

EARL'S COURT SQUARE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2015
A 40th anniversary issue



Tree Lighting

It was a dry, mild evening, about 60 adults and nearly 30 children were counted. Much mulled wine was consumed and appreciated as well as mince pies eaten. The lights on the tree would have been an added bonus. Now with the transformer replaced, we enjoyed the lights for the 12 days of Christmas.

Useful Telephone Numbers

If at any time, you are disturbed by noise and nuisance from private parties in flats, or local licensed premises, you should contact the Police, 020 7161 8846 earlscourt.snt@met.police.uk, and the Licensing Teams, RBK&C, 0207 361 3002 (24 hours), environmentalhealth@rbkc.gov.uk, in order to gather sufficient information to proceed to the next stage.

If you see any rubbish dumped on the pavement on days other than Mondays and Thursdays, contact RBK&C Streetline on 020 7361 3001, streetline@rbkc.gov.uk

For dumped shopping trolleys, contact Customer Services at Tescos at West Cromwell Road, 020 3280 6907.

For non-emergencies involving the police, contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team on 020 8721 2003 earlscourt.snt@met.police.uk

For parking problems, contact RBK&C on 020 7361 3004 parking@rbkc.gov.uk

Making contact with Earl's Court Square Residents' Association:

If you wish to make contact with ECSRA, you can either drop a letter into 19a Earl's Court Square or email ecsra@btinternet.com, or ecsrachair@talktalk.net. Further details can be found on the ECSRA website www.ecsra.co.uk

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FARON SUTARIA



Dates for your diary:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 26 February: | Earl's Court Society Annual General Meeting |
| 3 March: | ECSRA Annual General Meeting |
| 13-14 June: | London Garden Squares Open Weekend |
| 27 June: | ECSRA Annual BBQ |
| 19 July: | Brompton Cemetery Open Day |
| Plus... | Items of local interest |

Thank you to Faron Sutaria for printing this newsletter



Faron Sutaria are proud to be associated with the Earl's Court Square Resident Association.

We have over 31 years of local experience, knowledge and involvement in the area. If you are thinking of buying, selling, renting, or would like free mortgage advice, please call in and see us.

In the meantime, all of our properties can be viewed on our daily up-dated website at www.faronsutaria.co.uk

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Free up-to-date market appraisal

Meet Acting Sgt. Ben Palastanga our Safer Neighbourhood Officer in Charge.



RBK&C Officer of the Year 2014

PC Ben Palastanga's best for the last 13 years has been Earl's Court. He has been in many of the Wards in RBK&C and in the last 3 ½ years, we have been fortunate to have him as our friendly Earl's Court Ward officer, currently acting as Sergeant.

"Earl's Court is different from the rest of the Borough, it has a bit of everything" says Acting Sgt. Ben. "The neighbourhood feel appeals to me and to the residents too and considering the makeup of the area, crime is comparatively low. There are more neighbour disputes to handle as the area has a high percentage of flats, so noise from small flats with families, loud TV's or music, often needs a friendly but firm word. This comes under the banner of antisocial behaviour and is viewed by residents as a policing priority.

Burglary of both cars and homes comes next, but the fact that neighbours know each other in our area is a big help to spotting anything

suspicious. To keep offences at a minimum, most importantly, residents shutting their front doors, not buzzing strangers in. In effect self-policing which is hugely helpful for the police in the prevention of crime".

"We remain vigilant and with your help, will continue to strive to ensure that Earl's Court remains a safe and pleasant environment to live and work in".

Acting Sgt. Ben and his PCSO Danny Wright, work closely with staff at the local hostels, who all help patrol the area. They also have good relations with the Housing Associations, the Councillors and the Ward panel, comprised of interested and active local residents. That everyone works together in the community to achieve the best for Earl's Court, Acting Sgt. Ben is proud.

