

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY
REPORT

2011



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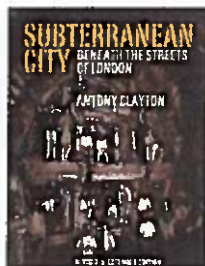


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*The wood engraving of Chelsea Old Church on the title page
is by Hugh Krall*



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THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

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

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Annual General Meeting of The Chelsea Society

held at

Chelsea Old Town Hall, King's Road, London SW3
on Monday 28 November 2011

The President of the Society, the Most Hon. The Marquess of Salisbury took the chair at 6.30pm and welcomed the members of the Society. He then introduced the Chairman of the Society, Stuart Corbyn, the Hon. Treasurer Tom Martin, the Hon. Assistant Secretary Patricia Burr and the other members of the Council of the Society.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Society held on 22 November 2010 were approved and the President signed them as a true record.

Michael Bach, Terence Bendixson, Paulette Craxford and Jane Dorrell were declared elected members of the Council.

The President informed the meeting that no resolutions had been received.

The Hon. Treasurer, Tom Martin, presented his Report and the Accounts for the financial year ended 30 June 2011. The total funds of the Society were £60,155 an increase of £4,078 over June 2010. He reported that the Society is eligible to receive Gift Aid on its membership subscriptions. He will claim this, up to four years in arrears, but members will need to sign a declaration. The accounts, proposed by the Treasurer and seconded by Frances Taylor, were approved unanimously.

Stuart Corbyn thanked the President for taking the chair and for agreeing to remain President for a further year. He then delivered his Annual Report to Members and announced that due to other work commitments he was resigning as Chairman. He asked members to suggest the names of any candidates who might be interested in the role or who might like to serve on the Council where there were vacancies.

Lord Salisbury thanked him for his full Report and expressed his sorrow that he was stepping down.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There being no questions, the President approved the Report which was seconded by Dr Jon Moynihan.

Any Other Business

Lord Salisbury said he was responsible for organising the great river pageant on 3rd June 2012 to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The Queen will begin her procession from Chelsea – the exact location will be announced on 18th January. He had one plea: that members who had river frontage should, along with their neighbours, put out bunting and streamers

Dr. Susan Horsewood-Lee asked members to join the Borough's new Residents' Panel and liaise with the Borough and other members about the Council and local services. Website: www.rbkc.gov.uk

She enquired whether the Society had plans to spend the balance of £50,000. The Chairman replied that the Society needed a reserve in case of any future legal action, and next year's Exhibition will absorb some of the funds, although Leonard Holdsworth is inviting people to sponsor it, and we are taking commercial advertisements in the Annual Report. Suggestions to increase our range of activities would be welcome.

Lord Salisbury introduced Greg Hands, MP for Chelsea and Fulham, who brought up two issues:

- i) He was organising meetings about basement developments to see what local government can do about curbing the associated problems. It has been a big issue for 20 years.
- ii) He is extremely concerned about the Thames Tideway Tunnel and urged members to respond to the consultation and give the thumbs down to the proposal to make the main drive site in Carnwath Road, Fulham, close to Chelsea Harbour. This will cause massive disruption to locals and will gravely affect Fulham and Chelsea traffic, with 29,000 heavy lorry movements carrying large machinery and prefabricated buildings along the King's Road, and New King's Road over six years. Greg holds regular surgeries every month in Peter Jones where members would be welcome. They can contact him via email on mail@greghands.com.

About 100 people attended and Lord Salisbury thanked them for coming.

Chairman's Report

My Lord President, ladies and gentlemen, good evening. Can I start by thanking Lord Salisbury for serving as President and agreeing to continue for another year.

The Society has two main objectives – encouraging good architecture, town planning and civic design, and stimulating interest in the history, character and traditions of Chelsea.

Planning matters are the responsibility of the Planning Committee, chaired by Terence Bendixson, with Martyn Baker, Giles Quarmer and Andrew Thompson as members. This committee has been closely examining the many applications relating to Chelsea over the past year. We were particularly involved with the following events and issues.

Civic Day

We participated in Civic Day on 25 June which was held at the Duke of York Square. The event was used to publicise the Society's work and to display some major developments in Chelsea. There was also a petition on subterranean development.

Basements

Subterranean development, the digging of basements, and the nuisances associated with excavation when it is going on under a nearby house, has been one of the recurrent news stories of the year. One local association is working on one assumption – that only legislation can solve the problem – and has been active in Westminster. Your Society is on another tack and is part of the VANGUARD team that is exploring ways of making better use of existing powers. The working party, which includes several Borough Councillors, senior Town Hall planners, a local residents' association and ourselves, is just getting under way. In due course it will seek to draw on the experience of other residents.

Chelsea Barracks

Work has continued throughout the year on plans for the old Chelsea Barracks site in Chelsea Bridge Road. Yes, it is in Westminster but your Society has taken a keen interest in it. Following intervention by the Prince of Wales and abandonment of a phalanx of glass prisms designed by Richard Rogers, a new layout based on garden squares, town houses

THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

and mansion blocks has emerged. It has been given outline planning permission. With wealthy buyers from abroad being the most likely buyers, the houses and flats will be Belgravia in scale but there will be no towers. And one of the squares will be devoted to growing vegetables for sale while also, like the famous vegetable garden at Villandry on the Loire, being ornamental. Kim Wilkie, the landscape architect responsible for the project, will be giving one of the Society's talks next year.

Liscartan House and Granville House in Sloane Street

Almost opposite Holy Trinity Sloane Square in Sloane Street are two 1960s office and shop buildings. Both have the grid façades of that period and, though one is much better than the other, neither is a gem. The Cadogan Estate now proposes to replace them. Sloane Street would be fronted by one long façade with shops at street level and offices on top; a row of gabled shops would run along Pavilion Road and, between the two, would be an open courtyard containing a restaurant. It is neatly planned and would be built to a high quality.

Your Society has, however, from the first had grave concerns about the huge, slightly waving grid of the Sloane Street façade. It is vast – a battleship of a building when many of its neighbours are former houses or mansion blocks. The new Borough Plan cautions against such assertiveness and makes clear that new buildings should relate to their surroundings. They should make an effort to fit in. They should not shout and scream about themselves.

The Council's planning officer acknowledges this problem and has worked long and hard with Stiff + Trevillion, the architects, but hitherto to very little avail. Stiff by name, stiff by manner, it seems. Asked to model the façade around the six shops and the office entrance – in other words make the big building look like a row of seven smaller ones – they say that would be contrary to their philosophy. They want the façade to express the grandeur of the long office floors that lie over the shop and not the modest dimensions of the shops themselves.

This is the most important design issue to face Chelsea for years. A decision has yet to be made.

The Brompton Hospital

The Hospital Trust is considering its future. One possibility is a move elsewhere and the sale of its seven acres between Fulham Road and the Chelsea Farmers' Market. Estimates of the value of the site, if up-market houses and flats were built on it, range from £280 to £500million. Your Society is urging the Council to pre-empt developers by preparing

THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



*Above, Liscartan House and Granville House in Sloane Street today.
Below, proposed new building in Sloane Street.
Both photographs © Stiff + Trevillion Architects Ltd*



THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

guidance on what might be built. The last thing we want to see is a row of towers.

Loss of land for schools and other community uses

With the Chelsea Academy up and running, every year sees it accommodating an additional age group. But, with school leaving age going up by a year in 2014, the Academy's Trustees already need to find space for a new building. So why is the Borough Council seeking to sell for luxury houses the playground of the Carlyle Building in Hortensia Road?

Why, to be general, is it so unprotective of non-housing land? Recent years have, to name but a few, seen the conversion to residential of the College of St. Mark & St. John, Chelsea College of Art and the old Kingsley School in Glebe Place. Now the Brompton Hospital may go too. Then there are Chelsea's pubs. You do not have to buy the nostalgia lobby's view that they are 'the centre of our community', to acknowledge that they add to the local character. But it will be tantamount to a miracle if, in a year's time, the last pint has not been downed at the Phene Arms and in the Cross Keys. Both will be expensive private houses.

A living place is a mixture of houses and all manner of commercial, social and community properties. Yet the continuous selling off of land used for education is pushing Chelsea towards being a residential area for the rich. The Borough Council is not omnipotent but it can arrest its plans to sell the old school playground in Hortensia Road.

Now to our second major objective – stimulating interest in the history, character and traditions of Chelsea.

Annual Report

The Annual Report is one of our main ways of achieving this. Each year we say the Report is the best yet, and Carolyn Starren produced another excellent Report for 2010. I personally know how much time and effort she puts into producing it and would like to invite you to join me in thanking Carrie for all her work on your behalf.

The Lectures held in January and February, organised by Serena Davidson, were as follows:

Antony Clayton gave a fascinating talk entitled *Subterranean City – London Beneath our Feet* that covered the folklore of London's secret tunnels and passages, lost rivers, underground railways and government bunkers.

THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Ian Foster's talk *Adventures and Politics in the 18th Century* marked the 350th anniversary of Sir Hans Sloane's birth. Ian somehow managed to compress Sloane's achievements over his 91 years into a short lecture.

Philip Davies, who has worked for English Heritage in London, used photographs from his book *Lost London 1870-1945*, to demonstrate just how much of London has disappeared.

The Visits this year, organised by Paulette Craxford, have, by coincidence, had an educational theme.

The first visit was to the new Chelsea Academy in Lots Road and was hosted by the Headmaster, Andy Yarrow, and Janet Perry, Finance Director. Designed for 1,200 children, this is a major new building.

There were two visits to Hill House's new facility in Radnor Walk. This is now an assembly hall for sport, music, drama and art – a major change from its life as commercial baths, a theatre, dance hall, pub and latterly for over 100 years, a Welsh Congregational Church. Jonathan Goode of David Le Lay Architects talked about their work in converting the building.

The last educational visit was to Sussex House, at 68 Cadogan Square. This was built as a house, designed by Norman Shaw. It is a relatively rare example of a substantial late 19th-century house, demonstrating the wealth of residents in a part of Chelsea at that time, the majority of houses of this type having subsequently been converted into flats. Nicholas Kaye, the Headmaster, gave members a tour and demonstrated the pride the school takes in the building.

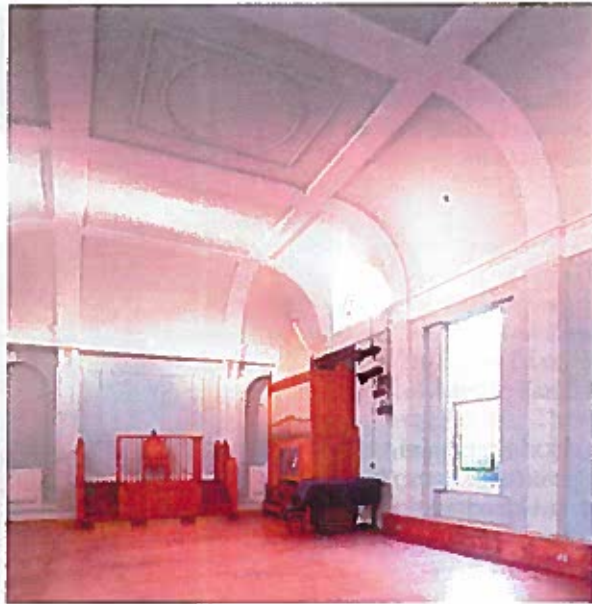
Concluding the 2011 programme was a visit to the Saatchi Gallery. Nigel Hurst, the gallery director, had to go abroad at short notice but one of the gallery staff gave a brief introduction to their work. I gave a talk



The new Chelsea Academy in Lots Road.

© Tim Crocker Photography

THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Founders' Hall at Hill House's new facility in Radnor Walk, a project designed by David Le Lay Architects. © Paul Smoothly.

Headmaster's office, Sussex House School. © Sussex House School.



THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

about developments on the Duke of York's site over 200 years and some background to Saatchi moving to the building. Members had an opportunity to look over the gallery.

Chelsea Map

As part of our role in stimulating interest in Chelsea, we have this year produced a map of buildings and places in Chelsea. This is not intended to be an erudite architectural review but more an introduction to a wide range of buildings from the late seventeenth century to present day. It shows the diversity of the styles and some of the architects who have been involved in making Chelsea such a special place.

The Society commissioned Christopher Lumgair to produce the map.

Socials

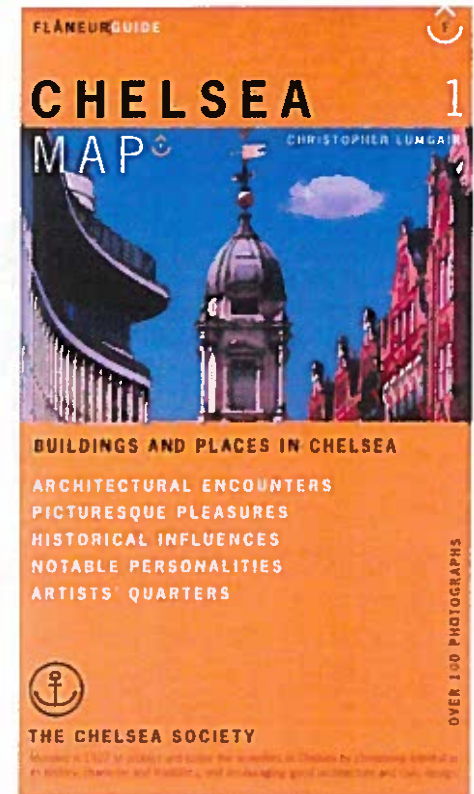
On 15 July we participated in the Doggett's Coat and Badge race, with the Mayor of Kensington & Chelsea, Councillor Julie Mills, handing prizes to the participants.

On 28 July we held a summer drinks reception at Petyt Hall which was well attended by members and their guests.

Looking Forward

Members of the Council are already hard at work developing the programme for 2012. Events to look forward to include a series of lectures in the New Year by the following: Ken Howard, artist, on Monday 23 January; Kim Wilkie, landscape designer on Monday 20 February and Franny Moyle on Constance Wilde on Monday 5 March.

Make a special note in your diary for the Society's 2012 exhibition *Chelsea at the Heart of Gardening* to be held from 21 May to 2 June on Dovehouse Green. This will tell the story of the rich horticultural history of Chelsea



The Chelsea Map, designed by Christopher Lumgair, and published by the Society.

THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

from the 16th century to today. We are working in partnership with Chelsea Physic Garden, English Gardening School, Chelsea Gardeners' Guild, Royal Horticultural Society and the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. We have already attracted an encouraging amount of sponsorship, and our thanks are due to Leonard Holdsworth for his work in this respect.

I would like to take this opportunity to give special thanks to two members who over the years have made significant contributions to the Society; Arnold Stevenson who has been responsible for organising the Society's involvement in the Doggett's Coat and Badge race and Hugh Krall who yet again has produced one of his superb watercolours for use as the Society's card for 2011. We wish to thank them both warmly for their generosity.

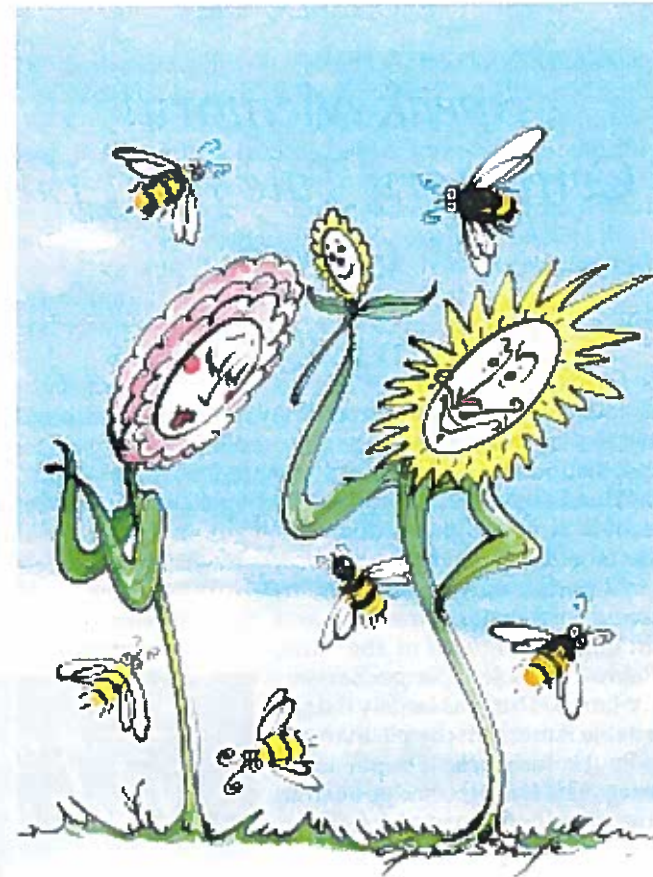
I would also like to thank Christy Austin for all her hard work over five years as Honorary Treasurer. Christy has stepped down but, I am pleased to say, will continue on the Council. Dagmar von Diesel, Honorary Secretary, has recently relocated out of London and I am grateful to her for all that she did for us. I am also grateful to Patricia Burr for taking over the Secretary's duties on a temporary basis.

Moves out of London during the year are one of the reasons for the Society's membership reducing by 30 to 1089.

Finally it is with much regret that I have to announce that I am stepping down as Chairman after only two short years. Recent work commitments do not allow me to give the Society the attention it deserves.

My Lord President, this is the Chairman's report for 2011 in the Chelsea Society's 84th year.

