casual affairs with several ladies. Again, almost certainly, however, Mrs. Crawford was not not one of them. She, more than twenty years Dilke's junior, was not unattractive but certainly no great beauty. She was a frustrated woman at this point in her life. She was unhappy at home and at the age of 18, four years before making her accusations, she had married a dour Scottish MP in order to get away. She was never happy with him, never loved him and began to be unfaithful to him (though not with Dilke) within about a year of her marriage. Her lover was a certain Captain Henry Forster, whom Mrs. Crawford wanted to shield and with whom she was, without much doubt, in love; soon after the subsequent divorce case, however, Forster died.

Crawford was strikingly portrayed in a play called *Right Honourable Gentleman*, based loosely on Jenkins's book, as a dour and stern Victorian husband summoning his young wife into his room brandishing an insinuating anonymous letter and asking her, using a curious old fashioned expression, "Virginia, have you defiled my bed?" He then went on to say, "I have long suspected Forster." Mrs. Crawford, possibly panicking, hotly denied that Forster was her lover and then blurted out the expression "the man who ruined me was Charles Dilke". Gaining confidence, she added some further and sensational revelation, going as far as to say that Dilke "taught me every French vice".

What happened as the immediate result of this bombshell was that Crawford brought an action for divorce against Dilke, heard early in the

following year, 1886. It was in every way an extraordinary case, one of the strangest ever to be brought, at least in the early days of the old Probate Divorce and Admiralty Division of the High Court.

The case for Crawford consisted almost entirely of a recitation, by Crawford, of his wife's confession which was uncorroborated except for the testimony, which was faulty and inconclusive, of two almost valueless witnesses. Nevertheless, the picture looked black for Dilke despite the fact, and this of course is extremely significant, that the judge, in his summing up said, "I cannot see any case whatever against Sir Charles Dilke".

Dilke, indeed, was discharged from the case, having been found in law to be an innocent man. Unfortunately, however, the situation was more complicated and, indeed, more tragic than this. Crawford's petition was granted on the grounds of his wife's adultery with Dilke. Now this verdict, strictly speaking, was correct in law but in practice, it meant that while Mrs. Crawford was found guilty of adultery with Dilke, Dilke was found not guilty of adultery with Mrs. Crawford. What on earth were the public at large to make of such an extraordinary verdict? Naturally, people were interested only in headlines, the sort of headlines which now proclaimed, "Charles Dilke named in sensational divorce case". So unsatisfactory, indeed, was this hearing for divorce, brought by Crawford against Dilke, that the Queen's Proctor was prevailed upon to intervene and to show cause why the decree given at this point should not be made absolute.

Dilke, however, was very badly advised by his counsel, Sir Charles Russell, one of the leading advocates of the day but not, it appears, fully conversant with the procedure of matrimonial law, which admittedly at this time was only in its infancy. Matrimonial law, in those days was catering for very few cases and was to undergo many changes before it became much more sophisticated years later. Be that as it may, Dilke not only found to his consternation, and contrary to the advice given him, that he would not be allowed to appear as a party in the case brought by the Queen's Proctor, but also he discovered that he would not be supported in court by Sir Charles Russell as he had hoped. He had confidently expected that Mrs. Crawford, on the supposition that she would also be a party to the case, would be subjected to what could only be a rigorous cross-examination by Sir Charles Russell. And it was thus confidently, indeed realistically, hoped by him that Mrs. Crawford's evidence would be totally destroyed.

As it was, the Queen's Proctor, no great friend of Dilke at the best of times, was represented in court by a certain Sir Walter Phillimore Q.C., who although a competent barrister, was by no means as formidable an advocate as his adversary in court, the man who was briefed by Crawford, namely Sir Henry Matthews Q.C., a high Tory and avowed enemy of Charles Dilke. Dilke appeared, as did Mrs. Crawford, as a witness only and was duly subjected to a withering cross-examination at the hands of Matthews. The worst part of all was that Dilke proved to be an extremely bad witness in his own defence. Even if, as we can legitimately suppose,

he was telling the truth, his answers were so full of circumlocution and were so evasive as to put him apparently completely in the wrong.

Mrs. Crawford, on the other hand, had, by this time, become the hero of the hour, while Dilke was cast in the role of heavy villain. The jury took very little time to return a verdict which was unfavourable to Dilke who, only now felt certain that his career was finally ruined.

By this time it was the summer of 1886. Dilke was persuaded to stand again for Chelsea at the next election and was only narrowly beaten. From now on, he determined to try and clear his name by all legitimate means possible. He briefed a solicitor, who, with the help of agents, set out to track down all possible new evidence that might rehabilitate his good name. The evidence that came to light was little less than completely damning of Mrs. Crawford, who, it appeared, was far from being an innocent young woman, seduced by Dilke. Rather did it become apparent that she had several lovers and that she had unquestionably lied in the witness box.

One of her original allegations against Dilke, moreover, had been that, on one occasion, he had introduced a second lady into the bedroom, namely a young woman called Fanny Gray, an indoor servant whom Dilke persuaded to join himself and Mrs. Crawford in bed. This three-in-a-bed story was naturally very shocking to the public at large, but it was also said, in sophisticated social and political circles, that Mrs. Crawford could hardly have made up this story if it had not actually happened. This, however, is where the new evidence becomes very important. It was subsequently discovered, beyond any doubt, that Mrs. Crawford had made love to her principal paramour, Henry Forster, in the company of her own sister, Mrs. Harrison. In other words, this is almost certainly where the three-in-a-bed story came from. This is only one example of how the case, that had at one time seemed so formidable against Dilke, suddenly began to crumble and almost to disintegrate.

Unfortunately, however, all this came to light too late to be of any real service to Dilke even though a committee had been formed of respectable and influential men, some of them in public life, and by no means all of them special friends of Dilke. There was little, in practice, that they could do.

It was at this stage that an even more mysterious element enters into the whole conundrum. Whereas Dilke never ceased all his life to seek opportunities for clearing his name, Mrs. Crawford, shortly after the second case, seemed able to put the case entirely our of her mind and never referred to it again. Indeed the life of Mrs. Crawford from that moment on was as different as can possibly be imagined to what her life had been before. It might be wrong to call her, up to then, a "loose woman" but she was by no means the innocent young damsel seduced by Dilke's charms that she would have wished to present herself to the world in the year 1886.

What happened was amazing and dramatic. She was a friend, as was Dilke in a different context, of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster of the day, Cardinal Henry Manning. She told him of her desire to be

received into the Roman Catholic Church. He explained the implications of this desire, and after her protestations that she was quite sincere, which he accepted, she eventually went to confession to Cardinal Manning, presumably admitting any misdeeds of her former life and, on receiving absolution, then received her first Holy Communion as a member of the Roman Catholic Church.

This circumstance adds another serious dimension into the whole situation. Did she confess all her "sins" to Manning? Or had she by now so successfully transferred events and occurrences, which had actually happened with Forster, over to Dilke? If so, did she confess this? Did she in fact confess that she had lied in the witness box and had seriously defamed the Member for Chelsea?

Well, of course, we will never know the answers to these questions. So sacrosanct is the "seal of confession" that Manning could never tell anyone what she said. But if she *had* confessed to telling monstrous lies about Dilke, he would have been bound to tell her that she could not receive absolution until she had made full "restitution" to Dilke and ensured the restoration of his good name. This would have involved her making some sort of public affirmation of Dilke's innocence and acknowledgement of her own mendacious accusations against him. But such a thing never happened. We are left then at the end of it all, with more of a mystery than ever.

Mrs. Crawford, born in 1865, did not die until she was over 80. More than half of her life was spent as a devout Roman Catholic, passionately involved in the social and charitable activities of her Church. She never remarried. She never again referred to Dilke. It was as if she had put all those parts of her life in a back room, locked the door, and never thought of them again. Was this a sure sign of her innocence or is there some much more intricate psychological explanation of this apparent metamorphosis of her life, possible showing some sort of almost schizophrenic ability to live at two levels? Perhaps indeed she had two totally different sides to her nature, one of which was in command of the first half of her life, and the other in command of the second. Mrs. Crawford seemed to live happily ever afterwards.Whether or not she ever thought about the misery which she had inflicted on Dilke and the total destruction she had wrought to both his private and public life, we shall never know.

The author gave a lecture on the Dilke case to the Chelsea Society in October, 1993.

(See illustration, page 40)

A Markham Square childhood

by Elizabeth Russell

In the early spring of 1930 a large pantechnicon drew up outside 33 Markham Square, full of furniture. Inside the house waited my mother, my aunt, me, soon to be nine years old, two Welsh maids, Lena and Dilys, Tiger the cairn, and Roger the cat. Later we would be joined by Johnny, my ten-year-old brother. We were moving house, from Wales.

I deeply resented leaving Wales. Our house there had a kind of blessedness about it and the big garden with the mountain beyond was a paradise for children. There was no electricity but coal fires (but not upstairs unless you were ill), lamps and candles, one bathroom and two ghosts. We ran wild in a civilized kind of way and were in the main blissfully happy. Then, in the autumn of 1929, we had to move, to a place called Chelsea, and now the day was upon us.

