



THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

Registered Charity 27626

Spring Bulletin 2022



This Bulletin is printed and distributed to members twice a year, and electronic mailings are sent to members at approx. monthly intervals. If you are not receiving them, please contact Secretary@chelseasociety.org.uk or 07803 147654.

For more detail, and to keep up to date with the activities of the Society, visit our website at www.chelseasociety.org.uk You can also follow The Chelsea Society on Instagram, where we now have 962 Followers Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join the Society, by visiting our website and clicking on **“Join Us.”**

They do not have to be resident in Chelsea.



Happy Birthday

The Chelsea Society was founded on 1st April 95 years ago, and now has 986 members. We also have 944 Followers on Instagram – lets make it a thousand in both categories!

FUTURE EVENTS

NATO & Ukraine

25th April 2022



At 6pm on Monday 25th April, at Chelsea Old Town Hall, King's Road, the Society will hear a lecture by General Sir Adrian Bradshaw KCB OBE, former Deputy Supreme Allied Commander of NATO forces in Europe on "Challenges facing NATO and the UK relating to Ukraine ." Sir Adrian is now Governor of the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

His military career encompassed much of the world: including operations in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. He served in an armoured regiment, as a pilot in Army-aviation and with the SAS – and was known as an innovator. **Tickets** £15 per person to include Wine & Canapés. Available from the Box Office of the Cadogan Hall, 3 Sloane Terrace, London, SW1X 9DQ in person, or by post with cheque payable to Cadogan Hall, or by phone 0207-730-4500 (booking not available online). A charge is made by Cadogan Hall for card payments.

The Queen's Gallery

Monday 9th May, 6 for 6.30 – 8.00pm

The Royal Collection holds some of the most significant examples of art and design in the western world.

For the first time, highlights from the collection are brought together to tell the story of 300 years of diplomatic, artistic and cultural exchange between the British and Japanese royal and imperial families. **Tickets** £45 includes introductory lecture, glass of champagne, 20% discount in the shop, and free access to the Gallery for one year, (except for private events). Members may bring guests: **Please book early, as we have a limited number of tickets.**



PAST EVENTS



The Kings Road

There was an exhibition about 400 years of The Kings Road, at 340 Kings Road on 26-28th December 2021

PAST EVENTS

Photo Competition

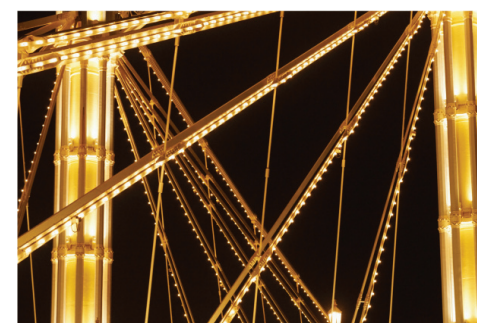
Prize-giving for the Chelsea Society Prize was at 2pm on Friday 10th December 2021 at the Physic Garden. The distinguished photographer, Alison Jackson, is seen here with the Society's Chairman, Dr. James Thompson, and the three winning photographs.

The winners were:

1st – Milana Khisyametdinova 12 years old for close-up picture of the Albert Bridge

2nd – Felix Griffin 17 years old, for distant tower-blocks

3rd – Matthew Smith 24 years old, for black & white photograph of the houseboats in Chelsea Reach at night.



Chelsea Walk

Following the very successful Chelsea Walk with the Blue-badge Guide Guy Fairbank on 27th October, we have arranged another.

The walk will focus on 'Cinema, Surgery and Spies in Chelsea' – German spies who were kept in the Tower and put on trial at Duke of York Square, Philby & co meeting at the Markham Arms, Dirk Bogarde and Handmade Films, McIndoe who reconstructed pilots' faces. **Tickets** £10 from the Box Office of the Cadogan Hall, 3 Sloane Terrace, London, SW1X 9DQ in person, or by post with cheque payable to Cadogan Hall, or by phone 0207-730-4500 (booking not available online). A charge is made by Cadogan Hall for card payments.