We congratulate Acting Sgt. Ben on his tireless efforts on our behalf, for which he has been recognised by his superiors and senior management, who awarded him Officer of the Year Award for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. A presentation by the Worshipful the Mayor Cllr. Maighread Condon-Simmonds was made at the Town Hall.

If you have information that may help in reducing or detecting crime in our Earl's Court Ward, contact Acting Sgt. Ben Palastanga and the Earl's Court Neighbourhood Policing Team on T. 020 87212003 M. 07764 023092. e. earlscourt.snt@met.police.uk.

Their Safer Neighbourhood Base is at 2-4 Kenway Road SW5 0RR.

He He He

Children's parties are great fun, and balloons which float off into the blue yonder are an essential part of this.

But the sad fact is that if five year olds insist on such toys, their granny may not be able to have an MRI scan when she needs it.

How so ?

The balloons owe their buoyancy to being filled with helium – a lighter than air gas.

In the early days of flotation, hydrogen was used. Unfortunately being highly flammable it reduced passengers to a crisp when the Hindenburg caught fire. Since helium is inert, it was substituted PDQ.

Much of the Free World's helium comes from holes in the ground in Texas – it is produced as a by-product of radioactive decay.

When the US government thought that helium would be essential for airships, it nationalized the supply. When it discovered that this was not going to happen, it privatized it.

In the meantime, a new use for helium had been discovered: nuclear magnetic resonance. Its descendant magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) requires huge magnetic fields which need magnets cooled to close to the absolute zero of -273C.

Liquid helium is the coolant of choice. In hospitals and research laboratories, they cool the escaping gas to re-bottle it.



But all those children's parties think it is a great jape to liberate the helium into the atmosphere.

Cheer up. Only 10% of the world's production every year is wasted to amuse babies – a price well worth paying, unless it is your granny who is waiting for a scan.

Does anyone in Earl's Court have a clue what "sustainability" means?

I await proof.
by Alan Malcolm



Christine Powell - Chairman ECSRA

Annual Newsletter

The Earl's Court Square Residents' Association Annual Newsletter is delivered to all households within the Earl's Court Square Conservation Area. You will find an application form enclosed to renew your membership or to join if you would like to. Rates are £6 for an individual and £9 for a family / household.

Rubbish



We now have a group of several willing volunteers helping Heidi Bradner deal with rubbish issues. Contact Heidi on: heidi@heidibradner.com. One focus is the cellar doors where there have been incidences of rat infestation when the doors have been blocked by scaffolding preventing rubbish from being collected. Please ensure that your managing agent is

aware of this problem particularly if external renovation work be carried out. You can arrange for a door step collection of up to 10 bulky items, which are 'too big for the bin'. The charge is £27.60 and you can either book through the RBK&C website or call Streetline on 020 7361 3001. The British Heart Foundation Shop in Wandsworth will accept furniture and electrical items. Please note that although there are rubbish collections on Bank Holidays, pick-up will be suspended over the August Bank Holiday as the crews will be on duty for Notting Hill Carnival. Please do not put rubbish out for collection on that day.

Planning and Properties

ECSRA donated money for properties within the Square to have house numbers painted on their columns. Over time, after redecorating work, these had been painted over but now most have been replaced. However, the following have not and we would be grateful if freeholders / managing agents would arrange for this to be done: 1, 4, 10, 16, 18, 23, 26, 25-27, 59 and 65. The font is Garmond, with the figures painted in black, 7" in height.

ECSRA has also heard of water ingress to properties which is not necessarily caused by leaking roofs. If clogged gutters and drains are not often kept clear of debris and leaves, the surrounding area can soon fill up after a torrential rain storm. So please do clean gutters and drains to prevent water leaks. It can be a costly business and most unpleasant for those who are affected, usually in a flat beneath.

26-48 Wetherby Mansions



When this mansion block was surveyed last year, it was discovered that the steels holding up the front wall of the building had deteriorated and would need replacing and the vault under the pavement was collapsing. The other end of the steel beam in the photo was in even worse condition, and the other steel beams were very badly corroded.