Stuart Corbyn



CHELSEA SOCIETY 2012 EXHIBITION

Chelsea at the Heart of Gardening

**21 May - 2 June, 10am - 6pm
Dovehouse Green, King's Road**

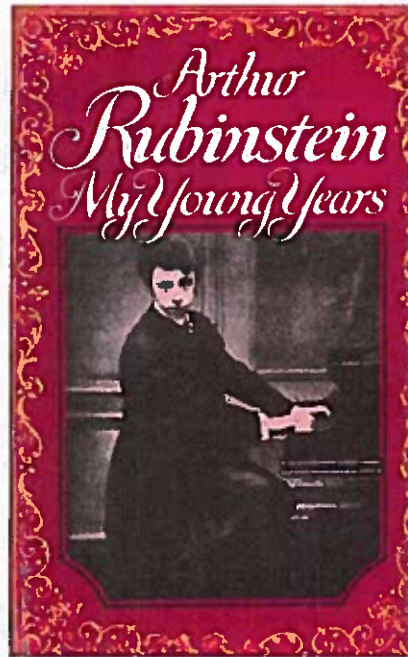
Speak Memory! A Centenary Tale from Edith Grove

by John C Q Roberts

Book-lovers in our Society may know of the second-hand stall held most Friday mornings at the Chelsea & Westminster Hospital. Its stock includes quality books donated by local residents to the Hospital Friends' charity. There I recently picked up, and for less than the price of a pint, a signed copy of a memoir by Arthur Rubinstein, one of the most celebrated pianists of the twentieth century. He recalls coming to London early in his career, and encountering major American and European cultural figures of the time, such as Pablo Casals, John Singer Sargent and Henry James. This was largely thanks to a hospitable American couple living in Chelsea, Paul and Muriel Draper of 19 Edith Grove. The Drapers had moved to Britain to enable Paul, a promising tenor, to take lessons from the legendary Lieder singer and teacher, Raimund von zur-Mühlen.¹ Edith Grove still boasts some fine Victorian houses, though Number 19 is not one of them. It is part of a brick apartment block, replacing grand houses destroyed in a wartime raid. It bears no memorial plaque. Tucked behind the new structure is the surviving annexe of one of those former houses.

I often wonder about the tales that Chelsea properties, with or without the blue plaque, could tell of life within their walls. For example, Durham Cottage at No.4, Christchurch Street does not declare itself the love-nest bought by Sir

*Arthur Rubinstein's memoir of his
younger years, published in 1999.*



SPEAK MEMORY!

Laurence Olivier for himself and Vivien Leigh in 1936. That stellar couple were customers at the branch of Lloyds Bank which used to be on the corner of the King's Road and Jubilee Place. I was office junior there at the beginning of the Fifties. In those days, long before cash-dispensers, people had to call into their bank to draw money. Though too young to recognise every local celebrity customer, I remember (who wouldn't?) the then most photographed woman in Britain, Barbara Goalen, the favourite mannequin of Dior and Balenciaga.² 'With her exceptional beauty and elegance' - to quote from the 2002 *Telegraph* obituary - 'delicate bone-structure and wasp waist, she represented the height of glamour'.

Then there was the artist, Augustus John, who was often to be seen with his bohemian coterie at the Six Bells overlooking Dovehouse Green, the establishment now called Henry J Bean's. John, an acquaintance of the Drapers, would have been among the regulars at 19 Edith Grove too. Another, as already mentioned, was Arthur Rubinstein. Let him take up the story. We are in 1912, exactly a hundred years ago at the beginning of the London concert season. Rubinstein, then in his early twenties, had come to know the Drapers on his debut visit to London the previous year, so he wrote:³

'The Drapers had moved to 19 Edith Grove, a short, uninviting street situated amid a poor, dreary neighbourhood. Muriel Draper had the magic to know just how to transform the banal, uniform look of Number 19 into a most agreeable place to live. There was an odd structure on the rear of their house; it might have served as a studio, a stable, a workshop, or a cellar, God only knows. Muriel had emptied it and cleaned it inside, leaving only the naked brick walls; she broke through a wall to make room for a door and staircase leading down to the place, and then, miraculously, she created out of it a magnificent, spacious, square, noble music room.

On one side of the huge fireplace stood the Bechstein concert grand⁴, some music stands, and shelves with music. On the wall opposite was a large, majestic sofa flanked by two long Renaissance tables and an oversized armchair. The mantel over the fireplace was covered by an old Gothic tapestry. Dark wooden beams crossed the ceiling, and huge candles were posted in prominent places. The whole gave the impression of the interior of a Florentine palace. But the most precious aspect of the room was its power to attract great artists to make music.

The night I was about to enter the enchantment of this place, I heard from the entrance door the theme of the second movement of the F major Quartet by Beethoven, the Opus 59, No. 1. Nothing more beautiful has



The music room at 19 Edith Grove.

ever been written. Paul Draper showed me the way to the music room, and we sat down on one of the steps so as not to disturb the musicians. I was happily surprised to see not more than six or seven persons listening intently to the accents of proud resignation of this sublime work. When the finale with the Russian tune came to an end, I descended the stairs to greet Muriel Draper and to be introduced to her guests. Three of them were Spaniards: Enrique Arbós, a violinist and conductor, and Agustin Rubio, a cellist, were both professors at the Royal Academy of Music; the third, Pedro Morales, was a viola player. The others were: Eugene Goossens, a young violinist and composer of Belgian descent, who later became a famous conductor; an anonymous lady; and the great American painter John Singer Sargent, who was, I discovered, a fervent lover of music. The London String Quartet, led by the young, brilliant Albert Sammons, was on its way to becoming the best ensemble of its kind. The four players invited me to join them in a quintet. "Yes, yes," Muriel shouted, "Arthur will play, but first we'll have supper."

We followed her upstairs into a small dining room where a table laden with cold lobsters, champagne, fresh fruit, and desserts offered a pleasant sight. Mixing happily food and conversation, we spent a delightful hour getting better acquainted. John Sargent exchanged with me memories of Joseph Joachim, whom he admired and whose portrait he had painted.⁵ After the last drop of coffee we returned to the music room. We settled

down to play the *F minor Quintet* of Brahms. As is customary among musicians, we entered into long discussions and comments on every facet of our performance. Our interminable chatter was stopped by Muriel's imperative voice. "And now, please, the Schumann!"

We obeyed. The *Quintet* of Schumann, this jewel of chamber music, gave me a better opportunity to show my born gift and love for ensemble playing. It was easier to read at sight than the Brahms, and I plunged into this work with delight and passion. When we finished, a loud cheer was our reward. By then I had become drunk with music. Discarding the quartet players, who needed a rest, my greedy eyes fell on Goossens and Rubio.

"Please, please, come on, let us play a Schubert trio!" They resisted at first, but when I dragged them almost by force towards their respective instruments they gave in and we settled down to play the great B flat Trio. With trios I felt at home; they were my domain. I had played dozens of them with Paul Kochanski⁶ and his brother, Eli, the cellist. Consequently, our playing had the quality of a concert performance. The beauty of the music whetted our appetite for more. We attacked without delay the other grand Schubert, the Trio in E flat, which came off even better than the first.

Getting up from our seats, glad, and a little tired, we were ready to call it a day, when Muriel announced with an air immune to objection: "Paul, give us a few songs from the *Winterreise*." And Paul sang, with me at the piano, almost the whole of Schubert's winter journey cycle with his small, well-trained voice and great intensity of expression.⁷ He stopped, but I continued to play my favourite songs by Brahms, Schumann, Hugo Wolf, and others, anything I could think of. After this orgy of music, it really was time to go home.

"Come up for a little snack," called Muriel from upstairs. "You must be hungry." Yes, we were indeed, without being aware of it. The 'snack' was a hearty meal of scrambled eggs, cold meat, cheese, and coffee. Chatting, joking, laughing, we finally took leave and dispersed in different directions. From that night on, the music room at 19 Edith Grove became a temple of glorious music-making such as the world has not known; it remains in my memory as the supreme musical euphoria of my life.⁸

Following that second stay in London, Rubinstein joined Paul and Muriel Draper for a summer holiday in Florence, and thence went on via Vienna to Zakopane, a favourite place in his native Poland, staying with a cousin of Joseph Conrad. He began the following concert season with

SPEAK MEMORY!

performances in Poland and Rumania. After New Year in Warsaw he set off on an extensive Russian tour. Then it was to be Vienna, Rome, Berlin and, once again, London, where there was to be an important season of ballet and opera from Russia, and when Stravinsky, Chaliapin and others would be added to the 19 Edith Grove roll-call.

Since Italy Rubinstein had had no contact with the Drapers. Over lunch at Scott's Paul invited him back to Edith Grove to see their new baby. 'We found Muriel down in the music room, sitting on the couch in front of a table covered with cups and cakes, pouring tea. A guest, a young woman, sat at the table. "This is Ruth, my kid sister. She is our house guest", said Paul, introducing me. There was no resemblance between sister and brother, but she had some of his warmth and charm. She had a thin, delicately shaped face, dark hair, a sensitive, slightly curved nose, and dark, expressive eyes.'

On the following page Rubinstein continues: "The days passed quickly in London. After a nice, long supper at which Pierre Monteux appeared with a viola case, we returned to the studio. We expected Muriel to suggest loudly, as she always did, which work she would like to hear. Instead, she began to whisper something into Draper's ear. He answered with another whisper, then both of them whispered intently to Ruth who at first said, decidedly. "No", but after some more whispers, gave in.

Now Muriel announced very loudly: "My sister-in-law, Ruth Draper, will do a monologue." There was a moment of general consternation; here we were ready to play great music, and the Drapers were going to impose upon us some prattle fit for a family celebration at Christmas, or for grandpapa's birthday! Ruth fetched a worn brown shawl, threw it over her head, and tucked it under her chin. Then she explained quietly: "An old Irish immigrant arrives in America to live with her daughter, whom she has not seen for twenty-five years. She expects to find her ashore, waiting, but the daughter does not turn up." Suddenly she was the old woman searching the crowd with keen eyes in anxious expectation of the happy reunion. She asks people for information, but they do not understand her Irish twang. In time her face and her body seem to shrink; she begins to dread the outcome until, at last, the woman, now a tragic figure, expresses in only a faint murmur her fate of loneliness, dejection, and poverty in a strange land.

Ruth took off her shawl. We all had lumps in our throats. Henry James stuttered: "My dear, you are a genius." Ruth smiled and announced cheerfully: "I do now an English lady showing off her garden to friends." She gave a smoothing touch to her hair, and became at once the fastidious

SPEAK MEMORY!



Ruth Draper as 'The Immigrant'. Charcoal sketch by John Singer Sargent, 1914.
© Theatre & Music Collection,
Museum of New York.

British aristocrat: "Don't you adore my petunias, my deah? Aren't they simply divine? And here are my sweet little dahlias..." And she went on with this prattle, imitating to perfection the accent, the inflection of voice, of the high-born English. Enchanted and excited, we shouted our bravos and praises. "Where did you learn all that?" we asked. "Who wrote your stories?" Ruth answered modestly: "Oh, I made them up myself. I always like to imitate and to caricature people."

Some forty years later I saw Ruth Draper perform at the Theatre Royal Haymarket. By then she had become a world-wide legend, admired by such other legendary figures as Sarah Bernhardt, George Bernard Shaw and John Gielgud. In my mind's eye I still recall not an otherwise empty stage, but one peopled by tourists being shown round an Italian cathedral, or by ladies under instruction in a New York keep-fit class – mesmerising magic. Hardly surprising that she was an inspiration to her second cousin, Joyce Grenfell, a Chelsea person almost her entire life.⁸

Ruth Draper's own record of her subsequent enduring friendship with Rubinstein is plentifully recorded.⁹ Here are a few of the many references. In a letter from London to a friend in America, dated 18 November 1920: 'Arthur Rubinstein is here and I've heard and seen him a lot – wonderful as ever and such a true, fine friend.' To the same correspondent she wrote from Milan on 17 December 1922: 'I envy you hearing Rubinstein and Kochanski, it takes me back to Edith Grove – I've heard them there and never can forget.' And again, on 10 June 1932, this time from Paris: 'Arthur's concert was wonderful and I've had lovely talks with him – he remains the vital, faithful friend that one can find again after years of silence...'

Just the other side of Battersea Bridge, recently retired although in her eighties, lives the distinguished actress, Faith Brook.¹⁰ Thinking of Ruth

SPEAK MEMORY!



Henry James, a portrait by John Singer Sargent, 1913.
© National Portrait Gallery.

Draper, I called to ask if they had been acquainted. "Sadly, no", said Faith, and wondered why I should be asking. I explained I was reading about Draper in a book by Arthur Rubinstein. "Oh, I knew him, of course. Used to call him 'Oncle Artur'. It was in my Hollywood days. As I could speak French, I was invited round by Charles Boyer, whenever Rubinstein was in town." Speak, memory!

There is a more recent local connection with Arthur Rubinstein. The closest companion of his last years now lives on Chelsea Embankment, the wife of our distinguished fellow-resident, Lord Weidenfeld. Annabelle Weidenfeld writes: 'In the same period, just before the First World War, Rubinstein used to visit John Sargent at his studio in Tite Street. Rubinstein also lived in a house on the corner of Tite Street and Royal Hospital Road,

where he was offered an apartment while staying in London by Eugenia Errazuriz¹¹ and her nephew Juan Antonio Gandarillas, whose wife, Juanita was the sister of the Chilean Ambassador in London. They were a very well known family in London and Eugenia was a lady of incredible taste and had a great salon in London where such people as Augustus John, Sargent, Ysaye, among many others, would congregate. She was also a great friend of Picasso. They more or less adopted the young Rubinstein, sending him daily gifts and introducing him to Penhaligon's Hammam, which he used all his life. I have often wondered which corner of Tite Street and Royal Hospital Road it could have been.'

This article can only offer a foretaste of the riches in Arthur Rubinstein's London story, which itself is only a part of the fascinating account of his early years. His book is not difficult to find. Nor is Muriel Draper's own rather gushy account of her London years.¹² Her pages about the final hours at 19 Edith Grove, before she left wartime Britain in 1915, are worth sketching in.

She describes the very last evening of music-making. 'Then it was time for supper. We went up the staircase, bringing the lighted candles with

SPEAK MEMORY!

us. The fact that I was leaving all this in a few hours conveyed nothing to me, though I knew it well enough. The room smelled of stocks. We were very gay. The beloved Rubio had joined us, which made it possible to play the Schubert quintet, so we went back into the studio to begin it. After the quintet Ysaye, Rubinstein and Barrere played the Beethoven serenade for violin, piano and flute. It was getting undeniably late. You could begin to see the dawn light in the high window. This was the morning of the day I was to leave England.¹³

She goes on to describe foraging for breakfast, Rubinstein helping in the search for butter to scramble the remaining eggs and how they found the last two bottles of champagne and a terrine of foie gras. 'Then it was time to put the trunks and the children into the taxi-cabs. I went down into the studio alone. The fire was burning. One candle was not yet out. The piano was open and the parts of the Beethoven quartet were on the music stands. In the morning light the flowers were lifting their heads and on the tables violins and a flute were carefully laid. Smoke was curling up into the roof and the room was filled with sound. Then it was time to go. I waved to them all, and walked through the door, out of 19 Edith Grove. As it closed, I heard music. I turned to look. And there in the door they stood, all but one, their instruments miraculously at hand, playing divinely. I do not know what they played, but, as it carried me across the sidewalk and into the waiting cab, I heard coming from the high open window of 19a the splendid chords of the *Hammerklavier Sonata*. The golden era was at an end.'

Thus ends Muriel Draper's account. Now for the end of mine. Before submitting my copy for this article, I went round to double-check that there was no plaque on 19a, now a modest separate dwelling. This time there was a light on inside. I knocked, and a head appeared round the door. I explained my business and was invited in. There was that high window through which Muriel had heard Rubinstein's farewell. There too those naked brick walls which had resounded to the voice of Chaliapin, to music played by the world's best. For me too at that moment 'the room was filled with sound'.



19a Edith Grove in 2012.

What could be more fitting than the discovery I made that morning? 19a is the home of a classical musician. And, more relevant still, he is one of the professionals involved in the creation of The Museum of Music History¹⁴, and among those who campaign for that project's public support.

The author, John C Q Roberts, after periods in industry and language teaching, worked until retirement in the world of cultural diplomacy, with a special interest in Russia. His memoir, Speak Clearly into the Chandelier (Curzon, 2000), has a Foreword by John le Carré.

1 Raimond von zur-Mühlen is recognised as a founder of the Liederabend as a concert entity, often being accompanied by Clara Schumann. At one of his concerts Brahms shouted out 'At last I have found my singer!'

2 The word 'celebrity' had not yet been devalued nor was the term 'supermodel' yet current.

3 The extracts are taken from *My Young Years* by Arthur Rubinstein, published by Jonathan Cape. These, along with the book jacket illustration, are reprinted by permission of The Random House Group Ltd. The book appeared in 1973, when Rubinstein was in his mid-eighties.

4 On his previous visit to London Rubinstein had selected it for their intended new home: '... an exceptionally beautiful instrument. The Bechstein firm sent me a check for thirty pounds - my commission on the sale!' At that stage he was still struggling financially.

5 A leading Hungarian musician, he gave the premiere performance on 1 January 1879 of the Brahms Violin Concerto, of which he was the dedicatee.

6 Violinist, originating from Odessa. He and Rubinstein, both child prodigies, had worked together and become friends in Warsaw.

7 Paul Draper also played the clarinet, taking part in early rehearsals for the first performance of Walton's *Façade* at Osbert Sitwell's house in Carlyle Square. (see *Chelsea Society Report* 2010, p.61.)