Traitor King

Andrew Lownie was interviewed by Michael Stephen at Waterstone's bookshop on the Kings Road on his recent book "Traitor King." Forty members attended.



In December 1936 – the king of England, Edward VIII, has given up his crown – abandoning his duty for the love of Wallis Simpson, an American divorcée. Their courtship has been dogged by controversy and scandal but with Edward's abdication they can live happily ever after – but do they?

Beginning his astonishing biography at the moment most biographers turn away, the historian Andrew Lownie revealed the dramatic lives of the Windsors post-abdication. This was the story of a prince shut out by his family and forced into exile; of the Nazi attempts to recruit the Duke to their cause; and how the Duke as Governor of the Bahamas dealt with the police investigation into the murder of a friend.

Drawing upon hitherto unexplored archives Andrew Lownie showed how their glittering brittle world was riddled with treachery and betrayal, and why the royal family never forgave the Duke.

PAST EVENTS

The Blitz in Chelsea

An illustrated talk by HUGH MACDONALD-BUCHANAN 23rd February at Chelsea Old Town Hall

The Luftwaffe commenced its assault on the British mainland in 1940 following the fall of France. The targets included industrial cities, ports, and even cultural locations across the nation, but London was always the principal target.

Here the focus was upon the East End and Westminster, but Chelsea, being not far from the epicentre and close to the Thames that helped guide the bombers, did not escape.

Some members of The Chelsea Society will recall the ravaged landscape which showed open wounds well into the 1970s before the building boom finally covered the bomb-sites.

Today, it is still possible to trace the damage by looking at the modern development. During the Blitz there were many tales of the resilience and bravery of residents, and of the Civil Defence force which formed a new civilian front line army.



NEWS

Albert Bridge



We have noticed that the four historic kiosks on Albert Bridge are in need of repainting. The paint is flaking and the wood is deteriorating.

RBKC is responsible for their maintenance.

Cabmens' Shelter

We are pleased to see that the setting of the cabmens' shelter at Albert Bridge has been tidied up, and some planting has been done.



Escalator out of order!



The escalator from the eastbound platform has not been in working order since before Christmas.

This is not fair to the elderly and disabled.

We are told that "a part is stuck in customs" – if this is true we urgently need our GLA member and MP to get it unstuck, and have asked for their support.

This is in any event a very amateurish way to run a railway. Adequate numbers of parts should be kept in stock so that they don't need to be imported at short notice when they fail.

NEWS



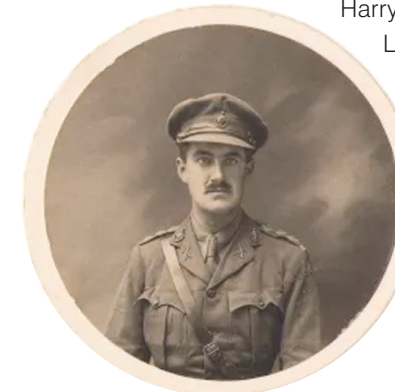
New building to replace Kings Walk shopping centre

We noticed on 15th January a huge crane in the Kings Road erecting a tower-crane for the construction of a new building to replace the now-demolished Kings Walk shopping centre.

Memoirs of Harry Lott

A member of The Chelsea Society, Brian Lott, has edited the diaries of his father, Lt. Col. Harry C. Lott MC, who led a remarkable and adventurous life as a civil and military engineer in the first three decades of the 20th century.

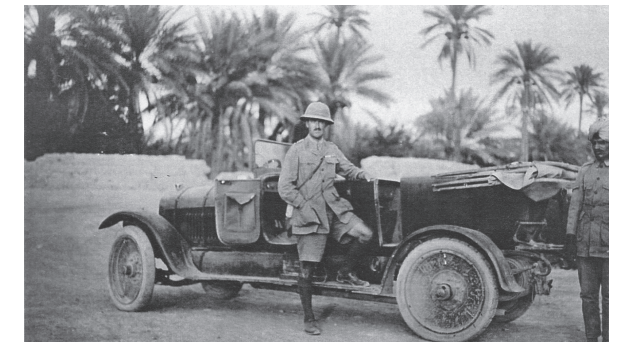
His five books are part of the social history of England, and of the British role in the world during that period.