I was taken for a walk to cheer me up, to Battersea Park. There I sat on a bench, looking at the distant gasworks and found that if I screwed up my eyes they looked like the Snowdonia mountains. I felt bereft. After a few weeks things improved. The Victorian house had been modernised and was so different, and I loved it. There was electric light and gas fires which popped when you lit them. No central heating, of course; the water was heated by a coke boiler. Each house had two coal cellars, with coal holes in the pavement, and the Gas, Light and Coke Company would call with its horse and cart and empty sacks of fuel down the holes. No fridge, but Harrods would deliver huge blocks of ice for you to put in your icebox. No washing machine, but the Reliance Laundry called regularly. Two bathrooms, one at the top of the house and one in the pantry for the maids with a wooden top on it so you could use it as a table, an early worktop. I spent most of my time in the basement, for the maids were my great friends and were young and we had fun.

At the back of the house there was a small garden, with a pond and a vine and jasmine. It backed onto the backyards of the Bywater Street houses. Every night when it was dark I could see an old lady in Bywater Street climbing slowly upstairs carrying a candle through the dark landings. The street was known as Bug Street, for the houses were infested with them. At the bottom of the street was the Dumb Friends' League shelter for stray cats.

I made a great friend who lived in a flat in Beaufort Street, opposite the terminus for the trams, which rattled off to Clapham. I used to go to tea there, and her nanny would take us for a walk along the river. We were in love with the river. We walked there whenever we could and watched the barges, and the water rising, sometimes so fast and high it slapped against

the top of the Embankment wall. At night, Chelsea children would go to sleep listening to the foghorns from the river craft, and on New Year's Eve at midnight they all hooted and the church bells rang and people in the Square came out on their doorsteps and shouted "Happy New Year" to each other.

On Sundays, my mother and I would go for a walk in the afternoon to spend my pocket money at a sweetshop at the western end of Cheyne Walk, which was kept by an old black man. Apart from having seen Paul Robeson in films (and being deeply in love with him) I don't think I had ever seen a black man, and it was marvellous to me to see his black hand weigh out my scarlet, green and orange peardrops into a small three-cornered bag and then twist the white corners of it shut. You could hear the water lapping and the gulls crying in Cheyne Walk, it was so quiet, for there was no traffic. As one grew older and started to go to dances it was to the river one went with one's boyfriend to watch the dawn come up over the black water.

Markham Square looked different in those days. External window frames were nearly all painted black (No. 6 still has this) and very elegant they looked. Across the bottom stood a large Congregational Church built of what looked like Kentish Rag stone. Lots of people used to walk down the Square on Sundays to go there, and the Boys' Brigade used to march from the World's End and play their fifes and drums outside the Church. The Square in those days wasn't all that grand. We were mostly fairly hard up, in spite of the maids. Some of the houses were let out in unfurnished rooms, and I remember old Sir John Squire (J. C. Squire, the poet) coming to tea with my aunt in the ground floor sitting room in the 'Sixties and saying that was the very room he had rented when he first came down from Cambridge.

The Square garden had one flowerbed in the middle, a rather unkempt grass lawn, three trees and an edging of privet and shrubbery. These made one very sooty when, each evening in the summer after we had done our homework, we used to play there, joined by Joan Greenwood, who lived in a studio nearby, and even as a child had that strange, deep voice she used so effectively on the stage. We played Grandmother's Steps, and a game she liked called Queenie, which I thought rather soppy. As a treat, we would be taken down the river to Greenwich in a boat called, I think, the *Daffodil*, which belonged to a marvellous, tough old cockney called Mrs Smith, and she would let us children take the tiller. Later, that gallant little craft was one of the armada of small boats which sailed across to Dunkirk to rescue the British Army in 1940.

I was sent to school, to Miss Hunt and Miss Walter's little school on the corner of Tite Street and Royal Hospital Road. Christopher Robin Milne had left the year before to go to a proper boys' prep school where, we were told, Pooh was kicked round the playground. I had to be taken to and from school down Smith Street because that street was rather rough, and going down it one had to pass the house on the corner of Smith Terrace which was a dosshouse for men.

The King's Road then was very different. Next to the Duke of York's Headquarters was the headquarters of Mosley's Blackshirts (the Whitelands House flats hadn't been built) and I used to lie in bed at night and hear the noise of riot and fighting in the road as the Blackshirts met the Communists who had marched up from the World's End. Other noises one heard, too, for in those days there was much drunkenness, and after closing time the drunks used to sing in the street, mostly a song called *Nellie Dean*. But the traffic wasn't nearly so noisy, for cars were scarce. One day my aunt came into lunch looking very pleased. She had looked in the window of Rootes car showroom opposite the Ritz and had seen there a new navy blue baby Austin, so she went in and bought it over the counter, and there it was in the Square the same day. It was lovely and smelt of real leather. You left your car outside all day but garaged it at night, and ours used to sleep in the Chelsea Garage, which was next to Carter Patterson the Carriers' yard, who kept their horses and vans there. There was a blacksmith in Dovehouse Street. There were very few cars in the Square and you didn't have to pass a driving test, you just drove. There were no traffic lights, but policemen on point duty controlled the traffic in Sloane Square. There were plenty of red buses and a few brown ones known as Pirates, which would stop wherever you hailed them. Lots of people rode bikes, and on Sunday evenings Cycling Club people would ride along after a day in the country, sometimes with huge bunches of bluebells strapped on the back of the saddle.

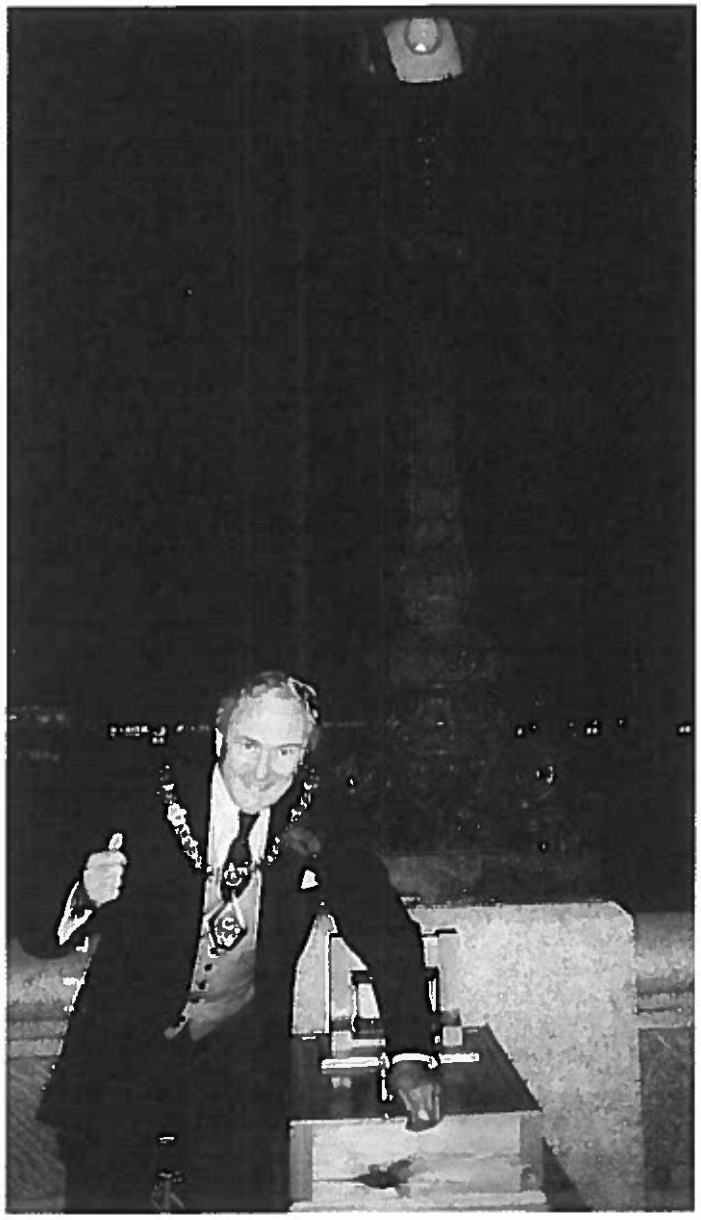
There were plenty of little shops of all kinds, and each shopkeeper used to wash and brush the piece of pavement in front of his shop every day. The people walking along the King's Road were mostly residents doing household shopping, and it was never crowded. In the early 'Thirties, there were men in the gutter, proud men who were out-of-work miners, begging and playing mouth organs, and wearing medals from the Great War. Women would often walk arm-in-arm. It was all much more like a High Street in a small town and the shopkeepers would give you a chair to sit on. Boots, which was further towards Anderson Street than now, ran a lending library, where one met one's friends.

There were very few restaurants, the favourite one for us being Caletta's, an Italian one opposite Markham Street, where you could get a three course lunch for one shilling and ninepence, and were served by waiters in stiff shirts. The walls were painted with scenes from Ecclesiastes, done many years before by some impoverished young painter in exchange for food.The painters were very poor (excluding Augustus John, who I remember seeing sweeping out the doors of Peter Jones in a flamboyant way, wearing a huge black hat and cloak) and at the coffee stall on the corner of the Vale and the King's Road they used to buy one cup of coffee to share between several. I remember hearing that Mervyn Peake used to send his bank manager letters about his overdraft in drawings instead of writing, hoping perhaps to soften his heart. The coffee stalls were a boon to many, selling hot coffee in huge thick white cups, very cheap, and hot sausages; There were others on the corner of Chelsea Manor Street and Sloane Square.