It took the contractor a long time to obtain permission from the Council to close and dig up the pavement, as it covers a basement space that the planning department are being more careful about with recent legislation.

Low water pressure

There were several occasions last year when the water pressure was either very low or, in some instances, there was no water at all during the morning peak. Those properties which were affected were Wetherby Mansions, some on the north and some on the west side of the Square.

It took time to get Thames Water to acknowledge that there was a problem but eventually, closed stop cocks or broken valves were found to be the cause. If you do encounter a similar problem, do not be put off by

Thames Water's customer services department advising you that no one else has reported a similar problem. Do persist! Our thanks to Cllr's Wade and Spalding who added their voices to the cause.

Traffic and Parking

With an increasing amount of work being carried out on buildings around the Square, there has been an increase in builders' lorries. If you see building materials blocking the road or pavement, contact Streetline on 020 7361 3001. For noise and nuisance, phone 020 7361 3002. For illegally parked construction lorries email parkingcontracts@rbkc.gov.uk.

Hatch box markings

ECSRA, with the assistance of the then Ward Councillors, in the mid-late 1990's convinced Transport for London (TfL) that a yellow hatch box was needed as traffic exiting the Square on to Earl's Court Road was having to wait two to three signal changes before they could proceed on to Earl's Court Road.

The recent disappearance of the hatch box was referred to the current Ward Councillors and Cllr. Malcolm Spalding on our behalf has been advised by the TfL Highways Operations Manager - Central Area, that for a variety of reasons it has been decided not to reinstate the hatch markings and that Keep Clear markings are the preferred option.

We await the practicalities of this now it is done. TfL have said they would meet with the ECSRA Committee, to discuss issues should this solution not work.

Redcliffe Dental Rooms

Dentist, Dr. Olaf Bruns, Ivonka and team are relocating to West Kensington.



Occasionally, we are all prompted to think about the speed of passing time. If you are a resident who has lived in the area for more than ten years, you may recall the Travel Agent at 273 Old Brompton Road - opposite the (then) wrist watch repair shop.

Dr. Bruns and the team of Redcliffe Dental Rooms acquired, on lease, the retail space of the former Travel Agent, opening their doors on 25 January 2005. The service went on to prove a valuable health care support to the community.

In response to the needs of our busy neighbourhood for greater evening and weekend appointment access, Dr. Bruns and his team are relocating to new and larger premises nearby. Opening the doors of their new venture after almost ten years to the day.

The new and improved premises are located a short walk away, or one stop on the tube, West Kensington. The telephone number remains the same.

Diet of Worms

There are many bonuses to living in Earl's Court Square, but one of these is easy access to Albertopolis. If you become a Member of the Natural History Museum, you are entitled to attend their training courses. Your intrepid reporter signed up for a workshop on Earthworms. Without them we would be ankle, (no, waist or worse) deep in under-composted vegetable matter. All those cabbages would be causing noses to wrinkle throughout West London.

The really good news is that earthworms are 80% protein, and therefore should be part of a balanced diet, as they are indeed for Maori Chiefs, for whom they are reserved.

They have an interesting sex life, being hermaphrodite, and so remarkably unpicky when it comes to choosing partners with whom to propagate their DNA.

However, since we have 26 (!) different species (really?) in Kensington, they must be a little selective, since, like the Montagues and Capulets, they do not cross breed. Gestation of the eggs and cocoon can take anything from weeks to months depending on the temperature

We learned that if they do not like where they are, they can migrate 100 metres in a single night under cover of darkness! Let us hope they like our Garden, because we need them. The scientists at the NHM would like our help in conducting a census of our worms. If you would like to take part, access their website at: www.OPALexplorenature.org.



Redcliffe Dental Rooms

WE ARE MOVING - JANUARY 2015

With affect from 26 January 2015, Dr Bruns and his team will be moving to new and larger premises



You will find Redcliffe Dental Rooms a short walk away, or one stop on the district line – whichever you prefer.

