

ECSRA CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH
"CHAMPAGNE AND CANAPES" RECEPTION 08.09.2021

For those of you who don't know me, I'm Chrissie Courtney the Chairman of the Earl's Court Square Residents' Association – or ECSRA.

On behalf of ECSRA I have great pleasure in welcoming you all to our "Champagne and Canapés Reception", and an extra special welcome to the families and representatives of the four amazing individuals who lived in Earl's Court Square who we are honouring today.

I have apologies from the MP for Kensington, Felicity Buchan, who was due to unveil the four plaques, who is sadly unable to be with us today due to a 4pm vote in The House of Commons and a Three Line Whip - which she was unable to ignore.

Today wouldn't have happened without our very generous Sponsors – John D Wood - who have worked with ECSRA for many years - who funded the Jazz Duo and commemorative brochures and provided a marquee. The Sloane Club – who have reached out into the community and donated a selection of delicious savory and sweet canapés and provided the services of their catering team. And Alex Tullett (our Hon Treasurer) and Alan Smith - who have donated today's champagne. Many thanks to you all - as we couldn't have done it without your generosity.

We are also delighted to welcome our three Earl's Court Ward Councillors, Cllr Hamish Adourian, Cllr Malcolm Spalding and Cllr Linda Wade - who all supported our CLLL bid to the Council for funding for the supply and erection of the four ceramic plaques. Many thanks to you all.

City Living Local Life (CLLL) is a vehicle for funds collected by the Council from developers for distribution to local organisations to fund local community projects. And it has been quite a project - ably undertaken by Christine Powell and her “Plaques Team” of Alex Tullett, Sue Lupton and Heidi Bradner. All are Members of our ECSRA Executive Committee - and we thank them for their hard work behind the scenes to make today possible.

First there was the selection of the four Notables – an undertaking in itself - as there were quite a few candidates to choose from. Then permission had to be sought and granted by the freeholders of the four buildings (who are also represented today). The plaques were then designed by Judy Head - who has supported ECSRA over many years with our annual magazine and website – and is with us today. The CLLL Bid was then submitted to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea - whose permission also had to be given for their crest to be used on the plaques - I’m about to unveil.

We now come to the “special” section of our programme - when you will hear from a representative of each of the four Notables’ families. Please could I ask all the speakers to try to keep to their allocated 5 minutes - so we have an opportunity to enjoy the music, champagne and canapés together after the speeches – and forgive me if I need to give them a gentle reminder.

- Mary Eaton and Caroline Welby to speak about their father **Douglas Eaton.**
- Raana Hosseinpour to speak about her grandfather **Fuad Rouhani.**
- Anna Meadmore - from the Royal Ballet School - to speak about **Dame Ninette de Valois.**

- Tamsyn Barton - to speak about her godmother **Jennifer Ware**.

Thank you all for attending our Reception today and making it an event to remember - to Denise Edson and Magda Zawiska for making the teas - and to all our ECSRA Executive Committee and members for their continued support.

And a final huge thank you to Katrina Quinton and the Garden sub-Committee for the use of this beautiful garden today and specially to Katrina and Kevin Colgan for all the help they have both given us behind the scenes - which is much appreciated.

It's now time for you to join Christine and Sue - who are leading tours around the North and South arms of the Square to view the four new plaques - and then it's back here for sweet canapés, tea and champagne. Or - you're welcome to stay here - and continue to mix and mingle if you prefer. We hope you have an enjoyable afternoon.

Chrissie Courtney