Smells were different. Some people did smell rather, but mostly not. Flowers on barrows (twelve to a bunch, not ten) smelt lovely, unlike now when most seem to have the scent fertilized out of them. Huge bunches of sweet smelling violets would be heaped up in a wicker basket, and the gypsies from Mitcham would come round the Square singing their heartrending song "Who will buy my sweet lavender", followed on Sundays by the Muffin Man with a tray of muffins balanced on his head and ringing a bell, and the log man with his horse and cart. People, when you kissed them, smelt nice; men didn't use all the aftershaves and essences they have now, but smelt of Lifebuoy soap, and wool, or tweed. The pubs, though, smelt awful. I don't mean inside, because women, let alone children, didn't generally go into them, but outside when the beer was delivered in wooden barrels, the smell was sickening.The smell of horse manure was nice, and the smell of a pea-souper fog was appalling, sometimes yellow, but mostly white, and bitter cold, the swirling fog caught you in the throat.

There were national events. In 1935, came the Jubilee of Queen Mary and King George V, with street parties everywhere, the best in Chelsea being in Slaidburn Street, where flags ran riot and the street was crammed with trestles groaning with food, though the inhabitants were of the poorest. Then, in 1936, the dying of the King, and the announcement on the wireless, "the King's life is drawing peacefully to its close", and in the dark hours after midnight I heard the newsboys running down the streets shouting, "The King is dead!" Everyone wore black armbands, and my mother took me to see the funeral procession through Hyde Park, all the crowned heads of Europe following the coffin, and the funeral marches played sad and slow. My mother stood beside me, wearing my father's medals from the Great War, and a man who had climbed up a tree to see better fell and hung from a branch by his braces. In the same year came the Edward VIII scandal and Cosmo Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury's pronouncement, and I saw the awful *Evening Standard* poster at the World's End which said COSMO CANTAUR CUTS KING'S CUTIE.

Afterwards, the coronation of George VI and more parties, more commemorative mugs, and then, in 1938, the threat of war. I was then at Francis Holland School, half of which was evacuated to the country. I stayed in London, and remember hearing, in my classroom, the wailing of sirens as they tried out different types for air raids to come and we were fitted for gasmasks at Holy Trinity School in Sloane Street. Men started digging trenches in the parks. Came Munich, and a breather. The basement of 33 was designated as a first aid post with my aunt in charge, assisted by a young man from the other side of the Square who was a British Israelite and couldn't cut his beard for religious reasons, so couldn't get his gasmask on. We dug an Anderson shelter into the garden (not to be used by the family, who preferred to watch the raids from the roof, or shelter under the Steinway grand piano). The voice of Hitler ranted from wirelesses over the summer back gardens of Markham Square, and on September 1st. he invaded Poland. Two days later we declared war on Germany, and life in Chelsea entered a new era.



The lights go on again: the Mayor, Councillor Desmond Harney, switches on the newly-restored Embankment lights in November, 1993.

The Mores at home in Chelsea: Sir Thomas and his family, painted by Holbein at Beaufort House. The original was destroyed but this 16th. century copy was presented by the Chelsea Society to Crosby Hall in 1950. Now it is to hang in the Old Town Hall (see Chairman's Report).

Friends remembered: Mrs. Winfred Bottley with the relief carving by A. L. Pocock, which she presented to Chelsea Old Church in memory of her fellow-firewatchers killed there in 1941. (See page 23).

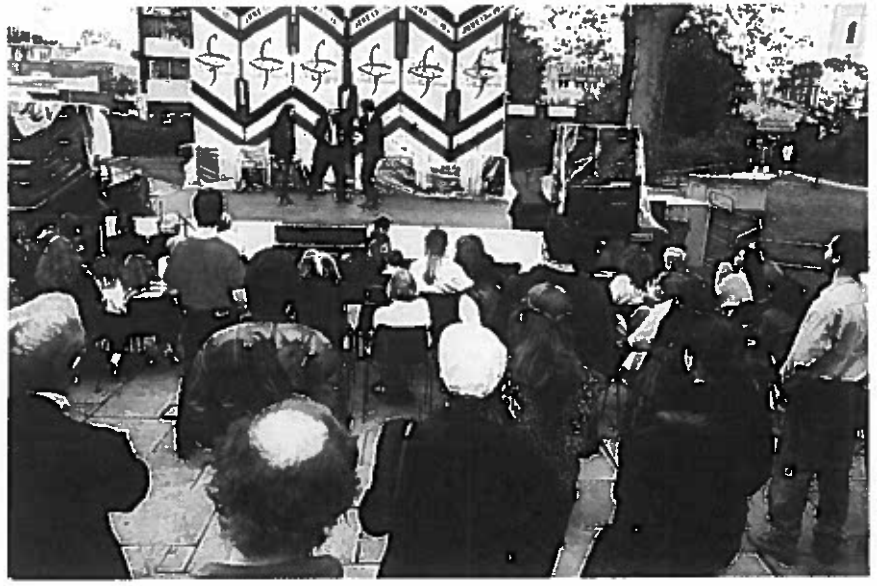
One Michael: Michael and Susie Bryan, who collect and deal in paintings from their Chelsea house and are authorities on Chelsea art and artists (see page 47).

The other Michael: Michael and Diana Parkin with their four-year-old daughter Zuleika seen well away from S.W.3. The Michael Parkin Gallery in Motcomb Street has become a show-case for Chelsea artists past and present.

Putting Chelsea on the map: the exhibition arranged by the Chelsea Society for the Festival, "Chelsea in Maps and Pictures", opened in the King's Road.

Top hats: the Rev. Derek Watson, Rector of Chelsea, joins models from Kensington and Chelsea College for their millinery exhibition at the Old Town Hall. (See page 24).

The great tradition: the London Sketch Club opened the doors of its studio in Dilke Street to recall Chelsea as the artists' quarter.



Almost a village green: entertainment, including jazz, was on stage at Dovehouse Green, Sloane Square and World's End throughout the Festival.

Singer and gardener: the late Esther Darlington in operatic costume, 1962 (see page 53).

Brilliant and scandalous: Sir Charles Dilke, M.P. for Chelsea, in 1875 (see page 26).

Putting down roots: Sue Minter, Curator of the Chelsea Physic Garden, writes about its work (see page 43).

Return to roots: Sir Dirk Bogarde, the actor and author, writes about the Chelsea he knew and knows (see page 51).

Chelsea artist of the 1930s: young Helen Gleadow in her studio (see page 56).

Chelsea gardener: Helen Gleadow watering the garden she grew in Cheyne Walk after the Blitz.

Royal approval was given to the gardens in the ruins of the bombed houses in Cheyne Walk (where Roper's Garden was to be laid out), when Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, visited them in 1954. Here she talks with Helen and Rupert Gleadow.

Was this Chelsea's market-place? Walter Greaves's painting in oils, Mountebanks: Chelsea *(above), the whereabouts of which has been unknown since it was exhibited at the Cottier Gallery in New York in 1912, shows clowns cavorting in a Chelsea street. The buildings on the right stood on the site of Carlyle Mansions, so that this is a view of Lawrence Street seen from Cheyne Walk, circa 1870. The photograph of the same view today (below) shows the road outside the Cross Keys pub still as wide as it needed to be when coaches turned there at the end of their run from London. It is now believed that this was the scene of weekly markets.*

How does our Garden grow?

Sue Minter, Curator of the Chelsea Physic Garden, reports on its current work.

The 3.8 acres behind the high walls on the Chelsea Embankment that is the Chelsea Physic Garden this year celebrates its tenth year of opening to the public. Since 1673 the private research garden of the Society of Apothecaries of London, it has had a number of changes of direction this century. In 1899 the Society gave up the Garden because of the relative decline in the importance of botany in the training of doctors and for over 80 years the Garden was kept alive by the City Parochial Foundation as a botanical research resource for various London colleges. In 1981 they gave up their trust, again due to changes in educational mandate, and the Garden was saved again by an appeal launched by a group of independent trustees (to which the Chelsea Society was a generous donor). Now an independent charity, the Chelsea Physic Garden is open to the public in the summer and to Friends of the Garden throughout the year, and is run as a research and educational resource, nowadays catering for a returning interest in plant-based medicine. How things turn full-circle!

The changing financial status of the Garden is a contrast to the sanctity of its land, permanently given at a peppercorn rent under a Deed of Covenant by Sir Hans Sloane. However the changes in the early 1980s meant that the Garden had to organise itself on lines very akin to American gardens, i.e. involving volunteers as gardeners and as guides and in developing a high community profile. Just as in the seventeenth century when the Garden went down to the river and the Society of Apothecaries rented spare barge-houses, the Garden nowadays has a policy of letting parts of its premises to raise money and the Garden is very busy each summer with many weddings, receptions and events run by horticultural and conservation organisations.

The current work of the Garden can be summarised as follows:

- the demonstration through its plantings and publications of the range of species named or introduced to cultivation by a succession of distinguished curators
- the pursuit of horticultural excellence, especially in the cultivation of rare and tender plants
- the demonstration to all who visit the many uses of plants and particularly the heritage of the plant world as our common medicine chest.