Harry was a descendant of the Lott family of Flatford in Essex, made famous in Constable's paintings of Willy Lott's

cottage exactly 200 years ago. He studied engineering at the recently-opened Central Technical College in South Kensington, before it was merged into Imperial College, and describes his life in London from 1901 to 1904 when the Tuppenny Tube and Steam Omnibuses were replacing horse-drawn carriages.

All five books, entitled "The Colourful Life of an Engineer" are available by order from Amazon, Waterstones, and other bookshops.



Why did this Georgian house collapse?

During the night of 2/3 November 2020 this beautiful house in Durham Place, Chelsea, built in 1790, collapsed completely into ruins. We are trying to find out from the Health & Safety Executive why this happened.

Building works had been in progress for some time, and a basement was being excavated at the house next door.

The collapse was a shocking event, not only because of the loss of a fine heritage building, but because of the loss of human life which it could have caused. It is a huge relief that no-one was killed or injured, but there had clearly been a massive failure of some kind in the implementation of the building control regime.



NEWS

John Rendall dies

John Rendall, a member of The Chelsea Society and The Chelsea Arts Club, who lived at World's End, and was an active supporter of The Chelsea Theatre, died on 20th January 2022. He is remembered as a Socialite and conservationist whose pet lion cub, Christian, purchased on a whim for 250 guineas in Harrods, became a Chelsea celebrity.

Rendall and his flatmate, Anthony Bourke, installed their new friend in the basement of Sophistocat, the pine-furniture shop at World's End where they were both working. Public reaction was remarkably calm. "The idea of a lion in the King's Road wasn't that unusual at the time," Rendall told the Evening Standard in 2009. John Rendall was born near Sydney, Australia, in 1944. As a child he achieved local recognition as a boy soprano and later briefly toyed with training as an opera singer.



Argyll House



We are pleased that Argyll House is being completely restored. The Society had supported the owner's application for Listed Building consent, and we look forward to completion of this important project.

Giacomo Leoni, the Venetian architect built Argyll House for John Perrin in 1723. Leoni, who came to England under the patronage of Lord Burlington, and practised here until his death in 1746. He is known chiefly for his designs for Moor Park, Hertfordshire; the Duke of Queensbury's house in Burlington Gardens (since destroyed); and for the Great House at Carshalton, which was never built. As at March 2022 the house is owned by the family of the Fifth Marquis of Normanby.

Curzon cinema

Prog being made to rebuild the Curzon cinema and the adjoining block of flats. Completion is expected in the Autumn of 2023.



Dovehouse Green

Dovehouse Green is being maintained and improved, with the support of The Chelsea Society



PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT

The Local Plan

The Plan would not normally have been due for review until 2024, but RBKC decided to bring it forward because of changes to London and national planning policies, particularly the requirement to provide 4,500 new homes in the Borough over the next decade. The Council is therefore looking for ways in which more sites can be made available for housing and for some relaxation in the rules on tall buildings. The Chelsea Society recognises the pressures which RBKC are under, but we are encouraging them not to compromise on the Borough's character in order to meet an arbitrary target. We are also urging them to give greater priority to conservation and heritage issues, and to be more vigorous in protecting the Thames Conservation Area.

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT

Lots Road

The Design Concept for Lots Road is an example of where, in the Society's view, RBKC is prejudicing existing policies in the interests of cramming in more housing. Lots Road is Chelsea's only Employment Zone and according to the current rules additional residential accommodation should not be allowed in an Employment Zone unless it can be shown to be necessary in order to generate significant amounts of new floorspace for employment. But what the Council has in mind for the site which it owns on Lots Road is a massive residential development, involving a ten storey building at the southern end of the road, with hardly any new employment space at all.