8 36 Elm Park Gardens, her last home from 1957 to 1979, recently gained a blue plaque.

9 See *The Letters of Ruth Draper - a self-portrait of a great actress*. (Hamish Hamilton, 1979)

10 Her swan-song was an acclaimed solo show, *The Colour of Poppies*, a new play in my translation from the French original. Before and after the Jermyn Street Theatre she took it on tour, giving her final performances of it in April 2007 at the Theatre Royal York, her native city.

11 The Errazuriz family, in Chile since 1735, as well as diplomats, archbishops and industrialists, provided no less than four presidents of the Republic.

12 *Music at Midnight*, (Heinemann, 1929)

13 Paul Draper had already gone ahead back to the United States

14 www.momh.co.uk

Shrewsbury House

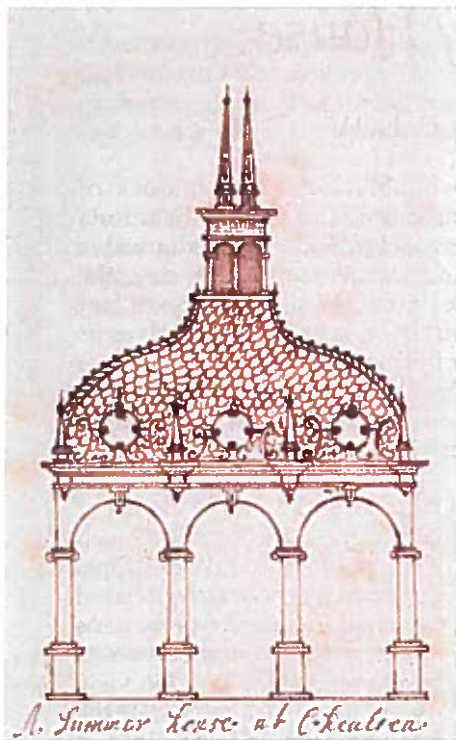
by David Le Lay

Any account of Chelsea will probably include a history of Shrewsbury House. The most oft repeated fact is that it was for a time the home of the legendary Bess of Hardwick. That indomitable lady's main characteristic is that, unlike most women of her day, she personally exercised control over all her affairs and was an excellent businesswoman. This included meticulous book-keeping which gives us a detailed insight into every aspect of her life. So we know for certain that in November 1591, shortly after the death of her fourth and last husband, the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, she set out from Hardwick with the intention of spending several months at Shrewsbury House, Chelsea.

The purpose of this visit was to be 'at Court' to promote the claims of her 16 year old grand-daughter, Arabella Stuart, as the heir to Queen Elizabeth I and to secure the engagement of Arabella to the Duke of Palma, a Spanish nobleman, in the hope that such a union might seal the desired reconciliation of England and Spain. In the event, neither of these aims was achieved. Bess was 60 and, as is often recounted, the richest woman in England, after the Queen. All the arrangements for the London visit, including the journey to and from Chelsea, were made to demonstrate the wealth and importance of this famous woman; one would be forgiven in thinking that she was the Queen herself.

Her stay in Chelsea was very carefully planned over many months before it actually took place. Not only were wagon loads of furnishings sent down in advance but extensive alterations and improvements were carried out to the house which had lain unused for many years. Amongst the improvements to the garden was the construction of an absolutely delightful summer house designed by Robert Smythson, architect of her new house at Hardwick Hall which was under construction at this time. There is a beautiful small drawing labelled *A Summer House at Chelsea* in the RIBA Collection at the Victoria & Albert Museum. The design is generally agreed to be by Robert Smythson. The 1706 plan of Shrewsbury House (then called Alston House) clearly shows and labels a summer house in the north-west corner of the main garden and the connection between Bess of Hardwick and Robert Smythson makes it virtually certain that his design is of the summer house at Shrewsbury House.

SHREWSBURY HOUSE



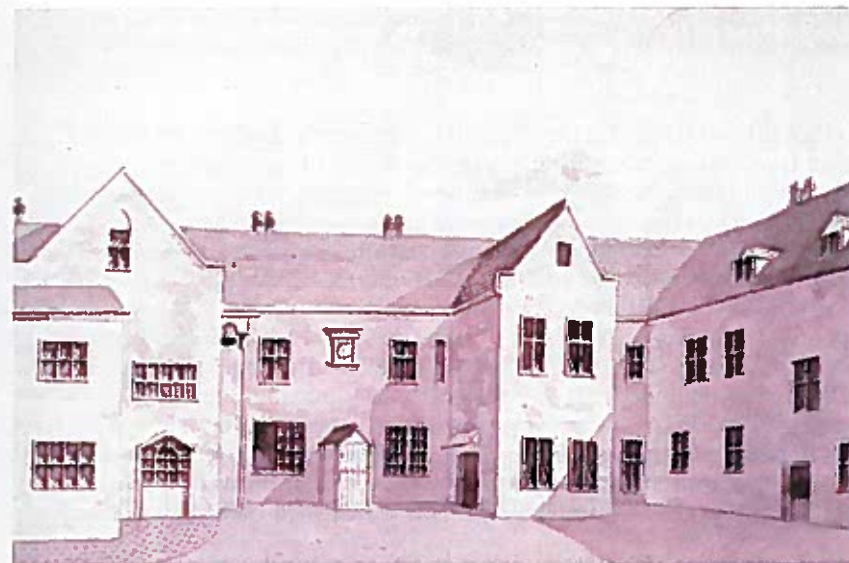
Drawing of a summer house at Chelsea, probably by John Smythson and dating from his London visit in 1619, sepia pen. The design is probably of a summer house designed by the artist's father, Robert Smythson. © RIBA Library Drawings and Archives Collections

Whilst in London Bess could have stayed at Court, or at the new London house constructed by her late husband but her decision to stay at Chelsea was calculated to keep her detached from the hub of the Court, in her own Thames-side palace with its extensive gardens. Besides, from Chelsea she could be rowed on the river in considerable style to the royal palaces at Westminster, Greenwich, Richmond and Hampton Court. In addition to regular attendances at Court, Bess entertained lavishly at Shrewsbury House, she went on extravagant shopping expeditions for her new house at Hardwick, she had clothes made and she gave to the poor of Chelsea. On 31 July 1592 Bess set off for the return journey to

Hardwick, somewhat sooner than planned, as London became gripped by the plague.

It would be wonderful to know what Shrewsbury House looked like at the time of Bess of Hardwick's visit. The earliest view we have of it is a watercolour of 1790 that appeared in Daniel Lysons' *Environs of London*, all of 200 years after the visit and executed at a time when the building was in industrial use. There is another drawing in the RIBA's Smythson collection – a perspective view of a house with a castellated wing, a house that has never been identified. Could it conceivably be Shrewsbury House, Chelsea? The drawing is by John Smythson, the son of Robert Smythson. Robert Smythson died in 1614, whereupon John was employed by Bess' son and heir, William Cavendish, to carry out alterations and extensions at Bolsover Castle, Derbyshire and Welbeck Abbey, Nottinghamshire – just two of the numerous properties he had inherited from his mother. In 1618-19 John was sent to London, perhaps to glean architectural ideas for the projects in hand. Whilst in London he must have visited Shrewsbury House, as that

SHREWSBURY HOUSE

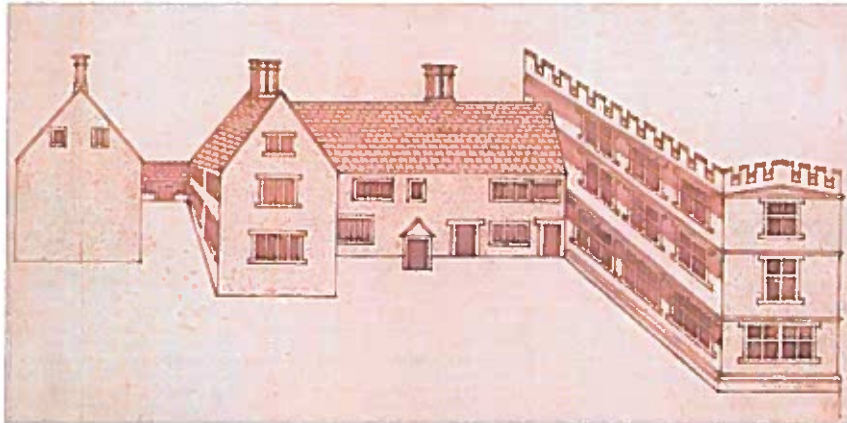


The south side of the north range of Shrewsbury House, Anon. c. 1790, pen and watercolour. Published in The Environs of London, being an Historical Account of the Towns, Villages and Hamlets within twelve miles of that Capital, Daniel Lysons, 1792. © City of London, London Metropolitan Archives

too belonged to William Cavendish. The drawing of the summer house in the garden is now thought by Mark Girouard, the principal authority on the Smythson collection, to have been executed by John Smythson on his London visit, though the design is definitely that of his father. It is possible John Smythson actually stayed at Shrewsbury House whilst he was in London.

The features of the drawing which lead one to the supposition that this could be Shrewsbury House are, firstly, the general arrangement of a modest house with a long wing to the right and what is obviously service-type buildings to the left, matches the arrangement shown in all the views and plans of the house. Secondly, the central projecting timber porch, is similar to that in the Lysons' watercolour of 1790. The Smythson drawing shows a small rectangular window above this curious porch whilst the Lysons' drawing shows a clock of roughly the same proportions. The most doubtful aspect of the assertion that the Smythson drawing shows Shrewsbury House is the 'castellated wing'. It is shown as being to a much larger scale than the remainder of the house, whereas the Lysons drawing shows this wing as being similar in scale and design to the rest of the building. If the drawing is of Shrewsbury House one would have to

SHREWSBURY HOUSE



*Perspective view of a house with a castellated wing, by John Smythson, sepia pen and brown wash with roof tinted with red chalk.
© RIBA Library Drawings and Archives Collections*

assume that the castellated wing was either re-built or drastically altered, probably after 1695, when the house was let out on lease. It would seem illogical to change or demolish a substantial, well-built wing yet keep the much older original house that was probably much more poorly built. Such logic however is often absent when it comes to demolition of buildings, as we will see, when a Lutyens house on this same site was demolished just three years after its completion.

In 1551 the 5th Earl of Shrewsbury is recorded as having arrived in Chelsea with 140 horses, and a letter written to Bess in 1578 refers to interior decoration of 'rareness of device and beauty'. Such a large scale and imposing wing as the 'castellated wing' could easily have been built by the Earls of Shrewsbury during the latter half of the sixteenth century. Indeed it would be surprising if the house of such a noble family had not, at least in part, been suitably grand. One cannot really imagine the great Bess of Hardwick staying for nine months or so at the house shown in the Lysons watercolour. Thomas Faulkner, writing in 1810, says that the house then had a room of 120 feet in length, yet such a room would surely need a higher ceiling than the building depicted in the engraving he provides in his book. He describes how the oak panelling to this room had been removed - perhaps the ceiling had also been lowered at the same time.

The 'castellated wing', like the summer house, could have been a design of Robert Smythson as it bears a strong resemblance to, for example, North Lees Hall Derbyshire (1596), Queen Mary's Tower, Sheffield Manor (1572)

SHREWSBURY HOUSE

and the outer wings of both Fountains Hall, Yorkshire (1611) and Chastleton House, Oxfordshire (1602), all of which are thought to have been designed by Smythson.

The earliest mention of Shrewsbury House is in 1519 when the 4th Earl of Shrewsbury is recorded as residing there but the house could well have been built much earlier, perhaps sometime during the second half of the fifteenth century. Upon the death of Bess of Hardwick in 1607 it passed to her son, William Cavendish, created Earl of Devonshire in 1618. He died in 1625 and his widow continued to live at Chelsea until her own death in 1643. After some 200 years in the possession of the Shrewsbury family, the house was then sold to Joseph Alston, a rich City merchant who was knighted in 1682 and died at Chelsea in 1688, though the house remained in the possession of his family until 1695. It was then owned by the Butler family who let it out on lease to a succession of tenants. In about 1760 it was bought by a Mr. Tate who established a paper manufactory there and the site continued in some sort of industrial use until 1927, though the house itself was demolished in 1813. By this time the outer walled gardens had been sold.

Walter Godfrey, author of the *Survey of London Vol. II, Chelsea Part 1*, published in 1909, suggested that the original layout of Shrewsbury House

Cheyne Walk, etching by Walter W. Burgess. Published in Bits of Old Chelsea, 1894. On the extreme right is the entrance to Shrewsbury House, the building next to it, set back from the road, is nos. 43 and 44 Cheyne Walk and the building with a gable is no.45 Cheyne Walk.

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SHREWSBURY HOUSE



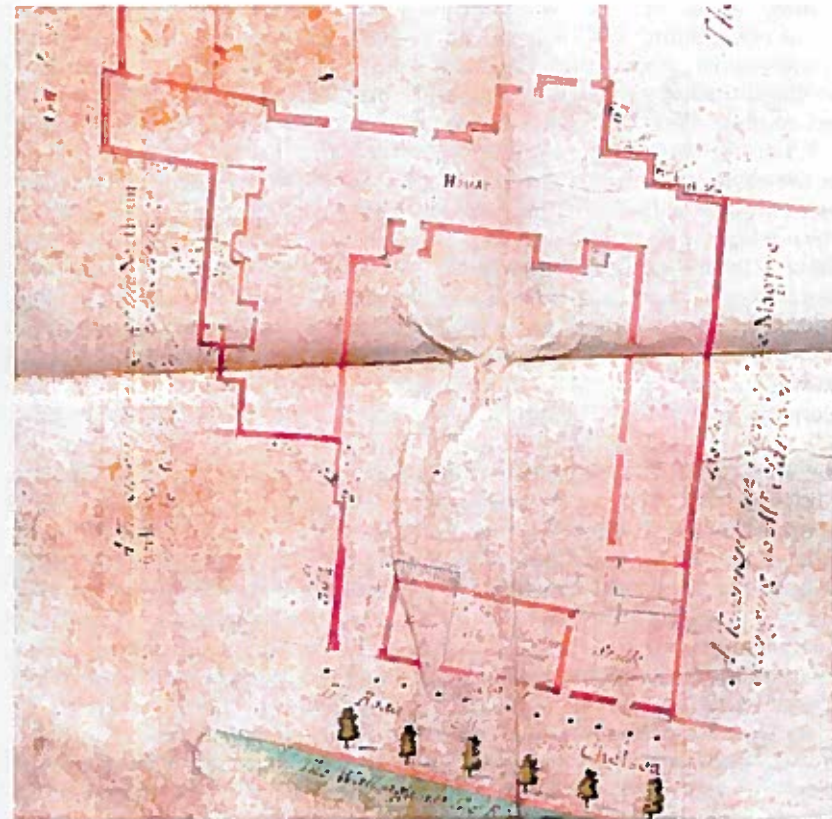
Part of a plan traced from a map drawn c.1706 to show the course of the water pipes supplying Beaufort House and Lord Cheyne's House. Shrewsbury House is here called 'Sir Joseph Alston's house', to the north is 'Sir Joseph's Garden' in the north-west corner of which is 'A summer house' and to the east 'Sir Joseph Alston's Orchard'. To the east of Shrewsbury House is Winchester House and 'Lord Cheyne's House'.

© Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

might have been a complete quadrangle, with a range of buildings on the Cheyne Walk frontage. His reason for suggesting this was based upon his discovery of a fine staircase and chimney piece together with late Jacobean doors and panelling in nos. 43 and 44 Cheyne Walk. He also thought that the scale and character of no. 45, with its gable, was such that it could well have been the south-west corner of the original quadrangular house. The founder of The Chelsea Society, Reginald Blunt, who was such an enthusiastic, if somewhat romantic, writer of Chelsea's history, was ecstatic. He soon had Bess of Hardwick tripping down that fine staircase as he fought, in 1927, to save nos. 43-45 Cheyne Walk from demolition. The fact that Walter Godfrey had dated the stairs and other features to no earlier than 1650, some 60 years after Bess's visit to Chelsea, did not at all deter Blunt from the excellent story.

Walter Godfrey cannot have seen the detailed plan of central Chelsea, south of the King's Road, prepared in 1706 in connection with a dispute

SHREWSBURY HOUSE



Part of measured drawing attached to Counter-part lease from Edward Butler to Wallhall & Godwin, ink with colour wash, 1739.

© Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

regarding water supply. This shows that the house, then belonging to Sir Joseph Alston, was at that time arranged around only three sides of a quadrangle. It seems likely that this was indeed the original arrangement, with probably a high wall and entrance gateway fronting Cheyne Walk, similar to those shown in front of Winchester House and the Manor House, further east. With the gradual expansion of Chelsea village around the church it seems likely that this would have led to the building of new houses on the Cheyne Walk frontage, on both sides of the entrance.

The earliest detailed plan of the estate is one attached to a lease plan of 1739. This enables us to accurately show where the house was situated, something which baffled historians for many years. Its site was all of the

SHREWSBURY HOUSE

frontage of the present block of flats called Shrewsbury House plus the site of nos. 38 and 39 Cheyne Walk, in fact the east wing of Shrewsbury House was on what is now the garden of no. 38. The lease plan shows two principal walled gardens around the house, one immediately to the north and another 'Long Garden' stretching eastwards, the whole site amounting to 1.5 acres. But the plan shows several blocked-up doorways, notably on the eastern boundary, indicating that when Bess of Hardwick was in residence the walled gardens shown adjacent to Winchester House, which was not built until 1638, could well have been part of the Shrewsbury House estate. It is also likely that the site of Cheyne Row, built in 1706 to the west, was also originally part of the estate. There can be little doubt that in Bess of Hardwick's day the estate would have amounted to considerably more than 1.5 acres, otherwise where would the 'flock of 40 sheep and two fat oxen', sent down to Chelsea for eventual slaughter and consumption, have been able to graze?