The first part of that remit was substantially achieved by my predecessor Duncan Donald and is represented by the "Historical Walk" which margins the western edge of the Garden. Visitors can now follow this with a guide pamphlet which keys in to the various beds marked with slate signs as well as a series of laminated pamphlets written by our one-time historical researcher Mark Laird. This area provides an insight into the wealth of plant material which entered cultivation via this Garden. It includes the beautiful but poisonous *Datura innoxia* from South America named by Philip Miller, the humble primrose named by William Hudson, the curious and fragrant incense plant introduced from Australia by Sir Joseph Banks and the well-known *Forsythia* named by William Forsyth, gardener here 1771-84. An entire border is devoted to William Curtis with many of the plants illustrated in the early number of *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* and one bed commemorates Robert Fortune who introduced many Chinese plants to other lands in the mid-nineteenth century including one most people drink every day: tea *(Camellia sinensis)*. The Walk concludes with the Thomas Moore Fernery with plants named or introduced by him, or by the last director of the Garden, John Lindley. Last year the display included a spectacular flowering of the giant Himalayan Lily, *Cardiocrinum giganteum* named by Moore.

Visitors to the Garden have long noted how many tender plants grow well here. This is because of our heat-reflecting walls, our well-drained soil and sunny aspect. The garden specialises in Mediterranean plants and holds a collection of *Cistus* under the aegis of the National Council for the Conservation of Gardens as well as several Mediterranean trees such as the cork oak and the kermes oak —food source for the cochineal insect— and of course our famous olive tree. We have excellent collections of plants from the Canary Islands, many of which survive outdoors and the staff of the botany department of the Natural History Museum work on two significant plant collections: *Pelargonium* species mainly from South Africa; and fern genera, many *Dryopteris* and *Asplenium*. Obviously we cannot grow everything in these acres so we concentrate on plants which benefit from our microclimate or plants of conservation significance, as well as those linked to our library. It has been one of my concerns to improve our standards of horticulture and presentation of these collections.

One of our most significant areas of work is one which well and truly links with our history: medicinal plants. When the Garden was first established it was thought that all plants were potentially medicinal. We now know that is probably not the case and the medicinal display area is now in the north-west quadrant of the Garden. A colour guidebook is now available and guides the visitor around the herb garden, through medicinal plants of the rainforest on display in the glasshouses, through a series of beds on the history of medicine and into our new "Garden of World Medicine".

The Garden of World Medicine is the newest of our enterprises and was planted last March. This was partly inspired by the Garden's recent collaboration with the Natural Products Discovery Division of Glaxo Group Research for whom we grow plants for screening for new medicines.

Many of the plants for this are obtained as seed from botanic gardens from all over the world via the international botanic gardens seed exchange which Chelsea started (along with the Oxford Botanic [then Physic] Garden) in the seventeenth century and which is currently still funded by the Society of Apothecaries. More and more pharmaceutical companies are interested in getting access to plants suspected of medicinal value by indigenous peoples and there is also increasing interest in plant-based medicine by the visiting public themselves. Thus the Garden of World Medicine is an ethnobotanical garden and an educational planting designed to expand the traditional links of the Garden with medicine. Chelsea is the only garden to retain its original title of "Physic", the old name for the healing arts. The planting provides a feature which is unique to botanic gardens in several ways:

- no other botanic garden in Britain has such varied collections of medicinal plants
- no other garden provides a sampling of the uses of plants for medicine in so many ethnic traditions.

Though not large (about 40 feet square) it contains about 150 species used by eight societies: by the Maori, Aboriginal and South African tribal peoples; in India (the Ayurvedic tradition); by the Chinese and by the North American Indians as well as in our own folk traditions of Northern Europe and the Mediterranean. I should perhaps make it clear that the Garden does not claim that all these plants are efficacious or safe, only that they have been used for these purposes. However, some societies have used plants which have since been taken up and double-blind tested to prove their worth. Each bed contains such an example, such as *Artemisia annua* used by the Chinese for thousands of years and now of value against cerebral malaria and *Podophyllum* used by Amerindians against skin tumours and now the source of semi-synthetic derivatives against lung and testicular cancer.

The traditions of using medicinal plants vary considerably between societies which provides interesting international comparisons and insights about what illness is thought to be. The Maori, for example, are now thought to have made little use of their native plants and because illness was thought to be brought on oneself through breaking social and family taboos, the sick were often abandoned to their fate. Experimentation with their flora was stimulated by exposure to the flourishing herbal tradition the settlers brought with them. This was unusual, Most tribal societies have used plants and passed on their knowledge to immigrants. Many native American remedies passed from the Indians to the colonial settlers and the slaves in the southern states of South America. The widespread use of witch hazel as an astringent today is a testimony to the heritage of American medicine.

Most traditions of ethnic medicine have a spiritual component which might be interesting to those who believe in the psychosomatic nature of some diseases. Some traditions (e.g. Indian Ayurveda) are more ancient

than "Western" medicine and have parallel beliefs about the causation of disease through an excess or imbalance of "humours".

Part of the concept of this garden is to address the question "What is health?" and to look at how people have answered it from within the traditions of their own cultures. The World Health Organisation is encouraging nations to develop inventories of their own medicinal plants while drug companies are expanding their work on plant screening. Behind these developments lie the problems of new diseases such as AIDS and the expanding populations destroying the vegetation upon which they rely.

This year the Garden has returned to a traditional area of research which also has links to the Third World. A Sudanese researcher attached to Imperial College is researching the fungus ergot on African food crops such as sorghum and millet. It is hoped to find ways of reducing this threat to a major food source. Ergot, however, is also interesting as the source of two medicines, ergotamine used against migraine and ergometrine used to prevent haemorrhage after childbirth. Ergot was also responsible for St. Vitus Dance and St. Anthony's Fire in the Middle Ages when eaten as a pollutant of rye bread: it caused gangrene for which people prayed for deliverance from St. Anthony and hallucinations which caused people to believe they could fly!

Friends of the Garden (who can visit when the Garden is closed to the public in the winter for a fee of £20) often notice it busy with the students of the English Gardening School. The School operates courses in garden design, practical horticulture and botanical illustration from the reception and lecture rooms here, and this is one of the ways the Garden fulfils its educational role. The other ways include the employment of a part-time historical researcher to research the Garden's archives and library resources, and of a part-time education officer to co-ordinate work with schools and the in-service training of teachers. The Garden has had a leading role in linking the use of botanic garden collections for the delivery of the national curriculum and is a founder member of the Botanic Gardens Education Network. Our current education pack is tied to Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and covers everything from pond-dipping to using plants to teach maths. In August annually we will be holding summer activities programmes for schools which, this year, covered environmental sculpture, weaving and design activities for 150 children.

This exciting range of activities is a testimony to the success of the current trustees and an enormous number of volunteers and well-wishers in saving the Garden from closure ten years ago. Since then nearly half a million pounds has been spent in capital investment in restoring the decaying fabric of the buildings. We continue to keep order beds to assist the science of taxonomy (or plant naming) currently under threat nation-wide and to provide placements to train volunteers as potential young horticulturists. The future, however, will need to include substantial further fund-raising in these days of declining interest rates!

(See illustration, page 40)

The two Michaels

Guy Topham meet's two pillars of the artists' quarter

When the subject of pictures crops up at the Chelsea Society's council meetings, somebody usually says, "Ask one of the Michaels." This refers to two men who have established themselves as the authorities on the life and works of Chelsea when it was the artists' quarter of London. They are in (alphabetical sequence) Michael Bryan and Michael Parkin, both of them picture-dealers.

The two Michaels are of an age to have been National Servicemen just after the Second World War (commissioned in the 16th./5th. Lancers and the Irish Fusiliers respectively); both have married exceptionally attractive and intelligent wives, who have presented both with a daughter; both live in beautiful Georgian houses; both are gregarious and convivial in the Chelsea tradition.

Michael Bryan holds regular exhibitions of water-colours in a Mayfair gallery — he has presented two memorable exhibitions of paintings of Chelsea — but otherwise works from his house in Cheyne Walk. Michael Parkin holds frequent exhibitions at his own gallery in Motcomb Street, east of Sloane Street, and, although he specialises in English artists working from the middle of the last century to the middle of this one, he has particular affection for Whistler and his circle (indeed he has made himself responsible for the upkeep of Whistler's tomb at Chiswick).

Michael Bryan was not brought up in an artistic household (his father was a financier) but he was influenced by what he saw from the windows of their house in Surrey, which had magnificent views of the downs (today he favours sweeping landscapes in the paintings he buys and sells). One of the schools he attended was also on a Surrey hill and from it he could see across the valley the distant trees surrounding his home. He was looking at this view one day in 1944 when he saw a flying-bomb plunge into those woods; immediately he telephoned his mother, who told him that she was unhurt but had been blown across the room by the blast.

After his spell in the Army, he went into business in the City — importing such products as spices, beeswax and honey — and prospered, becoming managing director of his company. He was living in a large flat in Battersea and, needing something to cover its walls, began buying pictures, which in the 'Fifties were very cheap indeed. Then, in 1961, it was suggested that he might try dealing in pictures, so he drew £50 from the bank, spent £47 on filling his car with pictures and then sold one of them for £52. This was something worth developing.