The new address is:

Redcliffe Dental Rooms
151 North End Road
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The telephone remains the same: 020 7373 0007

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Origins of the Earl's Court Square Residents' Association

Melvyn Jeremiah remembers



I came to Earl's Court Square in 1974, when I moved to a new post in the Cabinet Office. I bought a flat on the second floor of Queens Court (Nos. 25-27) overlooking the garden in the centre of the Square. It had belonged to Pamela Case, who at that time worked for a well-known firm of estate agents - she later went into business on her own dealing with very wealthy customers at the upper end of the market. She was a lady with style. When I bought her second floor flat, she immediately bought a first floor flat in the same building and set about re-ordering it in the "Pamela style".

Pamela quickly introduced me to the main characters then making the Square the delightful place it was to live in. Community activity centred on the bar in the White House Hotel at 17/19. This was run by David and Jennifer Ware. On Sundays at lunchtime David held sway in the bar where you would usually find a bunch of the local characters, augmented by individuals staying in the hotel, often regular visitors.

When a general consensus emerged that a Square Residents Association should be formed, it was natural that David was made Chairman. Others involved, that I remember, were the

rest of the Wares (of course), Pamela, Col. Tony Davies and his lady Barbara Prime (also Queens Court people), David Ramsden, Victor and Simone Smith, and Michael Ambler, the solicitor whose Morris 1100 kept being stolen (all from 29-31)! Donald and Marjorie Fair from the South side of the Square, Councillor Eaton from Langham Mansions, and Rodney Brangwyn from Wetherby Mansions. A great supporter was Jo Warwick, who lived in a basement flat on the East side of the Square.

At the time there was much concern about the activities of a pair of brothers, who were buying up substantial properties (such as those in the Square) and destroying their character by converting them into rabbit-hutch bed-sitters.

Apart from the consequent damage to the structure of the buildings (some of which had fine interiors even if in need of general tender loving care) we did not view with enthusiasm the prospect of becoming a bed-sitter ghetto. The Association was therefore formed to do battle with these developers and thwart their knavish tricks. Happily, ECSRA was successful over time and succeeded in having the Square designated as a Conservation Area.

In the early days of the Association we became aware that the ownership of the Square Garden had changed. At that point the Garden was more-or-less derelict, though still a welcome green oasis. The original iron railings had been removed in the Second World War (an appalling campaign by the Government propaganda machine to help persuade the populace that



proliferation over the summer. The birds and animals have enjoyed the almonds, strawberries and grapes in the garden and maybe next year the apples will fruit too.

We are looking at a number of capital projects for the garden and also have a date for the AGM for Garden Rate Payers which will be on Thursday 22 January at 8pm - venue to be confirmed, but we are hoping for Upstairs at The Troubadour again. Notices will be put up in the noticeboards and around the square in January.

The end of summer drinks party in September was a great success with over 80 residents joining in conversation with many new faces venturing into the garden too, which

is what it is all about. The gentle strumming of guitar and mellifluous sax reminded those who may have forgotten and prompted the curious to come into the garden and meet neighbours. Bread and cheese were consumed with gusto and we hope to host similar events in 2015.

The 40th Birthday of the Residents' Association was a lovely opportunity to meet former members of the garden committee and indeed the gentleman who designed the restored layout of the garden all those years ago.

It was lovely too, to look into the garden from the balcony of the Poets' House to see a different view of the floodlighting.

by Katrina Quinton, Chairman, Earl's Court Square Garden Sub-Committee

The Earl's Court Square Garden Committee

New comers to the Square may be confused between the Earl's Court Square Residents' Association and the Earl's Court Square Garden Committee. If you live in a property which overlooks the gardens, you will automatically pay a garden levy with your Council Tax which goes towards the maintenance of the garden. You are also entitled to a key to have access to it. This is managed by a Sub-Committee which is elected each year at its AGM, usually in January.