The engraving that Thomas Faulkner includes in his history of Chelsea, published in 1810, looks perfectly convincing yet it contains many inconsistencies. It shows a three-storey wing on the west side of the courtyard which, with its mullioned windows appears to date from no later than about 1700, yet this wing is not shown on the map of 1706. Also, the wing is shown as being separated from the main south-facing north range, yet no such gap appears in the measured survey of 1739. A comparison between the watercolour of 1790 and the engraving of 1810

*The south side of the north range of Shrewsbury House, drawn by Edward Ward, engraved by Barlow. Published in An Historical and Topographical Description of Chelsea and its Environs, Thomas Faulkner, 1810.
© Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea*



SHREWSBURY HOUSE

throws up numerous other anomalies. There are no obvious explanations for these inconsistencies.

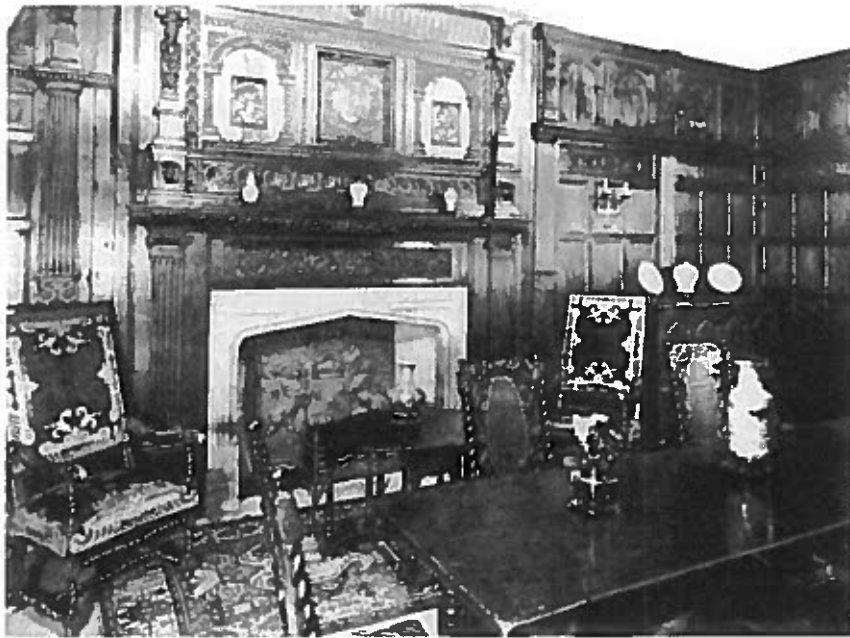
In September 1927, the site of Shrewsbury House, including the main north garden and nos. 43-45 Cheyne Walk, but excluding nos. 38 and 39, was offered at auction as a development proposition. It was purchased by a property developer who over the ensuing two years put forward various proposals for development of the site, none of which found favour with the authorities. Meanwhile, the remaining sitting tenants in nos. 43-45 were moved out, the buildings were stripped of anything of value and quietly allowed to rot. This was the early days of The Chelsea Society which kept a very careful eye on events. The redevelopment of the Shrewsbury House site was thus one of the Society's first planning battles and Reports of the Society in its early years include detailed views as to the importance of this site and the surviving Cheyne Walk buildings.

Also in 1927, William Randolph Hearst, the famous American newspaper tycoon, purchased a room 'from an old house in Chelsea' which was on display at Roberson's Knightsbridge Halls showrooms. The Jacobean panelling in that room bears a remarkable resemblance to that recorded in 1909 by Walter Godfrey at 43 and 44 Cheyne Walk and illustrated, in somewhat simplistic line drawings, in the *Survey of London*.

Eventually the site was purchased in 1930 by the Hon. Cecil Baring, 3rd Baron Revelstoke of Membrand. Lord Revestoke was Managing Director of Baring's Bank. He employed Sir Edwin Lutyens to design a substantial new house on the site for his daughter, Calypso, her husband, Captain Guy Liddle and their young family. Lord Revelstoke had previously employed Lutyens to carry out alterations and extensions to his island retreat of Lambay, a mediaeval castle on a tiny island off the coast of Ireland, to the north-east of Dublin. The Chelsea Society was delighted by this outcome – a substantial new house for the daughter of a rich aristocrat, designed by a respected and distinguished architect – what could be better? The fact that the proposals included demolishing nos. 43-45 Cheyne Walk did not seem to now overly exercise the Society, even though they were thought to be precious remains of the original Shrewsbury House, albeit, they would by this time have been in an advanced state of dereliction

The house, which was known simply as 42 Cheyne Walk, was completed in January 1933 at a reputed cost of over £30,000, an absolute fortune at the time. It was in Lutyens' classical style, with those idiosyncratic touches that mark him out as a genius. He designed every detail of the house, including the interior, paying special attention to the design of the nursery and many other special fixtures and fittings. It also had every modern

SHREWSBURY HOUSE



Room from an old house in Chelsea set up in Roberson's Knightsbridge Halls showroom, 1927. © Art Archives of William Randolph Hearst, C. W. Post Campus Memorial Library, Long Island University, USA

comfort including central heating. The house was sited well back from Cheyne Walk, roughly in the middle of what was once the main walled garden to the north of Shrewsbury House, with a large and impressive forecourt overlooked by all the principal rooms. There were probably fine railings and gate piers on the Cheyne Walk boundary but there is no record of these. There are however many photographs of the house itself, including the interior, as it was featured in the *Architect & Building News* and in *Country Life*.

Lord Revelstoke died in 1934 and in 1936 his daughter and son-in-law, Captain and the Hon. Mrs. Guy Liddle, decided to sell their Chelsea home. Imagine the sense of horror when it was discovered that the buyer was a well-known firm of builders called Y J Lovell & Son. They quickly drew up proposals to replace Lutyens' beautiful house with a large six-storey block of flats designed by Gordon Jeeves, the architect of the recently completed Cranmer Court in Whitehead's Grove. The Chelsea Society was outraged at the loss of a Lutyens masterpiece but felt powerless to prevent it and simply pleaded that the new building should respect its historic site.

SHREWSBURY HOUSE

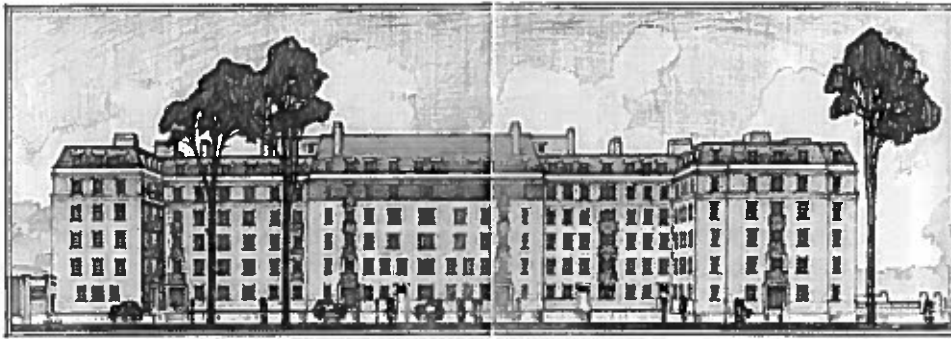


42 Cheyne Walk. Photograph, 1933. House for Lord Revelstoke, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, on the site of Shrewsbury House. Demolished 1936. © Country Life

It was probably the Society's concerns that ensured the resulting block was only six storeys high as opposed to the eight storeys of Cranmer Court.

It is often asked how the demolition of a virtually new house, that was so well designed and built, could have possibly been justified. The answer is solely to do with land values – 50 flats were simply more valuable than a single large house, no matter how fine that house may be. Such commercial considerations, even more so today, dictate many of the changes to the face of London.

Gordon Jeeves loved all things American, including tall buildings, and in the early part of his career he had been in partnership with Raymond Hood in New York. In 1928 the pair designed Ideal House (now called Palladium House) in Argyll Street, near Oxford Circus, an eight-storey office building clad in black polished granite with gold decoration. The sale particulars of the new Shrewsbury House boasted that by having a total of eight entrance doors with lifts and stairs, corridors were eliminated and every flat could stretch across the building allowing for both morning and evening sun and cross-ventilation. There were also eight Duplex flats, an idea imported from America. These flats had their own front door and their own staircase connecting the living accommodation with bedrooms situated at first floor level – a sort of 'house within a block'. The new Shrewsbury House is very much a 'block' that is placed upon its site in a



West elevation, Shrewsbury House. Drawing, pencil. Gordon Jeeves, 1936.
©Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

very perfunctory way – there is no attempt to plan the buildings so as to create pleasing or interesting spaces.

All that remains of the original Shrewsbury House today is extensive stretches of Tudor brickwork to the walls surrounding the modern block and remains of the walls of the Long Garden which exist at various properties on both sides of Oakley Street, notably on the boundaries of Adair House. At the time of the construction of the present block of flats extensive foundations were discovered. It is a shame that no record was made of what was found, let alone the opportunity taken for a thorough archaeological excavation. Otherwise we might know a good deal more about the long history of this important Chelsea house.

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Up and Down the King's Road – Memories from my Chelsea Childhood

by Michael Parsons

The King's Road that strides through Chelsea has always been a place of great interest, charm and sometimes notoriety. Max Décharné's book *The King's Road for me* concentrates too much on the 'Swinging Sixties'. There are many older generations who would argue that the preceding two decades were actually much more interesting as it was in Chelsea and Fitzrovia that artists, writers, actors and other talents started to re-ignite after the Second World War.

Starting at Sloane Square there was a wonderful department store called Peter Jones. On a wall climbing one of the spiral staircases to the upper floors was a huge mural depicting a London street which I believe was by Rex Whistler.

Almost opposite Peter Jones was the Duke of York's Barracks which for many years housed the London Irish Regiment, who, when they marched to church parades on Sundays had a large beautiful Irish wolf-hound as a mascot. Chelsea primary schools' sport days were held here and where Christchurch School always used to do so badly. During the 1950s the Barracks still had a pair of searchlights and two anti-aircraft guns. Other reminders of the conflict still around included bombsites, some of which would still be there fifteen years after the war was over.

There were three cinemas on King's Road. This might seem like a lot but most folk didn't have a television. Rising affluence meant that many families went to the cinema once a week, much more of an event then than now. There would be the main feature, the one you had wanted to see, but also a news programme, a lightweight current affairs film, maybe if you were lucky a cartoon and also another supporting film, the 'B feature'.

Moving up the King's Road, from the Sloane Square end, the first cinema was the Classic that showed lots of foreign films which the likes of my family wouldn't normally want to see. However, there were some

UP AND DOWN THE KING'S ROAD



Boys playing on the Dovehouse Green bombsite.
Photograph by John Biguell © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

exceptions. These were films by two French comedians, Jacques Tati, and Fernandel, who had the most rubbery face I have ever seen. I saw the names on the billboards as a child and my aunt took me to see *Mr Hulot's Holiday* with Tati and a film, name forgotten, that featured the man with the rubbery face.

The next cinema and the largest by far, was the Gaumont. It was there that I saw my first film. It was called *Trouble in the Glen*, and starred Glenys Johns, and an American actor, Forrest Tucker who wore a kilt and had an absurd faux Scottish accent. This came about because the British government subsidised American film companies to make films about British subjects in this country but the companies made it a condition that they would employ at least one American actor.

UP AND DOWN THE KING'S ROAD

When I was older I used to go with friends to the 'Saturday Morning Pictures'. It was a riot! It often started with a cartoon, then a short film, usually a comedy. There would also be a serial possibly Flash Gordon, or some jungle hero similar to Tarzan. Then finally before the big picture there might be a live show. The only one I remember was a man called Art Pickles, the world yo-yo champion player. Most of us were pretty unimpressed so we hooted, shouted, fought and generally misbehaved. We got so noisy that the manager came on stage and threatened not to show the main film until we quietened down. We did so he didn't.

The other cinema in the King's Road, the Essoldo, was much smaller and great for 'bunking' your mates in. You paid for two of you and then went down to one of the emergency exits to try and let the rest of your friends in. It was a risky enterprise; so many things could go wrong. The door might not open (pretty good for an emergency exit!) or the eagle-eyed usherettes might spot you. Then the unfortunates on the outside would be unlucky that week. If caught making the attempt and depending on the mood of the usherette you were either allowed to stay or thrown out. But the worst thing was if you got caught actually letting other kids in. Here there were no options. All of you were thrown out in full view of the rest of the audience. If anybody who knew you happened to be passing they would take great delight in telling your mum.

The Essoldo Cinema in 1969. The emergency door is the second door on the left.
© Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

Two places of entertainment in the King's Road were the Royal Court Theatre and the Chelsea Palace. My only memory of the Royal Court was that it was a good location for 'Penny for the Guy'. Many punters were fairly well off and in a hurry so the money they gave to us, often without looking, was just as likely to be a shilling (5p) rather than the miserly penny.

The other was the Chelsea Palace on the corner of Sydney Street and the King's Road. It must have been a big theatre as it had a revolving stage like the one at the London Palladium, and I can remember being taken to see a pantomime there where they had horses on the stage.





Two photographs by John Bignell. Left is the exterior of Chelsea Palace, and on the right is a show called *Twinkle*. © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

I was taken to many shows by Mum and Dad as my Dad was a friend (drinking friend) of 'Monsewer' Eddy Grey. Mr Grey was an occasional member of a comedy group called The Crazy Gang who appeared for many years at the Victoria Palace (now The Apollo Victoria). There were various talent shows and one in particular stands out, Clarkson Rose's *Twinkle*. This featured people who impersonated the stars of the day. Although I can't remember many of the stars that they were imitating I do remember the lights, the sparkle and the sheer magic of it all. It was also the last days of music hall and variety show before TV killed off live acts of this type. Consequently I saw Arthur English, Max Wall, Max Miller (very rude), the Morton Frazer Harmonica Gang and just once, Johnnie Ray the American crooner. Before the show started there was an overture with an orchestra. The programme had a number by the side of each act and before each came on the number was flashed up on a lighted sign on each side of the stage. The Carroll Levis Discovery Show returned annually. It was similar to Mr Rose's talent show but with an extra attraction, in that it was also featured on Radio Luxemburg.

Two other shows at the Chelsea Palace come to mind. One was *Alice in Wonderland* starring Mandy Miller who was quite well known at that time. The other was *Alice through the Looking Glass* starring Juliet Mills, a member



Chelsea Palace as Granada Studios in 1969. © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

of the acting family that included John Mills and her sister Hayley who went on to star in many films in the 1960s and 70s. At some point in the 50s The Chelsea Palace started showing 'girlie' shows that had nude tableaux and temporarily my theatre days were over.

However, later on it had a new lease of life when it was used by Granada TV as a television studio. At this time all shows went out live before an audience. One of these was *The Army Game*, a really popular situation comedy that featured two soon-to-be television stars, Alfie Bass and Bernard Bresslaw. The sergeant was William Hartnell who later became the first Doctor Who. The other programme recorded at the Chelsea Palace was a quite sophisticated show called *Chelsea at Nine* simply because it was in Chelsea and was broadcast at 9pm. Later it became *Chelsea at Eight* as, you've guessed, it went out at 8! This

featured several artistes and often a visiting star from the United States. I know from the Décharné book that Billie Holiday appeared there before her death and I remember Judy Garland also took part, as at the time she was living in The Boltons.

Even in the 1950s there were lots of foreign and other, what seemed to me, exotic restaurants and two in particular were memorable. One was the Bar-B-Que coffee bar. This was the first place where I saw people drinking coffee and where strange young men with beards, black berets and duffel coats and girls who wore black stockings used to spend inordinately long lengths of time. They were later to be known as beatniks. There was another place that had all sorts of squiggly writing on its shop front. The name of this eatery was The Good Earth; it was a Chinese Restaurant and must have pre-dated most of the Chinese restaurants that thrived in the 1970s and 80s.

It may seem incredible now but not all the houses and flats on the King's Road had electricity in the 1950s. My aunt and uncle had paid to have their flat connected to the electricity supply but where we lived at 282 only had gas supply with mantles flaring at night. Occasionally I was able to

UP AND DOWN THE KING'S ROAD



Demolition of the houses in the King's Road from 264 onwards c.1957. Mike and his family lived at no. 282 in the 1950s.

Photograph by John Bignell. © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

watch television at my aunts who lived next door at 280. Our radio was a huge brown box powered by an accumulator battery similar to a car battery that needed to be taken to a garage to be re-charged frequently. As it weighed a lot and we had no spare battery, as you can imagine I didn't get to hear a lot of radio either, until British Relay Wireless arrived which was a form of piped radio.

In 1955 a new shop opened on the corner of Markham Square and the King's Road. It was a clothes shop by the name of Bazaar and was the first shop owned by Mary Quant. Her first collection drew crowds outside but I simply remember a plain beige dress on a mannequin which was entirely shapeless and was known as the 'sack' dress. Incidentally, on the corner of Markham Square, periodically a large van would turn up and show road safety films for children. This was long before the Green Cross Code.

The north side of the King's Road was residential from Dovehouse Street to Carlyle Square but on the south side were the shops where Mum and others got all their groceries. The exception was the parade of houses

UP AND DOWN THE KING'S ROAD



The crowds outside Mary Quant's during the sales.