He switched to water-colours, which he loved, were even cheaper than oils and had been neglected by collectors. He began holding exhibitions and has continued ever since with such success that, in 1977, he sold his business interests and moved from Battersea to a tall Georgian house in Cheyne Walk, —where he still lives with his wife Suzie and their daughter Francesca, who works for Sotheby's — and devoted himself entirely to pictures.

His most notable exhibitions have been *In Cheyne Walk and Thereabout* in 1984 and *Old Chelsea and the Thames* in 1989. For these he spent years collecting paintings and drawings of Chelsea and, for both, published beautifully illustrated catalogues, which are themselves now collected.

Michael Parkin approached the same goal from an entirely different direction. After reading Law at Oxford and working for the Control Commission in Germany, he became involved in the early development of commercial television becoming the general manager of Radio Caroline, the commercial radio station in a ship anchored in the North Sea and he prospered mightily.

He had married a painter, who became a journalist and novelist, Molly Parkin, with whom he had two daughters. When the marriage ended in divorce, he took a year off and took a course in general art at the Victoria and Albert Museum. The idea of picture-dealing appealed to him and one day, driving through Belgravia, he saw a "To Let" sign outside a small shop in Motcomb Street and took it. There he has continued to hold regular exhibitions, often of the work of Chelsea artists. In 1982, he married again and he and his wife Diana and their four-year-old daughter Zuleika live near Sloane Square and in part of the 18th century Gunton Hall, in Norfolk.

The Michael Parkin Gallery presents ten exhibitions a year, many of individual painters, recently including Hermione Hammond, who works in Glebe Place. Michael Bryan is currently holding an exhibition a year in the West End and exhibiting at "The World of Watercolours" fair in Piccadilly; otherwise he works from his house. But most of the two Michaels' serious business is in finding the right pictures for their clients, whether private collectors or public galleries.

Should the Chelsea Society's aim of establishing a Chelsea museum and art gallery ever be realised, the two Michaels will doubtless again lend their experience and taste to ensure that it is the success it deserves to be.

Michael Bryan, Cheyne Walk, SW3. — 071-351 0147.
The Michael Parkin Gallery, 11 Motcomb Street, London, SW1X 8LB — 071-235 8144.

(See illustrations, page 37)

Reviews

Books

Robert Pearman, **The Cadogan Estate** (Haggerston Press, £9.95)

Robert Pearman, **The Cadogans at War** (Haggerston Press, £14.95)

It is perhaps the first of these books which is most likely to be of interest to members of our Society.

Robert Pearman, a Chartered Surveyor who at one time worked in the office of the Cadogan Estate, was well placed to write the first book. He tells us that in 1548 the family of Cadwgan ap William was living in a farmhouse in Monmouthshire and that the first written mention of the name, in its Welsh form, appeared in relation to them. The family came to have extensive lands in Powys between the Severn and the Wye — infinitely less valuable, however, than the 94 acres, from Knightbridge to Cheyne Walk and from Beaufort Street to Cadogan Place, which comprised the Cadogan Estate in 1986.

The first extension of the family estates were not in England. William Cadogan had been secretary to Richard Boyle (later the Earl of Cork) and had also fought in Ireland under Cromwell. In lieu of accumulated back pay he had accepted (1653-54) some 665 acres in County Meath. (Whose acres had they been previously, one wonders?) More than anything else, it was this sizeable estate which was the foundation of the Cadogan fortunes.

The addition of extensive Dutch acres was shortly to follow. The William Cadogan, who was to be the first Earl of Cadogan and who had been right-hand man to the Duke of Marlborough, had married a Dutch wife, Margaretha Cecilia Munter, while serving in the Low Countries. With her came the manor house of Raaphorst and some 500 acres of land. A short time later a second, neighbouring estate, oddly called *De Dre Papegaaien* (the Three Parrots) was acquired.

It was not until the General's return from Holland that the purchase of land in England began. In 1707, 237 acres were bought in Buckinghamshire and eleven years later 1,000 acres of the Caversham estate in Berkshire were acquired as a fitting home for someone who a few weeks earlier had been created Earl Cadogan.

Half way through the eighteenth century the Cadogan's association with Chelsea was to begin. It came about by way of a marital connection with the family of Hans Sloane. Sloane was an Ulsterman from Killyleigh in County Down, who had come to England in 1712. Here he had prospered as a physician to such a degree that he had been able to buy the Manor of Chelsea from Lord Cheyne. When they married, his two daughters became respectively Lady Cadogan and Sarah Stanley and it was to them that on Sloane's death (1753) that the Manor of Chelsea was devised. In this way

the Sloane-Stanley and Cadogan Estates were eventually to come into being.

Throughout the nineteenth century the inhabitants of Chelsea, and their avocations, were in a constant state of flux. The numbers doubled in the two decades from 1800 to 1820, while in the succeeding ten years those engaged in agriculture fell from 275 families to only 87. The population was to continue to grow until it reached an apogee of 75,380 in 1897. Since then there was a steady decline to scarcely half that total in 1986, and no doubt the population is smaller still to-day.

As the book's concern is with the Estate we don't hear much about the individuals who lived in it. All the same we are told about a notable day in 1928, when the curious spectator might have looked over the railings in Cadogan Square and have watched H. G. Wells and Arnold Bennett taking part in a game of tennis. But if Mr Pearman had got going on the famous, interesting and notorious people, who might once have been our neighbours, he would have had space for little else.

Two architectural developments of more than local significance are given a proper mention. The first concerned the sale in 1777 of 90 acres to Henry Holland and the subsequent development on them of Hans Town. Although few of Holland's houses survive unaltered, some of the original boundary bollards remain, notably one outside Arne Jacobsen's Danish Embassy.

The other innovation occurred a hundred years later with the red-brick mansions designed by, amongst others, George Robinson, J. J. Stevenson and Norman Shaw in Cadogan Square and elsewhere in our part of the Borough. So excited were the contemporary German *cognoscenti* by the style that their government actually appointed a cultural ambassador, Hermann Muthesius, to report on it. Not only that, they later subsidised the publication of a handsome folio, with clear full-page collotype plates, to record his findings. *Die Baukunst der Gegenwart, (The Architecture of the Present Day)*, the book was called, and it is surprising to see from its pictures how little many of the houses have changed a century further on.

Both these books have illustrations which are plentiful, admirably reproduced and always near the text to which they refer. It is, however, a slight disappointment that amongst so many portraits and battle scenes the name of the artist is mentioned only once. There are, of course, many paintings of, for example, Nelson, Marlborough, Cromwell, Lillie Langtry, Wellington and Charles James Fox, so it would not have been irrelevant to be informed that those reproduced are in fact by or after, respectively, Lemuel Abbott, John Closterman, Robert Walker, Sir Edward Poynter, Sir David Wilkie and K. A. Hickel.

The subject of the second volume is the third Earl of Cadogan (1783-1864). He was a sailor who joined the Navy at the age of 12 as a "First Class Volunteer" and who left it in 1813 with the rank of Post Captain. He had the reputation of being a strict disciplinarian and, looking at the impassive face and thin lips shown in his portrait, it is easy to believe that floggings were not infrequent in the ships he commanded.

Take all in all, these two volumes — together with the same author's biography of the first Earl Cadogan, reviewed here in 1988 — give as complete an account as we are likely to get of a family which has more closely affected Chelsea than any other.

Sam Carr

A short walk from Peter Jones

SIR DIRK BOGARDE writes of his return to Chelsea . . .

The Kings Road was still the same road that I had first walked in wonderment at seventeen and now, at seventy, it still had the same effect in spite of quite disastrous architectural changes and the ones which had taken place among the people who now thronged and jostled in it. But in all *felt* the same, and I still *felt* seventeen. I was surrounded by 'familiars', altered, of course, but still recognizable. . . . Not all of whom I knew or ever met. But they must still be about. Their shades? Comforting me. Oscar Wilde coming from Tite Street, Lily Langtry going up to the Cadogans', Carlyle walking slowly to his tobacconist, Augustus John in sagging dressing-gown and slippers off to the Five Bells. My parents were here too — when they were young and I just born. Off they went to the Good Intent, or to the Embankment to the Blue Cockatoo. Henry Moore bought his packets of vine charcoal from Green and Stone's, and Kathleen and Graham Sutherland, elegance and beauty beyond anything I had ever witnessed in my life before, and known among us students at the Polytechnic as 'The Beautiful People', long before that phrase (coined then) was so debased later for far less glorious creatures. But they had all been here . . .

So I am not unfamiliar with my area. Bewildered perhaps, but it fits me. Even though the players on the stage have altered beyond recognition, the play, as it were, remains much the same. Same format. Different sets and players.

Reprinted from *A Short Walk from Harrods* by kind permission of Peters Fraser and Dunlop.

(See illustration, page 40)

Obituaries

Viscount Bangor

Viscount Bangor —once better known as Edward Ward, the first radio war correspondent — died at his home in Chelsea on 8th. May, 1993, aged 87. Shortly before his death, he was lunching in high spirits at the Chelsea Arts Club, living life as enjoyably as he always had.