The Residents' Association is a different organisation and publishes this Annual Newsletter and Annual Report. Annual Memberships are due in January each year and a form is included with this newsletter.

Garden News



The garden having enjoyed the gentle autumn was gradually tidied away for the winter. The roses cut back, or tied in, the clematis pruned, overgrown plants being cut back to

size. You may well have noticed the new leaf bins too. Currently we are dividing plants and continuing our renovation of different areas of the garden bit by bit. We have thinned out the south east corner over the winter and will continue in the spring, to allow more light into the garden and to create a more interesting view for those whose properties look onto that corner.

The leaf bins have been created to help reduce the number of recycling bags we use. The Council are great at recycling our mowings, prunings and the many leaves from our wonderful trees but in the autumn there was a problem with their supplier which meant that we were running out of bags and the leaves were beginning to fall and the warm weather meant we had to continue cutting the grass!

So now, we have somewhere to put it all. With the help of a second geriatric lawnmower (machine that is not person) we have been shredding the Plane leaves. It looks like we might, after many attempts, have found a way to make the leaves break down less slowly so we can create our own compost. It is a work in progress, but it does make things that little bit easier!

Eyre has been on his hands and knees flooding the flower beds with multicoloured wall flowers to add some colour in the winter months while awaiting the spring bulbs to come through. The camellias, though in flower since early November, still give us almost year round colour and beauty. The hedging around the play area is maturing well and we have cut the vines back after their rampant

everyone had to make sacrifices; later research showed that the material had not been needed for the war effort and was generally wasted).

In 1974, the garden was surrounded by broken-down chicken wire, which did not keep any determined person out, but did make the place look incredibly shoddy. In a general sort of way the Association assumed that "something must be done about it" but at first it was not known who owned it, and doing any work on it without permission was fraught with possible unpleasant penalties.

It later emerged that the ownership of the Garden had been acquired by a young man as part of a package deal related to his property development activity. He did not really want it - evidently the other party to that deal was glad to get rid of it. He then put his mind to how he might make a profit from it, and came up with the marvellous idea of building an underground car-park under it. The Association joined battle with him and at length he accepted that his idea would not survive the local opposition. For its part the Association decided that the "garden project" needed the undivided attention of a separate committee, which chimed neatly with my research which had revealed the existence of the Kensington Improvement Act 1851. The Garden Committee was then formed and I became the first Chairman.

As I recall, the initial members of the Garden Committee were existing members of the Residents' Association Committee. Certainly the garden activists set to with a

will. Apart from the work involved in getting the Committee formally recognised under the Act, we determined that the first major action should be to reinstate the iron fence, so making the Garden secure.

That was a major operation in its own right, and an expensive one. We gained the wholehearted support of the residents, whose properties overlooked the garden, and who breathed a collective sigh of relief when the work was completed. We then turned our attention to framing a set of rules for the use of the Garden - the latest version of these (which are formally Bye-laws under the 1851 Act) can be read at www.ecsgarden.org.uk/Regulations/2012-09-19-Earls_Court_Square.

After that the never-ending round of planning, planting, and maintaining the Garden commenced. Great tribute is due to Christopher Fair, son of Donald and Marjorie already mentioned, who contributed his expertise as a Landscape Architect to re-instating the Garden to a design that is much as you see it today.

At the end of 1979 I left the Square when I took up a post in charge of Government spending in Wales, which required me to be based in Cardiff. The five years I spent in the Square had been eventful in many ways (not all to do with the Garden!) and I look back on it as one of the most enjoyable periods of my life. I am very happy that I was able to help to some extent in establishing the groundwork for the proper development of the Garden to the splendid asset it is today.



The “Poets’ House” at 21 Earl’s Court Square has seen some impressive parties over the years, but Tuesday, 18th November is up there with the best.

Jakob and Teena Stott kindly agreed to welcome the Residents’ Association to celebrate their 40th birthday in their lovely home. Teena introduced the evening by thanking us for putting up with more than two years of reconstruction at 21.