Photograph by John Bignell © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

between Oakley Street and Glebe Place. The first house at the corner of Oakley Street is Argyle House. Sir Carol Reed, a well known film director lived at number 215 and the last house on the block belonged to Peter Ustinov, the actor, director and raconteur. When my Mum was the manager at Smoke Rings, a small tobacconist in the next block, he was a regular customer and would sometimes ask if he could have a cigar until he was in funds when he would repay her, which he always did. I used to reciprocate this treatment by entering through his unlocked garden door, stealing his empty beer bottles and getting the deposits back from Fowne's the off licence, next door to Smoke Rings.

The other shops on this parade were a picture restorer and framers and then Nichols a builders' merchants, which my Dad used from time to time. After that was Hemming's the Bakers where, until sliced wrapped bread became more widely available, Mum would buy all our supplies. This was a double fronted shop and next to this was the Express Dairy. One day it was suddenly refurbished and became self service, a total novelty for everyone. Now customers could browse the shelves and pay for everything at the till in the front of the shop.

41 Howe, Jean	Globe Mensons	273 Ashton, Mary
42 Campbell, Flora	1 Benjamin, David	Snapper, Margaret
43 Hetherington, Catherine G.	3 Morgan, Edgar R.	273 Slocum Radio & Electrical Co.
44 Smith, Rowland	3 Middleton, Camar	275 Beckingham, H. Ltd., frutiers
45 Casey, Gerald G.	4 Ambrose, John S.	frutiers
46 Bannerman, H. D.	King's Road—cont.	275 Hughes, Susanna
47 Howard, Gwen, M.	235 Hestonlaga, A. B. Ltd., butch	277 Leaders Gallery, antiques
48 Scott-Dalrymple, E.	237 Elayere Thiry Co. Ltd.	04d Church Street here
51 Van de Velde, R. A.	237 Carr, Francis	279 Ebnaldo Picture Hse
52 Davis, Derrick D.	239 Pullin, Geoffrey A.	281 Chandy, T. E. & Son, Ltd., decorators
53 Barkwith, William E.	239 Pullin, A. L. Jewell & Silversmith	283 Silver, M. & Sons, consulting optn.
54 Leocaster, Rosses E.	Bramerton Street here	283 Silver, Herbert
55 Carr, Norah	241 Chapman Bros. (Chelsea) Ltd., picture restorers & framers	283 Lansdel, E. Seer., footwear repairs
56 Kirby, Max L.	241 Carlo Press Ltd., printers	285 Lussell, Leonard
61 Watson, Evelyn M.	241 Gould, newsagent & tobacconist	285 Sharples, Wm. H.
62 Atwood, Ada M.	243 Simmons, M.	287 Bentley Travel Agt. (M. J. W. Bentley)
63 Gould, Ernest R.	245 Barr, John P.	287 Stevenson, Madeline
64 Criverton-Smith, Ingha, Barbara A.	245 Ralph, R. fruiterer & greengrocer	289 Chelsea Book Shop (Weller Elsie, M.)
King's Road—cont.	247 Maynard, Arthur S.	289a Laws, E. G., M.P.S. chemist
187 Harris, P. T., optician	247 Scott Maynard, antique furniture	291/297 Ansdid, fruit & bowlers
189 James, tobacconist	249 Perry Thos. A.	291 Eastwright, Violet J.
191 Peters, hairdressers	249 Perry, J., haberdasher	291 Adams, Ewart P., L.D.S. R.C.S. Eng. dental surg.
193 Southgate, Ltd., fruiterers & bakers	251 Borris, S., grocers	291 Lee, Ralph, L.D.S. R.C.S. Eng. dental surg.
193/197 The Six Bells P.H. (Spang, A. W. R.)	251a Johnson, George W. & Co., grocers	293 Ingha, Arthur H., dentist
199 Mission Little, ladies' hairdressers	253 Hill, Harold (Dove atory) Ltd., bldg & decorations	295 Buder, Marion
201 J. Meeks, ironmongers	253 Jeremy, Ltd., antique furniture	295 Macmahon, Mary
201 Wascher, John P.	259 Green & Stone, Ltd., artists' colourmen	295 Pibworth, Charles J.
203 Forbes, John	259a Gerry, Neville (cherry, hawthorn, hocking, Cass. W.)	295 Preston, Jack S.
205 James, tobacconists	259b Duchal, Philip S.	...Postbox Square here...
205a Boston, Douglas	261 Bowen, S., grocers	297 The Practical Home Agents
207 Cox, L., antiq. furn.	261 Parfitt, Ernest	297 Guggin, Elie E.
207 Crane, Robert M.	263 Scott Maynard, antique furniture	299 MacQueen, Michel, C.
209 Dakin & Co., grocers	263 Lamb, Esmondie	301 Saunders, Frederick, H. B. (Kensington) Ltd., vitrines
209a Isaacson, Dorothy	265 Dixon, Dudley	303 Idm, James, cooked meats
Oakley Street here	265 Lafferty, toys	305 Electro Radio & Electrical Services
211 Harrison, Michael I.	267 Davies, John E.	
213 Reed, Carol	267 Lloyd, Janet T., M.P.S. chemist	
215 Mather-Jackson, Edward A. (Sig)	268 Weaver, H., butcher	
217 Barber-MHL, Elizabeth	269 Layer, Leslie E.	
219 Miller, Charles	271 Clark, R., confectioner	
Millers, antique furn.	271 Clark, Ronald E. L.	
221 Fowner, E. A., wine & spirit merchants		
221a Dawson, Edith M.		
229 Cart-race, Mary		
230 Carlyle Cigar Stores		
231 Middleton, picture frame		
233 Nicholls Bros., oil & colour merchants		

Chelsea Directory, 1953 listing the shops on the south side of the King's Road. © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

Previously my Mum's weekend shopping expeditions would entail walking to Sainsbury's where she would go from counter to counter paying at a kiosk at the back of the shop. Then she would walk in turn to the greengrocer's, the butcher, the baker's, the newsagent's to pay the paper bill and then carry all this back home. As we didn't have a fridge she would have to repeat some of this foraging during the week and then start all over again at the weekend.

But here I really ought to mention another Chelsea institution, The Gateways Club at 239 King's Road at the junction with Bramerton Street. This was the sort of place that no boy should really know about but always did. It had been a small afternoon drinking club catering for the likes of Augustus John and Jacob Epstein and those who needed to while away the few hours until the pubs opened again. At some point after the war it ceased to be exclusively an artists' haunt and instead became known



Gina Ware at the Gateway Club. Photograph by John Bignell © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

as a lesbian club. It also gained some national fame or notoriety in 1968 when it was featured in a film with Susannah York and Beryl Reid called *The Killing of Sister George*. There is also a history of the club called *From the Closet to the Screen* written by Jill Gardiner that records its existence until it finally closed in 1985.

UP AND DOWN THE KING'S ROAD



Mike Parsons at Christchurch School in 1954/55. © Mike Parsons

The next parade of shops included Bowen's the butchers, Gould the newsagents, and a funny little shop that had all sorts of strange smells coming from it. Nowadays we would call it a delicatessen but then we just knew it by the name of the owner, Boris. It was not a shop that we frequented as it sold foreign food and smelly cheese, but he did a lot of trade with big houses in the streets behind the King's Road. Apparently, according to Mum, the folk in these houses used to run up huge bills with him and only settle when they absolutely had to. I suppose this was a habit that reverted back to previous times when people would only pay their tradesmen's bills once a year. As Dad used to say, 'The rich and the poor have two things in common; a predilection for strong drink and a failure to pay their bills!'

Another, but to me more interesting shop in the King's Road, was a toy shop called Laffertey's. There were in fact two shops one on either side of the road. The one on the north side of the road sold mainly baby toys and prams and boring stuff like that but the one on the south was a wonderful place, a real boy's delight where they sold EVERYTHING! There were Hornby clockwork trains that were quite big compared to the Hornby electric trains that were beautiful and looked like the real thing. Laffertey's also sold 'Jacoskates', a really superior roller skate that had rubber wheels rather than the metal ones that most other children had and which were usually sold in Woolworths.

UP AND DOWN THE KING'S ROAD

There were other toys that were given to me, brought for me or occasionally shoplifted by me, at Laffertey's. Firstly there were Minic Cars which were simply clockwork that vaguely resembled current models of motor cars. These were OK but the special toys were Dinky Toys which were really good die-cast models of cars, lorries and other road vehicles. I had a good collection and one year Dad made me a toy garage with a forecourt and a sign properly written by a sign writer in shadow script that stated in a curve around the entrance **MICHAEL'S GARAGE**

Finally, the shop used to sell balsa wood kits of aircraft that could be flown in Battersea Park. These were made by a company called Frogcraft; some were big gliders that required a lot of skill with a craft knife and lots of glue.

Another building near Beaufort Street that deserves a mention was the Bluebird Garage. Set back from the road it had a separate entrance and exit and several petrol pumps. Faced in white tiles with the Bluebird insignia above the entrance, for all intents and purposes it was a garage and a very impressive one, but at the time it was an ambulance station serving

*King's Road between The Vale and Beaufort Street in 1964.
The Bluebird Garage can be seen in the middle of the block.
© Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea*



UP AND DOWN THE KING'S ROAD

all the local hospitals. Clearly, it must have been difficult for ambulances to get on to the road at busy times and so it closed and was later used as a covered clothing and curio market. Today, of course, it is the famous Bluebird restaurant and café.

Of course I should write about some of the pubs that existed at that time. My Dad's favourite haunt was the Lord Nelson (now The Trafalgar), which was near the Gaumont cinema. This was a simple pub with two entrances, one for the saloon bar and another for the public bar which was where my Dad always went. Every night would find him sitting just inside the door in his customary flat cap (at all times), wearing a blazer in the summer and raincoat in the winter, typically with his chin resting on one hand whilst the other cupped a cigarette. He usually had some friends with him but even if he was on his own you would always find him in the same place.

Another pub that had been a local for Dad was the Cadogan Arms further down the King's Road on the corner of Old Church Street. This was also my Aunt Nell's local and she could usually be seen in the saloon bar holding

court, nursing a large white Pekinese dog and a large gin and tonic. This pub had a long passage leading to the back room where I used to stand with the obligatory orangeade and crisps.

Mike's father taken in the 1950s.
© Mike Parsons



In the early 1950s there was not much motor traffic and bread, milk, coal and beer was still delivered by horse and cart. There were the famous Harrods' vans that often used to trundle around delivering goods to their patrons. The notable thing about these little vans was that they were electric and powered by a bank of batteries that nestled between the two axles. There was a general haulage company with a depot on the King's Road. The company's original name had been Carter Paterson, a really big company with branches all round London and probably across the nation. By the 1950s it had been nationalised and was known as British Road Services. The reason I am writing about them is that the trailers were

UP AND DOWN THE KING'S ROAD



Gran's 80th birthday held on 6 November 1953. L to R Kit, her youngest daughter, Mike's mum Elsie Annie, Bill husband of Dorothy, Gran (seated), Pamela, Gran's niece and Mike seated in front. © Mike Parsons

drawn by three wheeler units, Scammel Scarabs, so called because they looked like squat beetles especially when they were scurrying about the roads without their trailers.

Of course there were a multiplicity of London bus routes that went along the King's Road, most of which still exist today. These were owned by London Transport. The buses were all double-deckers but there were different types known by their model letters and serial numbers so a keen bus spotter like me could buy books and tick each one off rather like train spotters do. These of course were all replaced by the famous and ubiquitous Routemasters in the late 1950s now of course replaced themselves. The routes 11, 19, 22 & 49 between them covered most of London which was a great boon to someone like me who had been shown how to use them at a very early age so I could go almost anywhere I wanted. I can't help but think how lucky I was to be a child in the 1950s and have the freedom of such a lovely city and to have it all just a step from my doorstep on the King's Road.

David McDonald looks back an interview with Terence Bendixson

Introduction

Last September David McDonald retired as Conservation and Design Team Leader in the Royal Borough's Planning Department. Here he looks back over his 24 years as a Conservation Officer and considers losses and gains.

Lost opportunities - Sloane Square

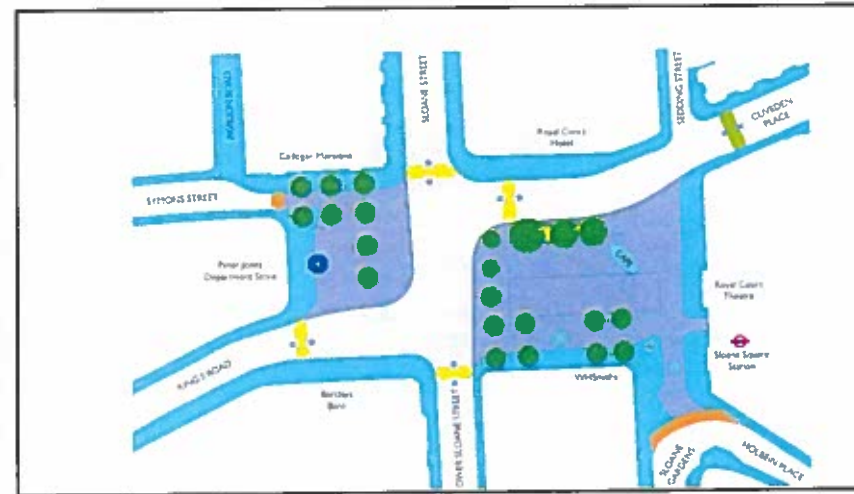
The great battle over the layout of Sloane Square took place on McDonald's watch. He was in favour of the changes and considers that, when they were dropped, a 'great opportunity' was missed. 'If you look at the Duke of York Square, where Cadogan had vision, something very successful was created - and that includes attracting the Saatchi Gallery. Sloane Square could have been a space to equal that. A great public space could have been created in front of the Royal Court Theatre but the opportunity was missed.'

He then referred to the site of Lots Road Power Station, where Circadian plan to build two tall towers of flats, one in Chelsea, the other in Fulham. 'That (Chelsea) tower is not a good thing. It was a poor decision to allow

*Sloane Square c.1905, looking east down Cliveden Place.
© Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.*



DAVID McDONALD LOOKS BACK



*Sloane Square as it might have appeared if the changes to the layout had been approved.
© Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea*

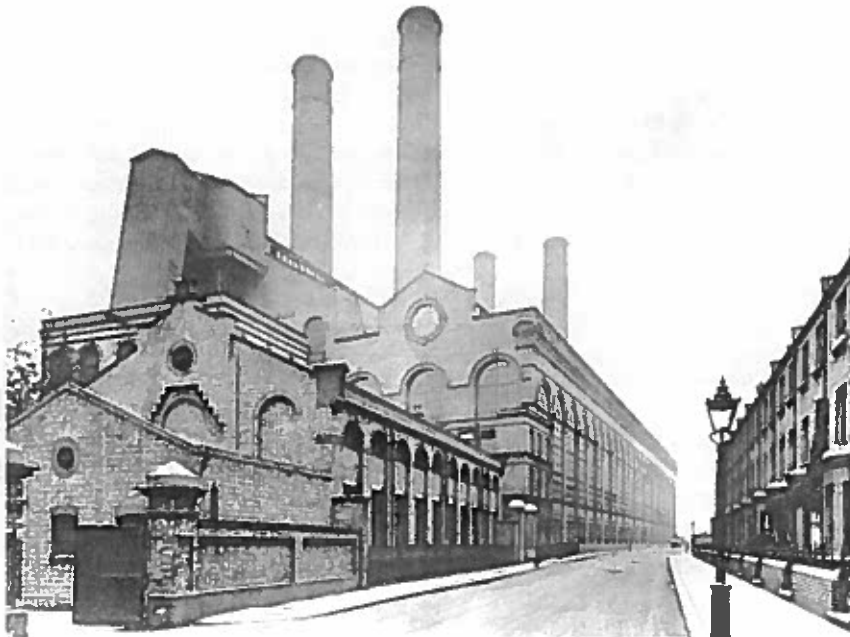


it - though it was not the Council's. It was the Secretary of State's decision (John Prescott's) after the developers appealed. But the landmark should not be the towers designed by Sir Terry Farrell. It should be the power station and its chimneys.'

DAVID McDONALD LOOKS BACK



This postcard was produced by Alphons Custodis Chimney Construction Co. to celebrate their work at Lots Road Power Station, opened in 1905. Below, an early photograph of the completed power station. Two of the four chimneys were removed in 1966. Both © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.



DAVID McDONALD LOOKS BACK

So much for lost opportunities, what about the conservation of historic Chelsea?

Career

David McDonald started his career as a town planner and was working for the London Borough of Camden when he began to realise that his greatest interest lay in old buildings. This led him to a conservation course at the Architectural Association where he was taught by Jane Fawcett of the Victorian Society and other luminaries in the protection of historic buildings.

When he arrived at Kensington Town Hall in 1987 it was therefore to fill the post of Conservation and Design Team Leader – with a staff of three. As the importance attached to conserving historic buildings grew, and as he was given additional responsibilities for urban design, regeneration, graffiti removal and access for the disabled, so his staff grew to a peak of nine. Now, in these days of cuts, the staff number six.

Good design

McDonald recalls how in his early years, if he asked an architect to modify an unsatisfactory application, some would seek to undermine his competence by saying: 'You are the Council who knocked down the Town Hall.' The inference was – so what do you know about protecting historic buildings? But that was set to change.