Edward Ward, the heir to the sixth Viscount Bangor, began his journalistic career with the Reuter news-agency in the Far East, joining the News Department of the B.B.C. in 1939. His first major assignment was the winter war in Finland and his descriptions of the frozen corpses of Russian soldiers in the snowbound forests made his name as a vivid reporter. In 1940, he covered the fall of France before being sent to the Middle East to report the desert war. He was captured during the 1941 campaign and remained in a prisoner of war camp in Germany until liberated early in 1945. It was typical of him that, on being flown back to London, he should immediately ask to return to Germany to report the final stage of the war.

In 1950, "Eddy" Ward succeeded his father to the viscountcy and a year later married his fourth wife, Marjorie Banks, the radio producer, with whom he had a son and a daughter. As a team, the Bangors continued their careers with the B.B.C. and he wrote three volumes of autobiography. Later, they jointly ran an antiques shop in Portobello Road, specialising in "fairground art", which she collected and which filled their large flat in Cadogan Square. When Marjorie died in 1991, her husband continued to entertain with his characteristic charm and generosity. He is succeeded to the title by his son; his daughter, Lalla, is a well-known actress and artist.

T.P.

Mr. Samuel Carr

Samuel Carr, who died on 5th. April, 1993, was a publisher and for several years a member of the Council of the Chelsea Society and editor of its Report until 1981.

Born in Belfast in 1913, the son of a stockbroker, Thomas Carr, he and his two brothers went to Oundle School and University College, Oxford. Graduating in 1934, he joined Batsford, the publishers, two years later and returned to them after five years' war service. For more than forty years, he was intimately involved with the development of the Batsford list, his bibliographical flair and taste in drawing and painting ideally suited to publishing at the time. He worked with authors and artists such as Rex Whistler, Sir Cecil Beaton and Sir Sacheverell Sitwell, and Sir John Betjeman was a friend. He initiated a long list of books, including a British Battles series of about forty volumes and himself edited a poetry anthology series, for which he chose all the illustrations and verses by poets such as

Stevie Smith, Gavin Ewart, Elizabeth Jennings and Christopher Logue. When he retired in 1978, he remained an active adviser to Batsford and other publishers.

Sam lived with his large family in the same house in Paultons Square for nearly fifty years. He took a keen interest in the history of Chelsea, its architecture and the preservation of its fabric. Watching the social developments around him, he noted sadly that the Chelsea he had known and loved was changing, although not quite beyond recognition. He was the first secretary of the newly-formed Paultons Square Residents' Association after the war, when the air raid shelters in the garden were filled in and it could be planted again. Later he was a trustee of the Open Air Nursery School for many years. His love of church architecture added to enjoyment of summer holidays in Norfolk, when he sailed with his children and many grandchildren.

P.C

(Book reviews by Samuel Carr are on page 49).

Miss Esther Darlington

Esther Darlington, who died in February, 1993, at the age of 82 was a Londoner and, what is more important, she was a Chelsea Londoner. To those who knew her she was the very epitome of Chelsea.

Her career was remarkably varied. As a girl, she did social work in the borough of Bermondsey and took a degree in Social Sciences at the London School of Economics. During the war, she worked for the Forestry Commission and it was there that she discovered her talent as an archivist, which she applied with tremendous effect to her later study and knowledge of Chelsea, particularly of her own Lawrence Street (the results of her research are now in the care of Chelsea Library). During the war years, she was one of those lodging at 96 Cheyne Walk, that part of Lindsey House owned by her friend Richard Stewart-Jones, the redoubtable secretary of the Chelsea Society, whose lively household of young, artistic lodgers has passed into Chelsea folklore.

Esther was an operatic singer. In 1948, she was with the Glyndebourne chorus at the Edinburgh Festival, and at the beginning of 1951 she and Helen Anderson set up an opera quartet, later extended to an octet, with which they toured the country. They called it the Chelham Opera Company, the name being a combination of Chelsea and Hampstead where she and Helen Anderson lived respectively.

She was a lady of huge force of character, of great charm, sensitivity and humour, sometimes broad but always within the confines of the behaviour of what used to be called the gentry. She adored her own garden and was a considerable plantswoman, combining her taste for the Victorian cottage garden with many rare plants, some of which came from the Physic Garden. She took particular pleasure in winning a special botanical prize in the Brighter Kensington and Chelsea competition.

Several charities, including the Abbeyfield Trust and Time and Talents, absorbed much of her time. She was an active member of the Chelsea Society. In 1983, when the Chelsea Physic Garden was thrown open to the public on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons, Esther took charge of the volunteer garden guides and ruled them with a firm hand. She often could be seen sitting just inside the door selling books, pamphlets and seeds, listening to visitors' questions and giving them advice with courtesy and charm even when the questions were in fact complaints. Her duties there kept her going long after her many physical disabilities would have suggested that she should be taking life more easily.

In her last years, when she found the stairs of her home too much to climb, she used great ingenuity in turning the two rooms of her ground floor into a minute flat. The front room became her office, reception room, dining room and kitchen, and the back room her bedroom from which she could look out on her beloved garden. She would entertain her friends in the tiny room with all the grace of a Belgravia hostess and on summer evenings she would sit in her garden and give lovely little parties with drinks and food beautifully prepared by herself.

When later, after a serious stroke, she was in the Westminster Hospital, she battled with her many physical frailties with fortitude. Some thought that she would never be able to return to her house in Lawrence Street. But they didn't know Esther! She was a very tough and determined lady and it was a joy to see her back home again. But sadly it was not for long.

When her will was read the following passage became known, "I would like to put on record my love for all my family and friends and to thank them all for the immense pleasure they have given me during my life; and though what I have to leave is very little I hope they will enjoy it."

She had very much to leave: integrity, courage, charm, a delightful eccentricity, wit and a love of people. Chelsea has lost a most endearing character.

John Casson

(See illustration, page 40)

Miss Mary Dent

I remember the City Planning Officer, Peter Wynn-Rees telling me four years ago how lucky we were in Kensington & Chelsea to have Mary Dent as our Director of Planning and Conservation. He knew, he told me, because he had taught her!

Now, we have all been greatly saddened by her death on 9th September, 1993, at the age of 51.

So often the relationship between amenity societies and planning officers tends to be confrontational, but in Mary Dent, you felt that you had a kindred spirit who especially valued the support of the Chelsea Society in making a stand against unsympathetic development.

Born in Sussex, Mary was educated at Putney High School and University

College, London, where she gained a Masters Degree in Town Planning. She was the first woman to be elected President of a division of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and had a distinguished career in the planning departments of Camden Borough Council, the Corporation of London, and latterly Kensington and Chelsea.

Many will recall her selfless dedication to seeing through the new Unitary Development Plan in spite of her illness, but for me her lasting memorial will be the restoration of the Chelsea Embankment to its former glory. She took a particular pride in fulfilling this project and all who can recall the sad state of neglect only two years ago should whisper a quiet thank you to this kindly lady.

Andrew Hamilton

Baron de Gerlache de Gomery

At the end of 1992, the half-centenary of The Anglo-Belgian Club was commemorated in the presence of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Liège. The celebration became in fact a tribute to one person, namely Baron de Gerlache de Gomery. The Anglo-Belgian Club was granted the title "Royal"; Baron de Gerlache de Gomery was made a Commander in the Order of The Crown; but, sadly, the event which should have crowned his career coincided with the beginning of his ultimate illness.

So many personalities attended the gala dinner that Baroness de Gerlache had a wide choice of friends whom she could have approached to give the address at her husband's memorial service. She asked me to do so because I happened to be a veteran amongst their acquaintances in this country, as Baroness de Gerlache and I had belonged to the same club in Antwerp, where I met them both as newly-weds.

They settled down in London when Baron de Gerlache, son of a world-famous discoverer, whose name survives in chunks of Antarctia, left the international maritime world of Antwerp to head the Belgian Economic Mission in Great Britain, which played a prominent role in the spectacular revival of Belgium after the war.

In 1956, I was appointed for the first time to the Belgian Embassy in the United Kingdom. By then Baron de Gerlache had joined the ranks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was not only Counsellor in charge of maritime affairs, but Permanent Representative of Belgium to a host of international organisations.

When he officially retired from the service in 1971, he revealed himself as the soul of the Anglo-Belgian Organisations in London, and foremost as Guardian Angel of the Anglo-Belgian Club. He demonstrated that he was indeed the club's saviour when the lease of Belgrave Square was nearing its end and there was no earthly way of gathering the funds, not only for the renovation of the premises but also to face the terms of a new lease.

Gerlache managed two miraculous feats: On the one hand he struck a very favourable arrangement with Grosvenor Estate (no mean accomplishment); On the other hand he arranged the brilliant merger with the Royal Thames Yacht Club.

This very elegant and, at face value, very unassuming gentleman was fundamentally a most determined fighter when he set his mind on accomplishing something he considered worthwhile. As he had become a true citizen of Chelsea, where he and Baroness de Gerlache spent their married life and had their only son, he joined the Chelsea Society and was responsible for raising the money to install the present Victorian-pattern lamp-standards in Upper Cheyne Row.

To sum up a career and a life; since 1945, Ambassadors came and Ambassadors went. But the Gerlaches stayed. They stayed, and they embodied Belgium.