Christine Powell, Chairman of ECSRA, welcomed everyone to the event, including two of our Ward Councillors, two previous ECSRA Chairmen and the first

Chairman of the Earl’s Court Square Garden Committee. She provided a few anecdotes about what else was happening in 1974, when the Residents’ Association was formed, before introducing the two guest speakers More than 100 locals (including Sir Malcolm Rifkind, our MP and Mayor Cllr. Maighread Condon-Simmonds) thronged to hear amusing reminiscences of growing up in Langham Mansions by Caroline Welby, whose father, Douglas Eaton, was for many years a leading stalwart of the RA. Roses in the garden celebrate his contributions.

The other speaker was the broadcaster, Evan Davis who moved

Sex ‘n Drugs ‘n Rock ‘n Roll



Susie Thornhill, owner of The Troubadour with Mike Laslette O'Brien.

Earl’s Court has always reflected lives lived on the edge. This is reflected in the number of “Rockers” who have either lived here or performed at Earls Court or, more cosily, in the basement of “The Troubadour”.

Few local residents will remember the young Robert Zimmerman who changed his name to Dylan in honour of the Welsh Wizard. But he was here. Coincidentally, the 100th anniversary of Dylan Thomas’ birth, “Under Milk Wood”, beautifully performed in St Cuthbert’s Church, was commemorated by the Earls Courtiers recently.

Many more will remember the teenage Adele performing at the Troubadour. Susie Thornhill the current Maitre d’ remembers it well. “Even then, this was clearly a star in the ascendant” she reminisced recently. Americans Paul Simon and Jimi Hendrix were

followed by Sadie (aka Elizabeth McGovern aka Lady Grantham). Members of the Stones, Led Zepplin, Pink Floyd have all strutted their stuff. Pete Doherty even smashed a guitar four minutes after his opening riff.

All these rockers depended on Roadies like ECS resident, Mike Laslett O’Brien.

In 25 years as a roadie he drove to more than 5,000 gigs, including 18 USA tours. Sometimes there were three gigs per night, and O’Brien had to collect the performers before each gig, and deliver them home (sober) after the last. A punishing schedule. His total mileage may exceed that of Neil Armstrong. Both Susie and Mike regret the decline in the number of venues for live music, but the Troubadour marches on.

Mike commented that tours were getting shorter – the physical, emotional, pharmacological and gastronomic strains were no longer acceptable to the current performers.

One of the issues with which he had had to cope was the tendency of performers to live up to their PR generated image. Something rarely helpful to those who had to working with them!

If you would like to know more goss’ behind the scenes, O’Brians magnum opus, “Dungiggin” will appear in time for Christmas 2015. We are hoping autographed copies will be available at ECSRA social events.

by Alan Malcolm

SW5 Theatre Group

Theatre on your doorstep. Did you know we have five excellent theatres within walking distance or a couple of Tube stops of Earl's Court?

For the past three years, members of the SW5 Theatre Group have been showcasing some of Britain's best actors, directors and productions, all in local theatres and all for under £20.

Their most recent play 'Chimera' at The Gate theatre was voted 'Dazzling' by The Times. Organisers Sharon Robinson and Camilla Nelson propose a play each month and usually about 12 interested members sign up and pay for tickets on the evening of the performance. It's all done by email.

"The Finborough Theatre has developed a reputation out of all proportion to its tiny size. It has played its part in the careers of many remarkable playwrights, directors, and actors"

Alastair Macaulay, Financial Times

Members' favourite theatres so far are the Finborough, The Bush, and The Gate. In 2015, we'll be adding the Chelsea Theatre and The Print Room, at the newly refurbished Coronet Theatre in Notting Hill. The Bush theatre is 'one of the most experienced prospectors of raw talent' in Europe.