Weak conservation policies in the old District Plan gave way in 2002 to stronger ones in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). When Councillor Daniel Moylan became Cabinet member for planning he stressed the importance of good looking streets and high quality architecture. Finally Whitehall Guidance (PPS5), from an unpromising draft, ended up as a reasonable working document after a lot of input from conservation professionals and amenity groups. Thus conservation became a stronger element in development control.

But 'bureaucracy around planning has increased a lot too', McDonald said. 'Whereas in the past my discussions about schemes would usually be with architects, recent years have seen the rise and rise of planning consultants. Nowadays there are consultants for almost everything.' Was it possible too that developers were more aggressive than in the past? McDonald was uncertain – but the nature of development was changing.

The basement menace

Turning to the current fashion for digging basements and super-basements McDonald noted that 'the amount of work that people want to do to houses

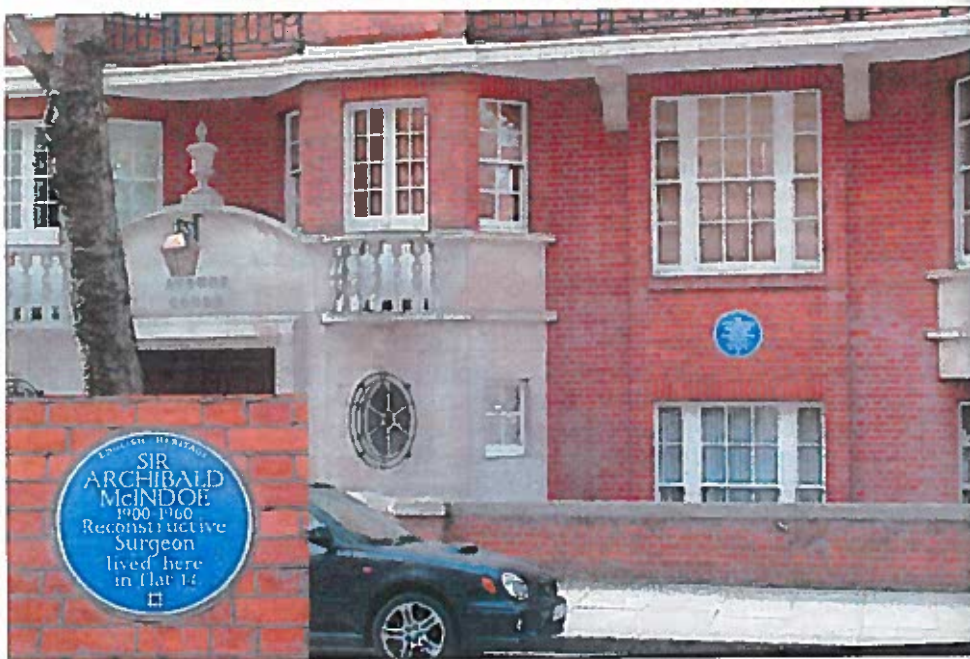
The Plastic Surgeon and the Penicillin Man

by Malcolm Burr

McIndoe and Fleming may sound like the winners of the Mens' Doubles at Wimbledon but the names actually represent two of the greatest medical scientists of the 20th century, both of whom lived in Chelsea.

The blue plaque at Avenue Court in Draycott Avenue announces that Sir Archibald McIndoe 1900-1960 lived there at No. 14 and that he was a Reconstructive Surgeon. In his time, particularly during the Second World War, he was *the* reconstructive surgeon: known and admired throughout the western world, honoured by many countries, he put back together 649 members of the allied air forces who had suffered horrendous burns

Avenue Court, Draycott Avenue displaying the Blue Plaque recognizing the residence of Sir Archibald McIndoe. © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea



THE PLASTIC SURGEON AND THE PENICILLIN MAN



Sir Archibald McIndoe in 'scrubs'
© East Grinstead Museum.

when their aircraft caught fire. They called themselves the Guinea Pigs because much of the surgery performed on them was experimental. They owed their lives to Archie McIndoe and they knew it. In Ward III of the hospital in East Grinstead, Sussex he was known by patients and staff variously as The Boss, The Maestro or quite simply as God.

He was not born in Chelsea, nor even in the UK, but in Dunedin, New Zealand in May 1900. After studying medicine at the University of Otago he became a junior at Waikato Hospital and, at the same time, married Adonia Aitken, by whom he

had two daughters. After a stint at the Mayo Clinic in the USA he came to the attention of Lord Moynihan, the President of the Royal College of Surgeons, who suggested he come and work in England. Developing his skills as a plastic surgeon he became a consultant to several hospitals including the Chelsea Hospital for Women in Dovehouse Street.

In the late 1930s there were only four full-time plastic surgeons in the UK. The most senior and distinguished was Harold Gillies, who was also a cousin of Archie McIndoe. Having established a hospital at Aldershot Gillies persuaded each of the other three to act as a civilian consultant to one of the armed services and McIndoe was assigned to the RAF. His life's work was about to begin.

There were eventually five hospitals treating airmen with severe burns but McIndoe established himself at the East Grinstead Cottage Hospital, now the Queen Victoria Hospital, and took over Ward III. Although he constantly visited the other hospitals and reviewed and directed work there, it was at East Grinstead that he personally operated on the worst cases, some of which were seemingly hopeless at the outset.

There are many stories, books, photographs of 'before' and 'after' which demonstrate Archie McIndoe's extraordinary skill in rebuilding faces, heads and hands from near destruction to normal or nearly normal.

THE PLASTIC SURGEON AND THE PENICILLIN MAN



Christmas 1944 in Ward 111, East Grinstead Cottage Hospital
with McIndoe seated by the piano.
© East Grinstead Museum.

He talked each patient through the process of operations (the average was 12 per patient), skin-grafts, treatments and saline baths which were developed when McIndoe found that pilots who bailed out into the sea were less scarred than others. Most of his patients returned to active duty and many of them flew again.

In the summer and early autumn of 1940, when the Battle of Britain raged overhead, McIndoe and his team treated 27 fighter pilots who suffered deep burns when their petrol tanks exploded and their cockpits caught fire. This particularly seemed to occur in Hurricanes: only five of the 27 were in Spitfires.

From 1941 onwards it was mostly bomber crews. They flew long distances mostly at night and McIndoe made sure that each plane carried creams, antidotes and painkillers to help an injured or burnt airman through the first few painful hours. By the end of the war 80% of the Guinea Pigs came from Bomber Command.

Apart from operating several days a week at East Grinstead, tending patients in Ward III and overseeing the other hospitals, Archie McIndoe found time to train 60 new plastic surgeons and brief 50 surgeons sent over from the USA prior to 'D' Day. He also and most importantly recognised

THE PLASTIC SURGEON AND THE PENICILLIN MAN

that the morale of a patient was a vital part of the cure and rehabilitation. He encouraged the airmen to go out to the pubs, restaurants and dance halls of East Grinstead and he worked on the townspeople to receive and welcome them as normal human beings. A local waitress described how they learned always to look them in the face, however strange they seemed at the time. Another woman told of how they went out of their way to dance with the damaged airmen at the local hall.

McIndoe was knighted in 1947 and the following year *Time* magazine featured him under the title 'The Man Who Made Faces'. But his intense workload had taken its toll. He died at the early age of fifty-nine.

Alexander Fleming came from a farming family in Darvel, Ayrshire. His father married twice and there were four children from each marriage. Alec, as he was known in the family, was the third child of the second marriage (7th overall) and was born in 1881. He was seven years old when his father died but his mother looked after all eight children and ran the farm with her eldest stepson.

Alexander's early schooling was at Darvel, which meant four miles each way on foot, and then briefly at Kilmarnock Academy. When his stepbrother Tom left for London to train as a doctor Alec and his brother Robert followed and Alec enrolled at the Polytechnic in Regent Street. At the age of 20, Alexander inherited £250 from an uncle and used it to join the medical school of St Mary's Hospital in Paddington where he was to spend his entire working life. After qualifying as a doctor he joined the hospital's Inoculation Department.

The head of the department was the legendary Sir Almroth Wright, a brilliant bacteriologist, made fictionally famous by George Bernard Shaw, who based his character Sir Colenso Ridgeon on him in his play *The Doctor's Dilemma*. All Wright's staff were paid £100 a year and were encouraged to work in private practice part time. Fleming did so in Devonshire Place until 1914 when he became an officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

Almroth Wright set up a laboratory in the casino at Boulogne to investigate treatments for wound infections. Many of his St Mary's team followed and they researched various forms of antiseptic but with only mixed success. Some antiseptics, they found, actually made things worse. The only good thing to come out of the war, from Fleming's point of view, was his marriage in 1915 to Sarah McElroy (called Sareen) from County Mayo in Ireland. She owned and ran a private nursing home which she sold in 1918 and the proceeds helped to buy a house in Suffolk and a lease on 20 Danvers Street, between Paultons Square and the Embankment.

THE PLASTIC SURGEON AND THE PENICILLIN MAN

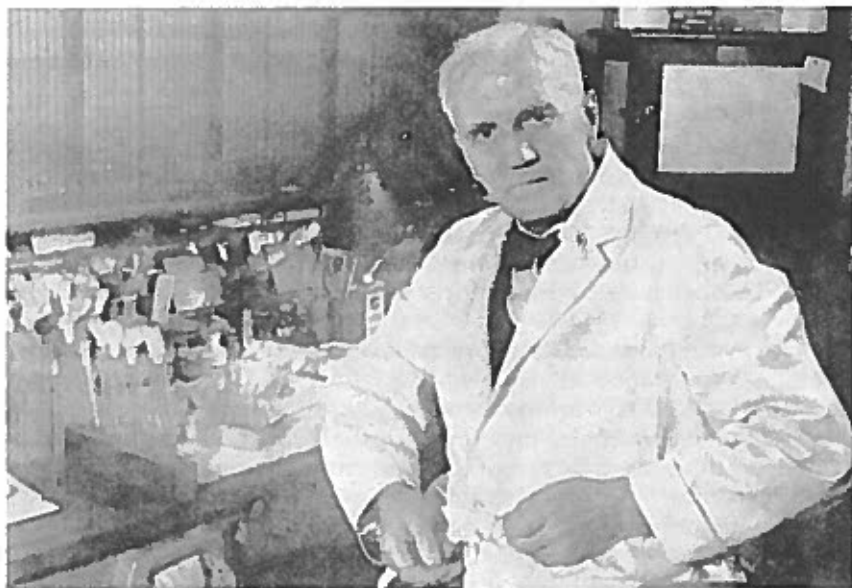
These were to be their homes for the rest of their lives. They had one son, Robert, who became a GP in Suffolk.

In 1921, at the age of 40, Alexander Fleming was made Assistant Director of the Department of Pathology at St. Mary's, the new name but not the last, of the Inoculation Department. He set up his own laboratory on the second floor of the building, overlooking Praed Street and there he made his first major discovery: Lysozyme, the substance in every human body and in some animals and even in plants which combats bacteria.

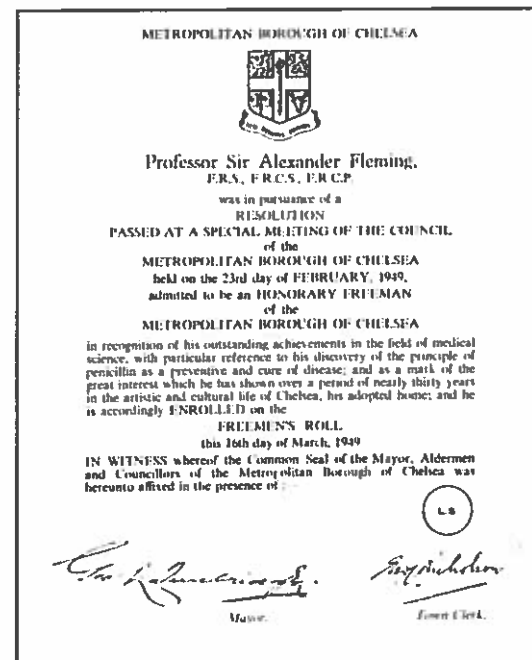
Seven years later, in 1928, Fleming made not just the discovery of his life but the discovery of his generation. Returning from a holiday and clearing away some three-week-old cultures on plates he noticed that, although they were all covered with mould, one mould had attacked and was destroying the bacteria. It had been touched by *Penicillium Notatum*.

Although it was found to be non-toxic to animals, it was unstable and so could not be isolated. It was not until 1940 that an Australian, Howard Florey, and a refugee German, Ernst Chain, succeeded in bringing it under control at Oxford's Biochemical Department. The production of

Sir Alexander Fleming in his laboratory.
© Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.



THE PLASTIC SURGEON AND THE PENICILLIN MAN



Citation to Sir Alexander Fleming on the occasion of appointing him an Honorary Freeman of the Borough of Chelsea in 1949.
© Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

pure penicillin began in the USA in 1941 and British production began at Oxford the following year. It was to save many lives and relieve untold suffering during the war and after and would, for ever, change the treatment of bacterial infections. A *Times* leading article welcomed the new wonder-drug in August 1942 but mentioned no names. The redoubtable Sir Almroth was having none of that. In a letter to *The Times* he proclaimed that the laurels belonged to Professor Alexander Fleming.

From 1945 onwards accolades poured in. Institutions and Universities all over the world rushed to honour him to an incredible total of about 135. The USA led the field with 15 - Harvard, Yale, Princeton *et al*, as well as honorary membership of the Kiowa tribe of Indians as Chief Doy-Gei-Tauni 'Maker of Great Medicine'.

Fleming was knighted in 1944 and the following year he, Howard Florey and Ernst Chain were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine. In 1946 the Department of Pathology at St Mary's was renamed the Wright-



Amalia, Lady Fleming, unveiling the bronze bust of her husband sculpted by Frank Kovaks on 12 March 1956, assisted by Colour Sergeant Charles Tennuci. Photograph by John Bignell, © Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

Fleming Institute with Sir Alexander as its principal. In 1949 he was made not only an Honorary Freeman of Chelsea but also a member of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and travelled to Rome to meet Pope Pius XII. But the year ended sadly when Sareen died in October. They had been married for 34 years. In his final years he was consoled by Amalia Coutsoiri-Voureka, a Greek member of his staff at St Mary's and they married at Chelsea Registry Office in 1953.

Fleming retired from St Mary's in January 1955 but there was little time to enjoy the contentment of a life full of achievement and the satisfaction of 'mission accomplished'. In March he died of a massive heart attack. He was buried in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, while thousands stood silent in the surrounding streets. Forty-four years after his death *Time Magazine* named him among the 100 most important people of the 20th century.

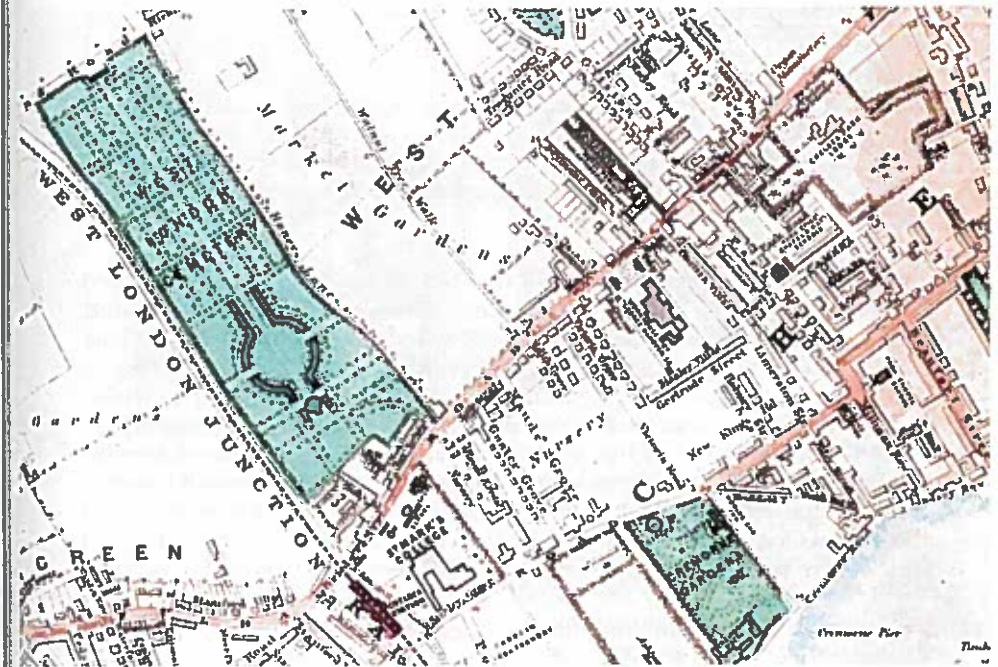
For many years the bust was displayed in Chelsea Town Hall. In January 1993 it was loaned to the Alexander Fleming Laboratory Museum in St Mary's Hospital, Paddington where it is now on display.

The Nurseries of James Veitch & Sons and Sir Harry Veitch

by Caradoc Doy

It is hard to imagine today, but 150 years ago the King's Road in Chelsea was home to some of the most famous and influential nurseries in the world. Great pioneers of horticulture were lined up along the highway with many of their nurserymen having become household names by fulfilling important work in their field. One of these great firms was the pioneering nurseries of James Veitch & Sons whose head office was 544-546 King's Road. Following its expansion to Chelsea in 1853 and its later removal from Exeter in 1864, this family dynasty spanned five generations

Extract from Stanford's Library Map of London & its Suburbs showing the location of the Veitch's Royal Exotic Nursery, adjacent to St Mark's College.



THE VEITCH NURSERIES

and pioneered many horticultural firsts. For most of the second half of the 19th century, the Veitch nurseries were one of the most dominant forces in the industry with close ties to botanists and botanic gardens, and influencing many branches of horticulture, leaving a lasting legacy today.