Baron Vaes

Mrs. Helen Gleadow

Helen Gleadow, who died on 31st. March, 1993 in her ninety-second year, was a "Chelsea character", although not Chelsea-born. One of twin daughters of Canon George Cooke, she spent her early childhood at Dalkeith in Scotland, where her father was private chaplain to the Duke of Buccleugh. She was three-quarters Scottish (a cousin of the writer Compton Mackenzie and his sister Fay Compton, the actress) and this may have accounted for her unfailing hospitality and physical stamina.

Later, she lived at Christ Church, Oxford, in Cardinal Wolsey's lodgings, when her widowed father was a canon at the Cathedral and Regius Professor of Hebrew and she was acting as his hostess. Already a serious painter, she had become adept at slipping out of a paint-spattered smock into a gorgeous purple gown to receive guests. No visitor at Canon Cooke's table ever suffered a moment's boredom.

Helen was renowned for her spontaneity and dash and her natural response to almost any proposal was, "Why shouldn't we?" When canvassing for Patrick Gordon-Walker, then a don at Christ Church, when he stood as Labour candidate in the city council elections, she was followed round Oxford by a troupe of small boys, attracted by her vivid golden curls, chanting, "Vote Labour! We got Ginger Rogers!"

Painting was the centre of her life (she had attended the Ruskin School of Art at Oxford) and at Christ Church she had a huge, high-ceilinged studio, which, in my time as an undergraduate, was like a French *salon*, many of her stream of visitors finding themselves sitting for their portraits.

After her father's retirement, she moved to Paris and then to Venice, attracted, like so many painters, by the light and landscape. She kept in touch with her friends with a stream of lively but ill-spelled letters (I particularly remember "Let only love prevale" and "God nose") and it was at this time that she met Rupert Gleadow, who was to become her husband.

Just before the outbreak of war, she and Rupert returned to London and took a flat at 33 Cheyne Walk, at the corner of Oakley Street by the old Pier Hotel, the Blue Cockatoo restaurant and Thurston's billiards table factory (now replaced by the Pier House flats). From the curved windows there was a painter's view along Albert Bridge with the trees of Battersea Park on one side and the plumed smoke of Morgan's Crucible Works on the other. There she painted, Rupert wrote about philosophy and religion and they made music: she with her violin, he with his clarinet.

It was here that she took to gardening, first begging a scrap of back yard from Mr. and Mrs. Terry, the greengrocers, next taking an allotment in Battersea Park. Then, when Chelsea Old Church was bombed, they began gardening amongst the ruins of the neighbouring Cheyne Walk houses, where vegetables and flowers flourished for Helen as they always did. The sunken garden in the exposed cellars and back yards of these houses became famous and, in 1954, was visited by the Queen Mother. Richard Stewart-Jones, then on the Council of the Chelsea Society, helped persuade Chelsea Borough Council that the site should not be built upon but preserved as a public garden: the result was Roper's Garden, laid out in 1964.

When their corner of Cheyne Walk was pulled down in the 'Sixties, the Gleadows moved to 18 Lawrence Street and there Helen had her own small garden — and what a garden it was! Not only was it crammed with happy, healthy plants but it surged up to the balcony and through the french windows into the sitting-room. Helen bought a good copy of the Stradivarius "Messiah" violin and Rupert set to work writing his scholarly *The Origin of the Zodiac*, which took him seven years and was published by Jonathan Cape.

But Rupert suffered a series of strokes and was nursed devotedly by Helen, who learned to drive (with difficulty) to keep him mobile and her little car was soon notable for the number of dents in its bodywork as a result of her haphazard steering.

After Rupert's death, her eyesight deteriorated and, admitting to being something of a risk on the road, she took to a bicycle. Riding on the Embankment, she was hit by a motorbicycle, suffering multiple injuries, and, although she recovered, her spine increasingly curved so that she could only see downwards when out walking. She refused to allow this to deter her shopping expeditions to the King's Road and, in her old age, friends and family worried about the extent of her walks about Chelsea. An active member of the Chelsea Society for many years, she attended its meetings and lectures almost to the end of her life.

She had many talents — she felt that had she concentrated on one, she might have become famous — but the greatest of them was for love and friendship.

Muriel Ward-Jackson

(See illustrations, page 41)

Mr. Reginald Grenfell

We note with sadness the death of a distinguished and much-valued life-member, Reginald Pascoe Grenfell, who died on 31st. March, 1993, aged eighty-nine. He was the widower of Joyce Grenfell and not only most loyally supported her in all she did throughout their nearly fifty-year marriage but, she said, "did everything for her". This was in spite of the fact that after one term at R.A.D.A. "Reggie took my mind off the stage and I left". They both contributed much to the Chelsea Society's Golden Jubilee effort in 1977, when Joyce raised the first slab in the Old Burial Ground, which we were to transform into Dovehouse Green. After her death in 1979 Reggie made gifts, through the Chelsea Society, for bulbs to be planted there in her memory. We all know how beautifully they flower in the spring and we shall continue to enjoy them as a living memorial to them both.

Although devoting himself so self-effacingly to his wife's interests he followed his own career in business and was a great character in his own right, with a delightful humour which complemented and stimulated her own. During their wartime separation he had a distinguished Army record and she, on tour entertaining the troops, wrote him hilarious accounts of her adventures. After her death he helped with the publication of her letters and memoirs.

Lesley Lewis

Captain John Litchfied

John Litchfield, who died on 31st. May, 1993, aged 89, was member of Parliament for Chelsea from 1959 to 1966. He had only narrowly been chosen as candidate as his rival was the young Nicholas Ridley, who, even then, was thought to show unusual political promise.

Although long interested in politics, Litchfield's main career was, of course, in the Royal Navy, his father having been an admiral and a friend of Jellicoe and Beatty. His naval career touched the extremes of variety, ranging from a spell in a gunboat on the Yangtse, and commanding armoured cars in Palestine during the Arab terrorism of the 1930s, to the command of the new battleship *Vanguard* (which was to take the Royal Family to South Africa on a state visit in 1952, which was cancelled on the death of the King) and Director of Operations at the Admiralty; he was awarded the O.B.E. in 1944. Only ill health prevented his further rise in his profession.

He entered politics at the age of 56, becoming a popular member of the House of Commons. He was no party hack, refusing to back the Macmillan government over the Profumo affair. An amusing raconteur, he used to say that he was the only Conservative MP to have sat on Harold Wilson's knee (in a crowded car on a Parliamentary visit to N.A.T.O. headquarters in Paris).

Captain Litchfield is survived by his widow and their son and two daughters.

Correspondence

To the Editor,

Sir,

The Chelsea Society Report has arrived and I have been sitting up reading it and enjoying the pictures. Reading about the bombing of Chelsea Old Church has revived so many memories. Might I add a few personal recollections of that time?

On the night on which it was bombed, I was living in a ground floor flat in Danvers Street — almost opposite Crosby Hall — and I can remember that the walls seemed literally to "come in" as the bombs hit the Church! It really was a miracle that the houses in Danvers Street were not destroyed, too! On another occasion I was on a 'bus travelling down the King's Road when bombs destroyed part of the old Chelsea Hospital near the corner of Sydney Street. The 'bus "swerved" across the road with the draught of the impact of that particular raid. Also, one Sunday morning after a raid I went out to buy a newspaper after the "All Clear" had sounded and on the way picked up a piece of shrapnel lying in the King's Road. The metal was still hot and I thought it would make a nice paperweight!

In Lawrence Street during the war there was a little café in one of the houses. It was run by an Australian lady. She used to serve kippers and mash, or some delicious sausages and mash — all home-cooked and, of course, a great delicacy in time of stringent food rationing. On one occasion I sat at a table with Kathleen Raine, the poet (although, of course, I did not meet her again) but we talked about poetry, which I loved. The Blue Cockatoo on Sunday afternoons was a favourite haunt for tea after a concert at the Albert Hall. Then there was Borris, the delicatessen in the King's Road, where one could buy smoked cod's roe and go home for a feast with a jar of it. Living in Chelsea was, for me, a very happy time, though fraught with danger in time of war. In about 1987, I made a pilgrimage back there. The Blue Cockatoo no longer existed. The house in Danvers Street had been demolished. Now, planners and builders plot their targets.

My husband, Henry Blunt, was a nephew of Reginald Blunt, the founder of the Chelsea Society. He was in the Gordon Highlanders in the Great War and fought at the Battle of Loos. He was rather deaf having been blown up twice in that Battle. Later he spent many years planting trees in the Sahara desert. We moved down to St. Leonards in 1975 and he died in 1978.

I am so glad to be able to belong to the Chelsea Society. Owing to age it is now difficult to travel far, but the Report keeps one in touch and revives one's memories.

Yours sincerely,

Leonie Blunt,

3 Moreton Court, 41 Eversfield Place, St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex, TN37 6DB

Sir

I am writing a biography of the painter Sir Matthew Smith (1879-1959) for Faber and Faber. In later life Smith lived at various addresses and studios in Chelsea, the last one being 762 The Cloisters.

I wonder if you, or any member of your Society, could put me in touch with anyone who might have known him or could give me any information about his life in Chelsea. I would be most grateful for any help you can offer as Smith is proving to be a most elusive quarry.

Malcolm Yorke,

22 Woodbine Avenue, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 4EU

New at the Library

Annual list of additions to Chelsea Library Local Studies Collection.