Everyone is welcome to join the Group for free, which now numbers about 80, provided you are over 50 and live within the SW5 postal code. The members are quite social and love to talk about the plays as well as local SW5 'goings-on', so

often they meet after the play for a drink in a theatre bar or a local pub. They have a party once or twice a year. There have been lots of friends made and spin-off activities organised by members of the Group since they began. They disseminate information about and support other local initiatives in Earl's Court such as the Earls Courtiers' productions and the Music for the Seasons chamber music and spoken word series.

Why not add The SW5 Theatre Group to your 'must try' list for the New Year. They would love to welcome you to the Group. If you are interested in joining, please contact Sharon or Camilla at: SW5theatregroup@gmail.com

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Top: Teena and Jakob Stott with the Mayor, Cllr Maighread Condon-Simmonds
Left: Allegra Stott presents a bouquet of flowers to Caroline Welby



Guests celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the ECSRA with a reception at the recently refurbished Poets' House.



to the area 26 years ago to enjoy the gay scene. Evan commented that he was sorry for the diminution of gay haunts over the years and he observed wryly on the effect the "pink pound" had had on property prices. The estate agents in the room grinned broadly. Previous RA Chair, Rodney Brangwyn, then gave a warm vote of thanks to all.

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Just a few examples of recent exhibitions at Gallery 286 during the past year



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button within 20 minutes. It can hold 2¼ million gallons of water and it takes four days to fill and four days to empty.

David Bowie was the first to start an era of arena concerts, followed by Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, the Rolling Stones, Queen, Bob Dylan, Stevie Wonder, George Michael, Prince, Whitney Houston, REM and the BRIT Awards.

1988 saw the start of a cycle of opera performances with Aida. The Convention Centre entered the Guinness Book of Records for a while for hosting the Vodaphone dinner for 11000 guests.

The Royal Tournament was held there for many years, and then the British Military Tattoo in 2010. The last event was on 13 December 2014 after which demolition work commenced.

Brompton Cemetery

The Heritage Lottery Fund argues that if they are to pass significant sums of money to an area, the area should show commitment by raising some funds themselves.

The Royal Parks are therefore hoping to raise £500,000 by the end of February to unlock the £3.8 million pledge from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund for the restoration work at Brompton Cemetery.

If you would like to make a contribution, either send a donation to Brompton Appeal, Royal Parks Foundation, c/o Old Police House, Hyde Park, London W2 2UH or donate on-line at www.SupportTheRoyalParks.org.

The Open Day in 2015 will be held on Sunday 19 July.



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Hidden Gems – The Great Wheel

London has held the record for the tallest Ferris wheel on earth, twice in history.

The more recent of course, was the London Eye, which, at 410 foot, held the record for six years from 2000.

More than a century ago, it was Earl's Court which held the record. The 300 foot diameter wheel was modeled on the original in Chicago, designed by George Washington Ferris. The Earls Court Ferris Wheel reigned supreme from its construction in 1895 until Paris took over in 1905.

Built for the Empire of India exhibition, the wheel rotated every twenty minutes, with 16 cars each holding 24 spectators, it carried 2.5 million passengers in its lifetime. It was finally demolished in 1907, when it was no longer profitable and re-erected in Vienna.

Perhaps, when the Exhibition Centre is flattened after the Olympics, we could have our wheel back.

by Alan Malcolm

Earls Court Exhibition Centre



December saw the closure of the Earls Court Exhibition Centre. In the last weeks, the Exhibition Centre

hosted the Christmas Show, which had a good turnout, the glamorous BBC Music Awards, and its last event concert by the Bombay Bicycle Club, a North London band. We are most grateful to the EC&O's Marketing team led by Stuart Tomlinson, who have been very helpful in lending their support over the years. We have borrowed much from them for our local events. Stuart and team have now moved to offices in Olympia.

Earls Court: 77 Years of Creating Legends 1937-2014

December 3 saw celebration of 77 years of the Earls Court Exhibition Centre. The event was held in the Brompton Hall and was attended by Christine Powell (Chairman) and Alex Tullett (Hon. Treasurer), both of whom had been members of the Earls Court Liaison Group.