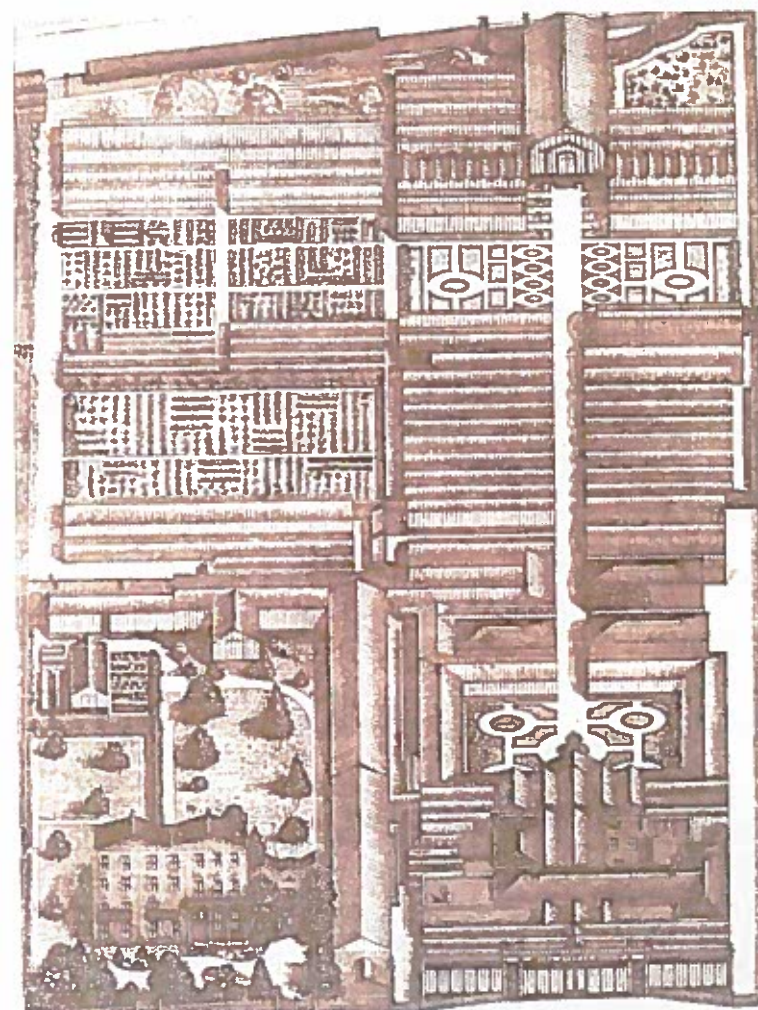
Under the leadership of James Veitch snr. (1792-1863), the firm became the first commercial nursery in Britain to sponsor their own plant collector by sending the Cornishman William Lobb to South America in 1840. The success of Lobb's two four-year trips to the southern continent brought many exciting finds for British gardens and greenhouses including *Begonia coccinea*, *Passiflora mollissima* and more seed of the rare Monkey Puzzle (*Araucaria araucana*). He also found new Fuchsias, Escallonias, the Chilean fire bush (*Embothrium coccineum*), the Copihue (*Lapageria rosea*) and the Lantern tree (*Crinodendron hookerianum*). On a later trip to North America he introduced a host of Californian lilacs (*ceanothus*) and many conifers, most famously the Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) and the Wellingtonia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*).

Over the next seventy-two years, the Veitch enterprise sent a total of twenty-three plant hunters to collect many hundreds of new exotic plants. These arduous and often dangerous journeys brought the raw materials for the Veitch Nurseries to market exclusively their own introductions and make a fortune in the process. However, this work did not come without personal cost as five of the collectors died from disease or misadventure whilst working abroad. In addition, travel was slow and hard going and the natives were not always friendly. A successful plant collector had to show initiative on the ground and a determination to deal with great difficulties.

Those who did survive to find novelties often became well-known in their lifetime. Other famous names sent out by Veitch included William's brother, Thomas Lobb who travelled extensively in the Far East introducing a host of new orchids and greenhouse plants. Richard Pearce collected plants and objects of natural history from Central America whilst John Gould Veitch became one of the earliest collectors to botanise Japan. Peter C. M. Veitch spent two years in Australasia and also worked with Frederick Burbidge in Borneo. Charles Maries found many good forestry trees and garden plants in Japan and China whilst Charles Curtis travelled the Indian Ocean and James Herbert Veitch introduced plants via a world tour before becoming managing director of the family firm.

The great Ernest Wilson took his first steps into plant exploration whilst working for Veitch and by the end of his eventful career had introduced a

THE VEITCH NURSERIES



The original nursery at Chelsea from *Hortus Veitchii Special Edition*, 1906. The front entrance was on the King's Road and Stanley House is shown on the left. The rear entrance leads to the Fulham Road and Brompton Cemetery. Hortensia Road now runs down the centre of the nursery grounds. Courtesy of Caradoc Doy

staggering 1,000 new plants to science. These came mostly from Western and Central China, earning him the title, Ernest 'Chinese' Wilson. William Purdom was the last collector to work for the nursery, also travelling to China between 1909 and 1912. All of the collectors were sent out during

THE VEITCH NURSERIES

Harry's lifetime. Many herbarium specimens collected by the Veitch collectors are held at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Mention should also be made of the firm's pioneering hybridists, particularly John Dominy, the nurseries' chief hybridizer, who is credited with raising (1854) and flowering (1856) the world's first official orchid hybrid (*Calanthe* × *Dominii*). Dominy trained the Foreman John Seden to become an even more successful hybridist, who raised hundreds of new orchids as well as many fruit and vegetable plants. Other Foremen, William Court and George Tivey, led the way in the field of hybrid *Nepenthes*, the carnivorous Pitcher plants, whilst George Schneider made a name for his work with ferns.

Soon after arriving in Chelsea in 1853, James Veitch jnr. (1815-1869) expanded the nursery to include further sites at Coombe Wood in Surrey and later the nursery took on land at Southfields in Wimbledon, Putney Vale, Langley near Slough and Feltham in Middlesex. It became almost a privilege to work at Veitch's and a job could always be found for a gardener in need. For the talented, this was often a route to a successful recommendation to one of the great gardens or estates.

*Sir Harry James Veitch (1840-1926)
from Hortus Veitchii Special Edition, 1906.
Courtesy of Caradoc Day*



Only six years after the death of his father, James jnr. died of a heart attack in 1869. He is remembered by the Veitch Memorial Medal which was instituted in his honour for his outstanding contribution to horticulture. This medal is now given out by the Royal Horticultural Society as one of the highest horticultural awards. Following James jnr.'s death the nursery was headed briefly by his eldest son, John Gould Veitch but only a year later he died of tuberculosis bringing the responsibility of the business firmly on the shoulders of John Gould's brother Harry James Veitch.

Harry was born in Exeter in 1840 and as a boy remembered

THE VEITCH NURSERIES

watching his grandfather James snr. sowing seeds sent back by '...those two most excellent collectors, the brothers Lobb.' He was educated at Exeter Grammar School before his father moved the family to London. Later he attended Altona University in Germany and then trained with the famous French seed firm of Vilmorin, near Paris. He was only thirty when his father died and following the death of his elder brother, Harry took over the reins for the next twenty-eight years until his nephews James Herbert and John Gould jnr. joined the firm. During his time in charge, Harry employed twelve of the collectors and did more than any man of this period to introduce new plants to Britain.

In 1866, the twenty-six-year-old Harry had joined his father as a committee member for the International Horticultural Exhibition of that year. The profits from this show were used to establish the Royal Horticultural Society's Lindley Library. Later that year, Harry became a long-standing Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, contributing a paper on orchid fertilization in 1888.

In 1912 the RHS decided to hold a one-off show in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, which Harry had helped to secure. This was to be the first International Horticultural Exhibition in Britain since the 1866 show for which Harry was now the only surviving committee member. As a director and chairman of the Schedules Committee, Harry was deeply involved in the preparations for this event. He was also on the Advisory, the Science and Education, Show and Site and Spacing Committees. He was also a member of the official party who received and escorted their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary. In the course of the opening ceremonies, it was announced that the nurseryman was to be honoured by the King with a knighthood for his contribution to horticulture and the Royal Horticultural Society. Significantly, this was the first time a horticulturist had ever received a knighthood. The show was a great success and paved the way for the first Chelsea Flower Show the following year, which has been held on this site ever since.

The nurseries of James Veitch & Sons introduced a wide range of plants from hardy trees and shrubs, climbing plants, conifers, bulbs, ferns, orchids and greenhouse plants to fruits and vegetables. You would be hard-pressed to find a garden in Britain that either does not contain a 'Veitch' plant or one derived from their nurseries. Many others of their introduction are now extinct or rare in the wild. Ironically, in collecting these plants from the wild, the plant collectors have enabled them to grow safely in Britain, in many cases saving them from complete loss and now, working with British botanic gardens, enabling some of them to be safely returned to their native countries.



Masdevallia Veitchiana © The Gailans Collection

Harry Veitch was a long-serving chairman of the RHS Orchid Committee and vice-chairman of the RHS Fruit Committee. He was one of the first recipients of the Victoria Medal of Honour and also received many international honours including the Legion of Honour from France, the Chevalier of the Crown of Belgium and the George R. White Gold Medal from the United States for his services to horticulture. He was a great

supporter of gardening charities including the Gardeners' Orphan Fund. He served on the committee of the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Institute from 1868 and as their treasurer from 1886. He was also a founder member of the Good Samaritan Welfare Fund of the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Institute and showed a long term interest in the United Horticultural Benefit and Provident Society.

Due to land leases expiring, the lack of a Veitch heir and his refusal to allow the name to be used by another, Harry decided to wind up the firm of James Veitch & Sons during the period of 1913 to 1914. Today, the name of Veitch is remembered by the many plants introduced to our gardens, homes and greenhouses. He is also remembered by several plants including *Viburnum harryanum* and *Masdevallia harryanum* which is closely allied to his favourite orchid, namely *Masdevallia veitchiana*. A portrait of Sir Harry Veitch by Hugh Riviere hangs in the Council Chamber at the RHS in Vincent Square, London.

In tribute to the outstanding horticultural contribution made by Harry Veitch and the family firm, special displays will take place in Chelsea and at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2012 telling the story of Sir Harry through his many activities and the plants he was responsible for introducing.

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The Author

Caradoc Doy was trained at Pershore College of Horticulture (1987-1990), and following a career with some leading nurseries and garden centres, is now a self-employed horticulturist and garden speaker. Caradoc has become an authority on the history of the Veitch nurseries and their plants, which led him to re-publish a centenary edition of Hortus Veitchii by James H. Veitch in 2006. In 2003, he staged a Veitch exhibit at St. Bridget Nurseries, Exeter and at Devon County Show in 2004. Caradoc grows a range of 'Veitch' plants and travels to give talks about the firm and their pioneering plant hunters. For further information go to www.caradocdoy.co.uk or by post to PO Box 28, Topsham, Exeter, Devon EX3 0WY

Turret House - a Postscript

by David Le Lay

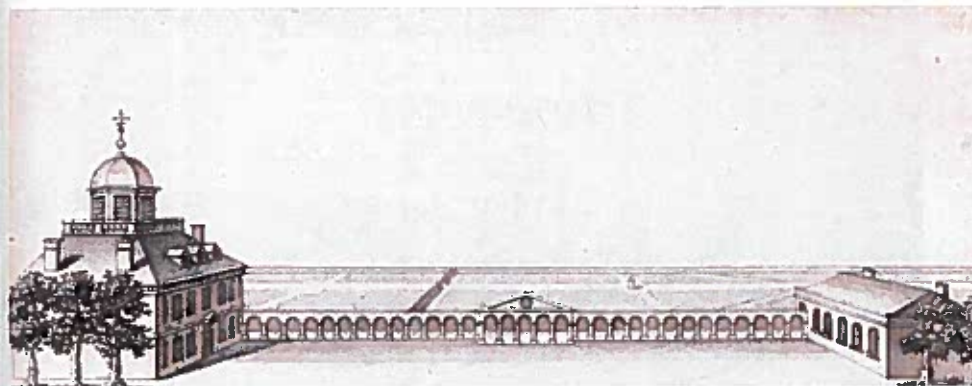
Since the publication of the 2010 *Report*, additional information has been drawn to my attention. This sheds light upon the early history of Turret House, one of the houses that were the subject of the article entitled 'Three Mansions' (see pp.47-57).

Turret House was built by William Van Huls between 1717 and 1718 as a country retreat; his town house being in Whitehall. Mr. Van Huls, as his name implies, was Dutch and he had come over to England in 1689 as part of the Court of William III to whom he was 'Clerk of the Robes and Wardrobe'. He managed to keep this appointment when Queen Anne came to the throne in 1702.

Detail from oil painting of the Royal Hospital, Peter Tillemans, early 18th century.
© The Royal Hospital Chelsea



TURRET HOUSE - A POSTSCRIPT



Turret House, drawn by Gadesby and engraved by Thorowgood, c. 1740
© British Library

William Van Huls, died in 1722 when both Turret House and his house in Whitehall were put up for sale by auction. The auction particulars indicate that Turret House was lavishly and elegantly furnished in the most up-to-date fashion. Just the names given by the auctioneer to the various rooms conjure up in one's mind the character the house - Yellow Mohair Room, Tapestry Room, Crimson Damask Room, Green Damask Bedroom and so on.

The design of the house itself is a little old fashioned for 1717, balustraded roofs with cupolas or turrets being normally associated with the 1690s but this style of house is quintessentially Dutch which is perhaps the reason it was favoured by Mr. Van Huls.

The house was bought at the 1722 auction by the Duke of Wharton but from 1724 -7 he kept it empty. In 1727 it was lived in by the Earl of Suffolk and from 1730 it was occupied by the Revd. Mr. Rothery from where he ran a school for boys.

I am most grateful to John Harris for drawing my attention to the 1722 sale particulars which enabled me to complete the history of this fascinating and important Chelsea house.

Sir [John] Denis Mahon, CH, CBE

(1910-2011)

by Carolyn Starren

Sir Denis was born in Chelsea, the son of John Fitzgerald Mahon, a member of the Guinness Mahon banking family, and Lady Alice Evelyn Browne, daughter of the 5th Marquess of Sligo. He was to spend the rest of his long life, except the last final months, at 33 Cadogan Square where he was looked after by his Spanish housekeeper and her family.

After Eton he went to Christ Church, Oxford to study history where he lived opposite the Ashmolean. This brought him into contact with Kenneth Clark who encouraged his interest in art history. He recommended that he continued his studies with Nikolaus Pevsner, then at the Courtauld Institute. Pevsner encouraged him to study the then neglected artist Guercino.

It was here that his passion for seventeenth-century Italian art was fostered and he went on to become one of the foremost art scholars and collectors of the twentieth century. Between 1943 and the late 1960s, when these paintings were out of fashion, Sir Denis assembled a vast collection, never paying more than £2000 for any one painting. When prices started to rise, in part due to his own research and interest, he stopped buying. At that time his collection was valued at £50,000; by 2007 it was valued in excess of £50 million.

In 1997 nearly 80 of his paintings, together with a selection of drawings by Guercino, previously deposited in the Ashmolean, were exhibited at the



33 Cadogan Square where Sir Denis Mahon spent most of his life.

SIR DENIS MAHON



Sir Denis Mahon at home © Prudence Cuming Associates Ltd.

National Gallery, London. The paintings were never to return to Cadogan Square as Sir Denis feared that all the attendant publicity would attract thieves.

Sir Denis donated his collection to various public museums including the National Galleries of England, Scotland and Ireland, The Fitzwilliam and The Ashmolean and the Birmingham Museum of Art.

A passionate supporter of museums he was a vocal advocate of free entry for all. Indeed he withdrew paintings on loan to institutions that introduced charges, offering them instead to museums that did not. This was by no means his only fight with officialdom. When his mother died in 1970 he offered to the nation *The Coronation of the Virgin* by Annibale Carracci. Although worth considerably more than the taxes payable, the Treasury refused to credit him with the difference so he sold it to the Metropolitan Museum, New York. Another of his famous battles was with the then Director of the Courtauld Institute, Anthony Blunt. Their professional rivalry was a talking point in art circles for many years.

Julian Treuherz, Keeper of the Walker Art Gallery, gave a vivid description of a visit to Cadogan Square. 'I was duly invited to visit his gloomy, austere

house, full of pictures propped up against the wall as well as hung. All flat surfaces were overflowing with piles of books, apart from a small space on the dining table where his meals were taken'. Others recall 'stacks of yellowing papers up the stairs while the mountain of copies of Hansard totally encasing the dining room sideboard was a feature of the dining room'. Little wonder then, following the presentation of his library and archive to the National Gallery of Ireland in 2010, that it took five months for their specialist team to organise, collate and box his books and papers. They started work in January and finally by May some 1000 banker's boxes were transported to Ireland. In December 2011 a lecture, 'The Importance of the Sir Denis Mahon Gift to the Gallery', was given in Dublin; entry, of course, was free of charge.

Perhaps the best way to conclude this brief look at the life of one of Chelsea's most illustrious residents is through the words of Tam Dalyell which appeared in *The Independent* on 12 May 2011.