STUNGO, RUTH	*Within Our Walls [Chelsea Physic Garden]*. Published to accompany the exhibition *"Within Our Walls"* held at the Physic Garden, 24-28th. May, 1993.
THOMSON, LEIGHTON	*The Rebuilding of Chelsea Old Church*. Published by Leighton Thomson, the author, 1992.
WINTER, A. F.	*Moravian Close, 381 Kings Road, Chelsea*. Published by A. F. Winter (Chelsea), 1993.

Imperial War Graves Commission. Civilian War Dead, 1939-45; Chelsea. Folder containing a copy of the Roll of Honour compiled by the Imperial War Graves Commission, 1954

The Esther Darlington Card Index to Chelsea People.
This is a significant index compiled by the late Miss Darlington and donated to the library by her family. It is an alphabetical listing of persons taken from rate books, parish registers and other sources. It is available for browsing and consultation in the Local Studies section during normal library hours.

Treasurer's Report

As forecast in my report last year, there is a deficit for the year of £2,356 against a surplus in 1991 of £926. However, this is the bad news; the good news is that the Society has been very busy looking after Chelsea in a number of different ways. Our Chairman will report more fully in his report but, as you will see from the accounts before you, £4,232 was spent on special projects, including the Riverside Report and Exhibition; costs relating to the Holbein Painting which previously hung in Crosby Hall and which will soon be in its new home in Chelsea Town Hall; and the Dovehouse Green Memorial Plaque — shown net after donations. All these worthwhile projects have added to the fabric of Chelsea, in which the members of the Chelsea Society are so interested.

Apart from the special projects, the levels of income and expenditure were, in total, remarkably similar and would have generated a small surplus. However, with an even more active programme in mind for the years ahead, both in terms of its campaigning and its activities for members, the Council has decided to raise annual subscriptions to £10 for individuals and £15 for husband and wife; this will come into effect from 1st. January, 1994, and will be the first increase since 1st. January, 1981. We feel that, in relation to comparable societies, a £10 annual subscription is the correct level. Our accumulated surplus is only modest for a Society such as ours to have in reserve for, if an important and urgent cause which might require engaging professional advice were to present itself, these reserves would soon disappear.

I shall be writing to all members over the next few days, mentioning both the increase in subscriptions and the installation of the direct debit system which we now have in place. We do hope you will all feel able to use this new system, since it makes the collection of the annual subscription so much easier.

I again express my warm thanks to Mr. James Macnair for so kindly acting as the Society's Honorary Auditor. Understandably, but sadly, Mr. Macnair has decided this is the last year for which he can carry out this task and I should like to pay tribute on behalf of you all to a very distinguished member of my profession and to thank him for all he has done. He cannot be here this evening, since he had a previous engagement, and he has asked me to give his apologies to you all. If any of you have any person in mind to succeed him as Auditor, could they please let me know.

My Lord President, I beg to present my report and the accounts for the year ended 31st. December 1992. If there are any questions, I shall be pleased to answer them.

I. W. Frazer

Hon. Treasurer

22nd. November 1993

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st. DECEMBER, 1992

Income and Expenditure Account — General Fund

		1992		1991	
Income		£	£	£	£
Annual Subscriptions			4,624		3,924
Donations Received			266		808
Income Tax Recoverable on Covenants			72		128
Advertising Revenue from 1992 Annual Report			650		575
Deposit Interest Received		1,161		1,617	
Sundry Income			955		735
			7,728		7,787
Less: Expenditure					
Excess of Expenditure over Receipts from Meetings		170		200	
Cost of Annual Report		3,077		3,596	
Stationery, Postage and Miscellaneous Expenses		2,162		2,046	
Cost of Annual General Meeting	389		124		
Subscriptions to Other Organisations		54		33	
			5,852		5,999
			1,876		1,788
Less: Special Projects					
Cost of Riverside Report and Exhibition	374		862		
Legal Fees re Holbein Painting at Crosby Hall		1,780		—	
Dovehouse Green Memorial Plaque (after donations)	883		—		
Cost of Booklet on Historic Street Furniture in Chelsea		370		—	
Consultancy Fees re Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea 10 Year Unitary Development Plan		825		—	
			4,232		862
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year				£(2,356)	£926

Income and Expenditure Account — Life Membership

Balance of Fund — 1st. January 1992	6,577		5,843	
Income: National Savings Bank Account Interest		618		734
Balance of Fund — 31st. December, 1992		£7,195		£6,577

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st. DECEMBER, 1992

		1992		1991	
		£	£	£	£
Current Assets					
Debtors			1,091		1,067
Balance in National Savings Bank Accounts			8,001		7,383
Balance on Bank Current and Deposit Accounts			16,350		18,661
			25,442		27,111
Less: Current Liabilities					
Creditors		4,079		3,982	
Subscriptions Received in Advance	319		347		
		4,398		4,329	
Net Assets			£21,044		£22,782
Represented by:					
Balance of Life Membership Fund		7,195		6,577	
Add: Balance of General Fund 1st. January, 1992	16,205		15,279		
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	(2,356)		926		
			13,849		16,205
			£21,044		£22,782

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, 1992 and the income and expenditure for the year then ended.

Dated: 10th. November, 1993
London S.W.10

J. MACNAIR, C.A.
Chartered Accountant

CONSTITUTION & RULES

1. The Chelsea Society shall be regulated by the Rules contained in this Constitution.

OBJECTS

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.

MEMBERSHIP

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.

THE COUNCIL

4. (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, regards shall be had, amongst other things, to the importance of including persons known to have expert knowledge and experience of matters relevant to 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-preceeding 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.

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.
   (5) The Society may participate in the direct debiting scheme as an originator for the purpose of collecting subscriptions for any class of membership and/or any other amounts due to the Society. In furtherance of this objective, the Society may enter into any indemnity required by the Banks upon whom direct debits are to be originated. Such an indemnity may be executed on behalf of the Society by officials nominated in an appropriate resolution.

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 matters 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 £10 annually payable on the 1st January. The annual husband-and-wife rate is £15*

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.

*Mrs A. Abeles
Richard Adkinson
Paul V. Aitkenhead
Mrs. H. Albery
S. G. Alder
Roy Alderson
Miss A. D. Alderton
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
Miss Sophie C. M. Andreae
*The Marquess of Anglesey
Mrs. C. Annus
Miss Mary Applebey, C.B.E.
Paul Arbon
Mrs. Paul Arbon
J. N. Archer
Mrs. Jasper Archer
Brian Argyle
Robert Armitage
Mrs. Robert Armitage
Miss J. M. Armstrong
*David Aschan
*Mrs. M. G. Aschan
Mrs. D. Ashcroft
The Hon. Nicholas Assheton
*Mrs. R. J. V. Astell
*Mrs. Philip Astley, O.B.E.
Dr. Stephen Astley
Miss Kate Attia

Lady Jean Babington Smith
M. Bach
David Bailey
Mrs. David Bailey
Lady Baillie
Miss J. K. Baker-Wilbraham
M. T. Ballisat
Mrs. M. T. Ballisat
D. Baring
Mrs. Marianne D. Barker
Dr. R. Barker
Mrs. Valerie Barker
Miss C. Barlow
*D. H. Barlow
The Rev. Keith Barltrop
J. C. Barnard
Sir John Barran, Bt.
Lady Barran
Julian Barrow
Mrs. Julian Barrow
Simon Barrow
Adrian Barr-Smith
Mrs. Adrian Barr-Smith
*Derek Barton
*Mrs. Derek Barton
Mrs. Roger Bassett
T. Bate
Mrs. T. Bate
Miss V. F. Baumgart
Sir Peter Baxendell
Lady Baxendell
Mrs. Anne Bearn
*E. V. Beaton
Mrs. A. E. Beaumont-Dodd
*J. Becker
Mrs. P. M. Becker
Robert Beckett
Mrs. Robert Beckett
Mrs. Mary Beevor
George Behr
Mrs. George Behr.
Mrs. Patricia Behr, M.V.O., M.B.E.
*William Bell
Simon Bendall
T. J. Bendall
M. G. Bendon
Mrs. M. G. Bendon
F. C. Benenson
Mrs. F. C. Benenson
Mrs. Anne Trego Bennett
D. R. Bennett-Jones
Mrs. R. A. C. Berkeley
L. Bernard
Mrs. L. Bernard
Miss Anne Berne
*Miss Anne Berriman
Mrs. Rita Berry
Rear-Admiral C. Bevan, C.B.
Mrs. C. Bevan
Mrs. Valerie Bicker
*Ernest Biggin
Miss Celia Bigham
John Bignell
Miss Susan Bilger
Miss Pamela Birley
*E. W. Bissett
*Mrs. G. Blakiston
T. F. Blood
Derek Bloom
Mrs. L. Blunt
Mrs. J. B. Flockhart Booth
Michael Boreham

Mrs. Michael Boreham
Miss Judith Borrow
The Lady Barbara Bossom
*Lady Bottomley
Miss Patricia Bottomley
*Timothy Boulton
David Bowen
M. Boxford
Mrs. M. Boxford
*Miss M. D. Boyd
Professor E. Boyland
Mrs. A. Boyle
Sean Boyle
R. M. A. Braine
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Mrs. Molly Brandt
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