Solar Panels

RBKC is proposing to relax the requirement for planning permission for the installation of solar panels on Grade 2 listed buildings, subject to certain conditions (principally that they must not be visible from the street). The Society has expressed general support for the change, though we have queried whether it should not also apply to solar tiles, and have proposed that there should be some mechanism for amenity organisations such as The Chelsea Society to raise concerns in particular cases.

Marks and Spencer building

Council officers have rejected the application for the re-development of this building, principally on grounds of the harm which would have been done to the interests of the residents of 1 and 2 King Charles Place. The Chelsea Society had objected to the overall height and bulk of the proposed structure.

Sloane Square

The Council is proposing to extend for up to ten years the permission to use Sloane Square for outside eating and drinking during the summer months as part of its policy of encouraging the development of a "café culture" more widely in the Borough. The Society has indicated its support, but will of course make representations if any problems arise in a particular case.

Chelsea Reach

RBKC proposes to grant a short lease-extension to the Chelsea Yacht & Boat Company. The Society is in discussion with RBKC with a view to protecting the visual amenity of the area by imposing restrictions in or annexed to the lease, on the size and appearance of boats.

Dovehouse Green/Chelsea Green

Work has started on the refurbishment of Dovehouse Green, and the refurbishment of Chelsea Green has been approved and is expected to commence soon. The Society was represented in the working groups which drew up the plans.

Colebrook Court – Sloane Avenue

The Chelsea Society has submitted the following objection to Planning Application PP/22/01540:

"The Chelsea Society exists to protect the interests of all those who live and work in Chelsea and to safeguard the character of this unique part of London. It has nearly 1,000 members.

The Society urges the Council to reject this Application. The reasons are the proposed building's excessive height, its incongruous design and its failure to meet the Council's requirement for 35% affordable housing.

HEIGHT

The proposed building would be 13 storeys high with the plant & machinery located on top of the 13th storey. The existing building on the site is 4 storeys high and the prevailing height of the other buildings in the surrounding area is 9 storeys. London Plan policy D9 stipulates that tall buildings should be developed only in locations that are identified as suitable for them in development plans. This is not the case for Colebrook Court. The New Local Plan Review, on which the Council is consulting, mentions Colebrook Court as a small site potentially capable of providing 20 new residential units, but it is not included as one of the locations appropriate for tall buildings. A 13 story building would be inimical to the character of the surrounding environment and damaging to Chelsea's skyline, including the vista from the Royal Hospital.

DESIGN

The materials proposed for use are sympathetic, but, as noted in the pre-application advice given on 5 August 2021 (Alison Long's letter, reference PRE/AR/21/04060/L3FU), the curved form of the tower block is incongruous and out of keeping with the style of the area. A design more in conformity with the other mansion blocks in the area would be more appropriate.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The proposal fails to meet the Council's requirement for 35% of the floor space to be used for affordable housing. It offers only about 20%, which is unacceptable. The 35% requirement has been in place for several years now and anyone contemplating a development of this size would be aware of it and should factor it into their planning. If it is not commercially attractive to do so in respect of this building, then the developers should change the design and build a less expensive one. Otherwise the development should simply not take place.

The Council has a responsibility to respect its own policies, and if it gives planning permission for a development which fails to do so, it is calling its own credibility into question. It should make clear to developers that the 35% requirement is not something which can be negotiated down but a rule which will be applied in all cases."



THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Chelsea Society now has 984 members, and 962 Followers on Instagram. Please encourage your friends to join the Society by visiting “Join Us” on the website, and to become a “Follower” on Instagram. Our target is 1,000 in both categories!

Our Secretary, Clare, can be contacted on secretary@chelseasociety.org.uk or 07803 147654. Please make sure she has your current e-mail address and telephone number.

Our mailing address is: 30 Paradise Walk, London SW3 4JL

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