The Exhibition Centre, although the site of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show in 1887, opened in its current version on 1 September 1937 with the Chocolate and Confectionery Exhibition, followed by the Motor Show. The first Ideal Home Show was held in 1939, having originated at Olympia. In 1949 the Royal Smithfield Show moved to the Exhibition Centre and the Boat Show in 1960. It was also the site of two London Olympic Games, in 1948 and more recently for the volley ball event in 2012.

Also a little known fact is that an 1800 square metre pool is in the centre of the main floor. A 750 ton concrete floor, which covers the pool when not in use, can be removed then reinstated at the push of a

Earl's Court Square Residents Association: A watching and acting brief

If you tell someone that you live in Earl's Court Square, and they are not up to date, they will make some crack about Australians, but if you are talking to someone familiar with modern London you will get a smile followed by talk of how beautiful the square is, the lovely garden, convenient for transport and of the great community of interesting people.

This does not happen by chance. The Earl's Court Square Residents' Association was formed in 1974, initially to fight to preserve the facade of Numbers 41 – 47. The job of protecting the Square and enhancing conditions for the residents continues still behind the scenes 40 years on.

The issues don't change too much: parking, controlling traffic from the Exhibition Centre, monitoring planning and licensing applications, restoring the buildings as much as possible to their original state from the 1870s (including retaining the original coal hole covers in the pavements), fighting against dog excrement and last, but not least, lobbying against Estate Agents' boards.

On the social side we have held receptions to meet our local MPs (originally Michael Portillo and latterly Sir Malcolm Rifkind) and as described elsewhere in this newsletter a splendid evening celebrating forty years of the Association. These events have all

been most generously hosted by Jacob and Teena Stott in the Poets' House. During the year, there is the annual BBQ and ceremonial lighting of the Christmas tree lights. As well as introducing residents to one another, the Association cultivates links with our other neighbours: the grade 1 listed St Cuthbert with St Matthias Church, the Garden Sub-Committee and, recently, St Cuthbert with St Matthias Primary School, in particular its gardening club. There are three newsletters a year to keep residents abreast of developments.

So, behind the scenes it may be, but the work of the Residents' Association is there for us all to see if you look around. Do join, do get involved. Please see the enclosed Membership Subscription form.



In December, it took six people to erect the enormous Christmas tree delivered to the Residents' Association for the community. High jinks for Alex Tullett and team to set the lights all over it.

Green Screen



When St Cuthbert with St Matthias School was built, over a hundred years ago, you could scarcely imagine that one day it would border one of the most crowded and most polluted roads in London. Now a group of interested parties, including the Royal Borough, the GLA, the School and Kings College London, have all joined together to see if it is possible to cut the pollution by Nitrogen Dioxide and particulate matter so that school children can play safely in the playground.

The research is being led by children from the top two years at St Cuthbert and the data gathered is being sent on to scientists from Kings College. A 'Green Screen' of ivy and other climbing plants has been built along the wall facing the road and pollutants from either side have been measured. Early results suggest that the screen does help cut down the pollution. When we understand more about this, we could even try something similar on our balconies or in the main Garden Square.

The school pupils have made an excellent video <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=T4kqpIIYBNI> as part of their learning experience. They

also held a special assembly, attended and addressed by Councillor Ahern, the Borough champion and Cabinet Member for environmental issues.

by Sue Malcolm

St Cuthbert's School



Following the 2014 AGM, ECSRA was asked to make a donation to St Cuthbert with St Matthias School for their new gardening club. £100 was given from the Nicholson funds.

Pick of Pumpkin



The Children were fascinated by the biology lesson the boy and girl pumpkin plants provided and enjoyed the delicious and healthy soup made from the pumpkins.

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As the new owner of Deluxe Dry-cleaners, Mr Kashif Butt is pleased to support the Earl's Court Square Residents' Association



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