'On Tuesday and Thursday mornings, from 10.30am-1pm in the spring and summer of 1980, the National Heritage Bill trundled its way through the committee stage in Committee Room 12 of the House of Commons. For the first two mornings, an elderly, somewhat ramshackle, large man, shuffled into one of the seats available to the public. On the second session of the committee I saw him shaking his head during a minister's answer to a question I had asked. Curious, I went across to him when the proceedings adjourned, and asked him why he had indicated dissent. His reasons were erudite. Would he care for a spot of lunch to continue the conversation? He accepted. Down we went in the lift to the Members' cafeteria to queue, for a dollop of stew and potatoes.

The next morning my friend, sparring partner and opponent, Alan Clark, MP for Plymouth Sutton and future diarist extraordinary, buttonholed me in the library. "I am told, Tam, you took Denis Mahon to the cafeteria yesterday!" "Well, Alan," I replied, "I did take an old boy who came to the Heritage Bill Committee. He seemed to know one heck of a lot about the clauses of the bill. I didn't like to ask him his name."

"But," smirked Clark, "Denis Mahon has never eaten a meal in his life before, in a cafeteria." He explained that Mahon had been his father's favourite student, when Sir Kenneth Clark, he of *Civilisation*, was Keeper of the Department of Fine Art at the Ashmolean Museum. Alan informed me that Mahon had the greatest collection of Italian 17th-century paintings in private hands in Europe, worth many millions. So the next day I invited Mahon again - to the more salubrious Strangers' Dining Room, which initiated a long friendship.'

Treasurer's Report

I am delighted to have been asked to succeed Christy Austin in the role of Treasurer to the Chelsea Society, taking office in October. We are all very grateful for the excellent work Christy and Kathy Roll put in managing the financial affairs over the past five years; I would take this opportunity on behalf of the Society to express our thanks.

In the year to 30 June 2011, the Society accrued an increased surplus of £4,078 (2010 - £3,398).

The accounts for 2011 were presented and approved at the AGM on 28 November 2011.

It has come to light we are not taking advantage of Gift Aid on membership subscriptions and we will be sending out a new form to all members to sign this year which will enable the Society to reclaim the basic rate tax from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) on each tax-paying member's 'gross' subscription - the amount before basic rate tax was deducted. This means that single member subscriptions of £15 using Gift Aid are worth £18.75 to the charity.

Your support on this initiative is much appreciated.

It is an honour to be asked to work with the Society building on Chelsea's history, heritage and strong sense of community, following on Christy's lead. I look forward to serving the members in the coming years.

If you have any questions regarding the accounts please do not hesitate to get in touch; I am happy to answer your questions.

Tom Martin
28 November 2011

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 30 June 2011.

Constitution and Objects

The Chelsea Society was founded by Reginald Blunt in 1927. The Society's objects are to protect and foster the amenities of Chelsea particularly by:

- * stimulating interest in the history, character and traditions of Chelsea;
- * encouraging good architecture, town planning and civic design, the planting and care of trees, and the conservation and proper maintenance of open spaces;
- * seeking the abatement of nuisances;
- * making representations to the proper authorities on these subjects.

The full Constitution and Rules of the Society, together with the Annual Accounts, are printed in the Annual Report, published in January each year, a copy of which is sent to every member.

Trustees

The Trustees of the Society are the Council constituted under the Society's Rules, which is responsible for the day-to-day work of the Society. The Council appoints Officers for certain posts. The current Officers and other Members of the Council are:

Officers

Stuart Corbyn (Chairman)
Nigel Stenhouse (Vice-Chairman)
Christy Austin (Hon. Treasurer) until 16.5.2011
Tom Martin (Hon. Treasurer) appointed 16.5.2011
Patricia Burr (Hon. Assistant Secretary)
Patricia Sargent (Hon. Secretary, Membership)
Terence Bendixson (Hon. Secretary, Planning)
Paulette Craxford (Hon. Secretary, Events)
Carolyn Starren (Hon. Editor)

Other Members of the Council

Michael Bach
Martyn Baker
Richard Melville Ballerand
Dr Serena Davidson
Jane Dorrell
Leonard Holdsworth
Giles Quarme
David Sagar
Andrew Thompson

Review of the year's activities and achievements

The Chairman's Report, published in the Society's Annual Report, contains a full description of the activities and achievements of the Society during the year.

Review of the Accounts

At 30 June 2011, the Society has total funds of £60,155, comprising £45,595 on the General Fund and £14,560 on the Life Membership Fund. These are considered available and adequate to fulfil the obligations of the Society. The reserve of funds is held to meet a need to fund any particular action required to protect the Society's objects, as thought appropriate by the Council of the Society.

Approved by the Council of the Chelsea Society on 28 November 2011.

Stuart Corbyn
Chairman

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

I report on the accounts of The Chelsea Society for the year ended 30 June 2011, which are set out on pages 96 and 97.

Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and the Independent Examiner

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of Section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 43 (7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (i) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - * to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act; and
 - * to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Acthave not been met; or
- (ii) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Angela Ktistakis, FCCA
GMAK
Chartered Accountants
5/7 Vernon Yard, Portobello Road
London W11 2DX
29 November, 2011

**THE CHELSEA SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011**

	2011	2010
Income and Expenditure account		
Incoming resources		
Annual membership subscriptions	12,201	12,652
Donations received	1,100	100
Advertising revenue from annual report	4,500	4,180
Interest received on General Funds	12	11
Interest received on Life Membership Fund	88	75
Income from lectures, meetings and visits	6,201	5,483
Income from sale of Christmas cards and postcards	1,752	1,927
Mailing inserts	---	400
Income from sale of <i>Here is Chelsea</i> book	8	36
	<u>25,862</u>	<u>24,864</u>
Total incoming resources		
Resources expended		
Direct charitable expenditure:		
Cost of annual report	9,097	9,962
Cost of newsletters	1,094	2,685
Cost of lectures, meetings and visits	6,366	5,151
Cost of Christmas cards and postcards	83	---
Subscriptions to other organisations	151	679
Advertising	75	---
Exhibition	2,345	---
Printing, postage and miscellaneous expenses	487	285
Insurance	526	721
Computer help and website	---	500
	<u>20,224</u>	<u>19,983</u>
Governance		
Cost of Annual General Meeting	613	577
Bank charges	155	158
Independent examiner's fee	792	748
	<u>1,560</u>	<u>1,483</u>
Total resources expended	<u>21,784</u>	<u>21,466</u>
Net incoming resources for the year	<u>4,078</u>	<u>3,398</u>
Balances brought forward at 1 July 2010	56,077	52,679
	<u>60,155</u>	<u>56,077</u>
Balance carried forward at 30 June 2011	<u>60,155</u>	<u>56,077</u>

**THE CHELSEA SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2011**

	2011	2010
Current Assets		
Debtors	245	1,395
Balance in National Savings Bank account	29,559	29,471
Balance on bank current and deposit accounts	38,045	32,838
	<u>67,849</u>	<u>63,704</u>
Less Liabilities: amounts falling due within one year	<u>(7,694)</u>	<u>(7,627)</u>
Net Assets	<u>£60,155</u>	<u>£56,077</u>
Funds:		
General Funds	45,595	41,605
Life Membership Fund	14,560	14,472
	<u>£60,155</u>	<u>£56,077</u>

Approved by the Council of The Chelsea Society on
28 November 2011
Stuart Corbyn, *Chairman*
Tom Martin, *Honorary Treasurer*

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost basis of accounting, and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting & Reporting by Charities, and applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards.

Incoming Resources

Membership subscriptions, advertising revenue, and income from events and the sale of Christmas cards are time-apportioned and credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in respect of which they are receivable

Donations are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which they are received, unless they relate to specific future projects.

Resources Expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis.

CONSTITUTION AND 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, regard shall be had, amongst other things, to the importance of including persons known to have expert knowledge and experience of matters relevant to the Objects of the Society.
(6) The Council shall be responsible for the day-to-day work of the Society, and shall have power to take any action on behalf of the Society which the Council thinks fit to take for the purpose of furthering the Objects of the Society and shall make and publish every year a Report of the activities of the Society during the previous year.
(7) The Council shall meet at least four times in each calendar year.
(8) A member of the Council who is absent from two successive meetings of the Council without explanation which the Council approves shall cease to be a member of the Council.
(9) Three of the elected members of the Council shall retire every second year, but may offer themselves for re-election by the Society.
(10) Retirement under the last preceding paragraph shall be in rotation according to seniority of election.
(11) Casual vacancies among the elected members may be filled as soon as practicable by election by the Society.
(12) One of the co-opted members shall retire every second year, but may be again co-opted.

OFFICERS

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

PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

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

SUBSCRIPTIONS*

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

- (4) Members may pay annual subscription 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 an 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 of 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 £15 annually payable on the 1st January. The annual husband-and-wife rate is £20.

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
IAN AGNEW
MISS INESSA AIREY
PAUL V. AITKENHEAD
FRANCIS ALEXANDER
JAMES ALEXANDER
R. ALEXANDER
MRS. R. ALEXANDER
MRS. ROSEMARY ALEXANDER
C. ALLAN
MRS. C. ALLAN
MRS MARGARET ALLEN
MRS. ELIZABETH AMATI
C. C. ANDREAE
MARTIN ANDREWS
*THE MARQUESS OF ANGLESEY
MISS MARY APPLEBEY, C.B.E.
J. N. ARCHER
JOHN ARMITAGE
MRS JOHN ARMITAGE
*DAVID ASCHIAN
M. ASHE
MRS. M. ASHE
MISS C. ASSHETON
MRS. ROMA ASHWORTH BRIGGS
MRS. LISA ATKINS
J. ROBERT ATKINSON
MRS CYNTHIA AYER

MICHAEL BACH
MRS P. M. BAGNALL
MISS ANGELA BAIGNÈRES
DR. B. M. BAIRD
MRS. B. M. BAIRD
MARTYN BAKER
MRS. MARTYN BAKER
RICHARD BALLERAND
MRS. MICHAEL BARKER
DR. R. BARKER
ROGER BARKER
MRS. VALERIE BARKER
*D. H. BARLOW
SIR JOHN BARRAN, Bt.
LADY BARRAN
JULIAN BARROW
MRS. JULIAN BARROW
MRS. M. C. BARROW
ADRIAN BARR-SMITH
MRS. ADRIAN BARR-SMITH
MRS ANNE BARTLETT
*MRS. DEREK BARTON
MRS. COLLEEN BASSETT
G. N. BATTMAN
MRS. G. N. BATTMAN
PATRICK BATY

SIR PETER BAXENDELL
LADY BAXENDELL
GERALD BEALE
ROBERT BEALE
MRS ROBERT BEALE
*E. V. BEATON
K. L. S. BEAUCHAMP-KERR
MRS. A. E. BEAUMONT-DODD
MRS. P. M. BECKER
HUGO BEDFORD
MRS. HUGO BEDFORD
MRS. PATRICIA BEHR, M.V.O., M.B.E.
T. J. BENDALL
TERENCE BENDIXSON
MISS ANDREA BENNETT
R A C BERKELEY
ROBIN BERKELEY
MRS ROBIN BERKELEY
MISS ANN BERNE
*MISS ANNE BERRIMAN
MRS RITA BERRY
MRS DELIA BETTISON
REAR-ADMIRAL C. BEVAN, C.B.
MRS. C. BEVAN
MISS SUSAN BILGER
MISS PAMELA BIRLEY
MRS. ELIZABETH BLACKMAN
MISS SUZANNE BLAKEY
DEREK BLOOM
THE HON. NIGEL BOARDMAN
MARTIN BOASE
JONATHAN BOLTON-DIGNAM
MRS. J. B. FLOCKHART BOOTH
MRS. MICHAEL BOREHAM
MISS JUDITH BORROW
*TIMOTHY BOULTON
MISS JUDITH BOWDEN
DAVID BOWEN
MISS CLARE BOWRING
M. BOXFORD
MRS. M. BOXFORD
MISS P. BRABY
DAVID BRADY
MRS. DAVID BRADY
H. R. BRADY
MRS H. R. BRADY
R. M. A. BRAINE
MRS. R. M. A. BRAINE
ARTHUR BRAY
MRS ARTHUR BRAY
A. W. BRITAIN
MRS. A. W. BRITAIN
MRS ANGELA BROAD
T. BROAD
MRS. T. BROAD

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THOMAS BROILLY
SIR HENRY BROOKE
LADY BROOKE
R. BROOKS
MRS. E. BROUGHTON-ADDERLEY
MISS KATRINA BROWN
N. F. G. BROWN
MRS. N. F. G. BROWN
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K. BURGESS
*RICHARD BURGESS
MISS ELIZABETH BURMAN
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MRS. D. E. BURTT
F. A. BUSBY
*MRS. JAMES BUXTON
TERENCE BUXTON

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MRS. A. CARO
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MRS. PHILLIP CARRARO
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S. CASTELLO
MRS S. CASTELLO
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JAMES CECIL
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M. E. CHAMBERLAYNE
DAVID CHARLES
DAVID CHARTERS
MRS. DAVID CHARTERS

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LORD CHELSEA
LADY CHELSEA
MRS. CYNTHIA CHAUVEAU
MRS. J. M. CHEYNE
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MRS. A. H. CHIGNELL
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MRS ALEXANDER CHILD-VILLIERS
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MISS CHERRY CLARKE
*R. S. CLARKE
ADAM CLEAL
MRS ADAM CLEAL
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*MRS. M. R. COAD
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MRS. STUART CORBYN
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MRS. ALAN CROSS
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 MRS. PETER DAVIES
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 LADY FORD
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 MRS. DUGALD GRAHAM-CAMPBELL
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 MRS. J. S. GREIG
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 MRS. WILLIAM GUBELMANN
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 MRS. ROBERT GUERRINI
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 LADY GUNNING

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 MRS. JAMES HALLING
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 MRS. ANDREW HAMILTON
 PETER HAMPSON
 MRS. PETER HAMPSON
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 MRS. K. B. HAMPTON
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 MRS. J. C. HANDS
 MISS PAULINE HANDS
 MISS JUDITH HANRATTY
 MRS. CHARLES HANSARD
 JAN HARALDSON
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 MRS. M. R. HARDING
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 MISS V. HARPER
 MISS INGRID HARRIS
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 MRS. JOHN HARRISON
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 MRS. FIONA HART
 DAVID HARVEY
 MRS. DAVID HARVEY
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 HARRY HAVEMEYER
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 W. S. HAYNES
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 MRS. H. N. HENSHAW
 MISS CELIA HENSMAN
 MISS ANDREA HEWITT

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 FERGUS HOBBS
 MAJOR I. S. HODGSON
 A. F. HOHLER
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 LEONARD HOLDSWORTH
 MRS. LEONARD HOLDSWORTH
 CLLR. TONY HOLT
 STANLEY HONEYMAN
 MRS. STANLEY HONEYMAN
 GAVIN HOOPER
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 *MALCOLM S. HOWE
 KIM HOWELL
 MRS KIM HOWELL
 *D. R. HOWISON
 GLOFFREY HUGALL
 C. B. HUGHES
 MRS. S. HUGHES-ONSLow
 A. C. B. HUNTER
 *RICHARD HUNTING
 PETER HUNTINGTON
 V. A. HUTCHINS, M.A.
 MRS. V. A. HUTCHINS
 MRS. SUZIE HYMAN
 MISS PEGGY E. HYNÉ

SIR DONALD W. INSALL, O.B.E.
 MISS RACHEL INWOOD
 *MIRANDA, COUNTESS OF IVEACH

MRS. ANITA JACKSON
 MRS. CHERRY JACKSON
 MRS. SARAH JACKSON
 P. G. JACOBS
 J. JACOBSEN
 PAUL JENNINGS
 PAUL JENSEN
 MISS VIRGINIA JOHNSTONE
 ROBERT PIERCE JONES
 MRS ROBERT PIERCE JONES
 MRS. E. J. M. JOWELL
 MRS. ELIZABETH JOWETT

JONATHAN KANE
 MRS JONATHAN KANE
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 R. KEELING
 MRS. R. KEELING
 *MRS. VERONICA KEELING
 MRS. SALLY KEH
 CHRISTOPHER KELJIK

MRS. CHRISTOPHER KELJIK
 ALLAN KELLY
 PAUL KELLY
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 MRS. ANN KENNEDY
 *MISS M. KENNEDY-BELL
 THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA
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 THE REV. C. KEVILL-DAVIES
 MRS. C. KEVILL-DAVIES
 M. KIA
 *MISS F. B. KING
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 MRS. STEPHEN KINGSLEY
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 *JAMES H. KIRKMAN
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 MISS PIERETTE KNAPP
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 *HUGH KRALL
 H. KRITZMER
 MRS. H. KRITZMER

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 LADY LAIDLAW
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 MRS MARGARET LANDALE
 BRIAN LAYERS
 MRS BRIAN LAYERS
 *MRS. W. A. J. LAWRENCE
 MRS TANIA LEAVER
 MRS. SUSAN LECKIE
 RICHARD LEIGHTON
 MRS RICHARD LEIGHTON
 *DAVID LE LAY
 SIR PAUL LEVER
 LADY LEVER
 ILTYD LEWIS
 MRS. ILTYD LEWIS
 MRS. NICOLA LINDSAY
 MISS REBECCA LINGARD
 MISS ELIZABETH LINTON
 ANDERS LJUNGH
 PRINCE JOHN LOBANOV-ROSTOVSKY
 PRINCESS JOHN LOBANOV-ROSTOVSKY
 MRS. ANN LONG
 STEPHEN P. H. LONG
 JOSEPH LOPEZ
 MRS. JOSEPH LOPEZ
 NICHOLAS LORAINÉ-SMITH
 MRS NICHOLAS LORAINÉ-SMITH
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 M. LOVAT
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