

TOLMIERS NEWS

No 8

The Tolmers News is a community newspaper. It costs about £17 to print each issue, and this money comes from TVA funds - as long as they last. No one is paid to write for it or to set it out. So far, each issue has been produced by 2 or 3 different people, who have done all the work. This method has become less and less efficient as it is very time consuming.

From this issue, we want to develop an Editorial team so that more people are involved and at the same time each person has less to do. Any offers would be welcome, especially cartoonists and crossword-puzzle maker-uppers.

9 APRIL 1974

editors this week
Barry, Christine,
Nick and Patrick.

Please bring all news items, letters, adverts to TVA 102 Drummond St.
387 4004



RUBBLE TO ROSES ?

Press Release: TOLMERS VILLAGE RESIDENTS TAKE OVER EMPTY SITE FOR A GARDEN AND PLAYSPACE

required for anything. Again we offered to cover any loss or damage.

The people of Tolmers Village are occupying a vacant site on the corner of Drummond Street and Coburg Street.

We have not yet had a reply. We have heard however, that they intend to put up another fence around it to prevent it being used for anything.

In our area there is nowhere for kids to play. There is nowhere for old people to sit. There are no trees, no gardens and nowhere to hold community events.

We are fed up with a system which allows absent landlords and owners of property to do what they like with their property regardless of the local community. The Tolmers Square area has suffered for too long. Many houses were bombed during the war; others have been demolished since. Over 70 houses have been lost and still nothing is built to take their place. The area continues to decline. Absentee landlords (Stock Conversion in particular) prefer to leave houses empty rather than allowing people to live in them. The residential population has dropped to less than half of what it was in 1965.

The site has been vacant since the war apart from a few years when it was used for temporary huts for contractors.

We intend to make this site into a community garden and playspace for children. We would also like to build a community hall.

We demand that the Council takes steps as fast as possible to bring the land under public control, so that it can be developed in the public interest.

Last November we asked the owners - Connolly's (Blakley) Ltd - if we could use the site for a community bonfire. The Council supported this request and the Town Clerk wrote to Connolly's on our behalf, but they refused to let us use it despite the fact that we had insurance cover against any damage caused. On March 11 this year we wrote again finally to ask if we might be allowed to use the site as a temporary garden and children's playspace until it is

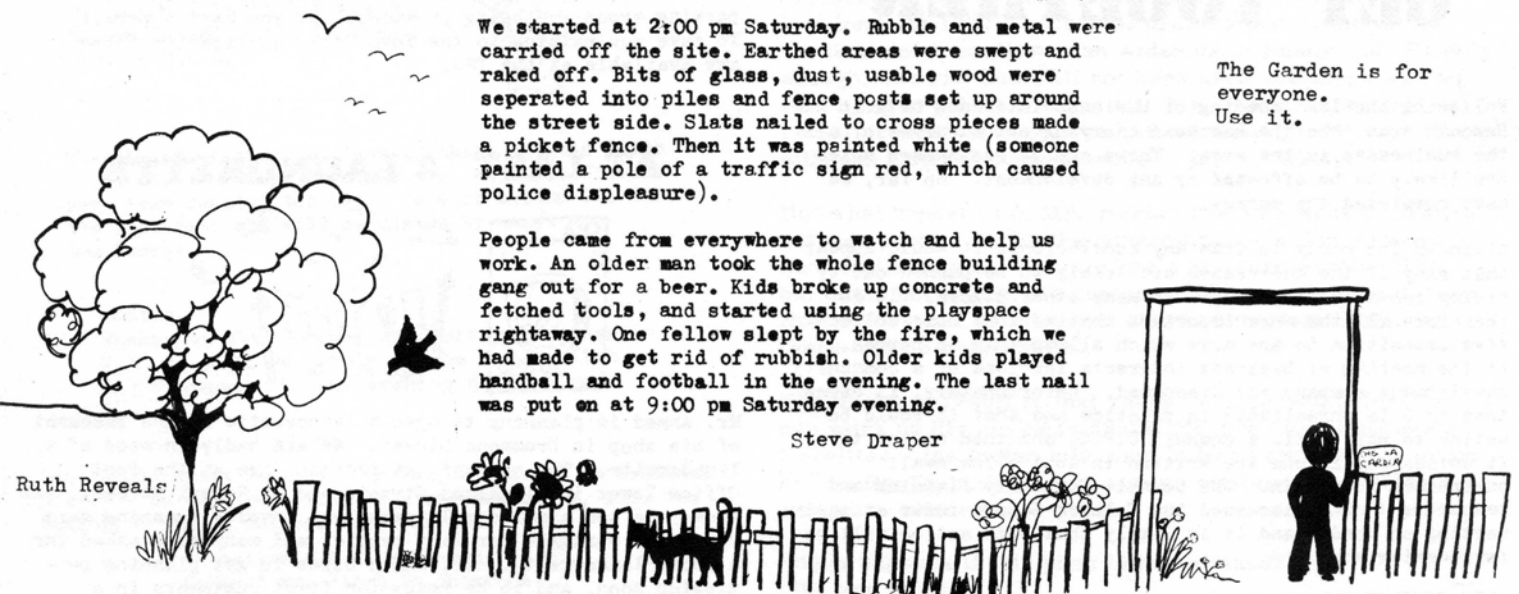
Nick Wates, 102 Drummond St

We started at 2:00 pm Saturday. Rubble and metal were carried off the site. Earthed areas were swept and raked off. Bits of glass, dust, usable wood were separated into piles and fence posts set up around the street side. Slats nailed to cross pieces made a picket fence. Then it was painted white (someone painted a pole of a traffic sign red, which caused police displeasure).

The Garden is for everyone.
Use it.

People came from everywhere to watch and help us work. An older man took the whole fence building gang out for a beer. Kids broke up concrete and fetched tools, and started using the playspace rightaway. One fellow slept by the fire, which we had made to get rid of rubbish. Older kids played handball and football in the evening. The last nail was put on at 9:00 pm Saturday evening.

Steve Draper



CORNER SHOPS UNITE!

Profiteering by property developers has created a storm of public protest. But we accept as a matter of course the changes in our streets - the dwindling numbers of small shops selling groceries and everyday goods, replaced by a pattern of supermarkets and boutiques. It is true that the small shopkeeper's prices are undercut by supermarket chains. But the convenience of the shop around the corner, with someone on hand to serve and chat to, means that the shopkeeper can still make a living and provide a much needed service. Often the pressures which are likely to force him out of business come from elsewhere - redevelopment and rising prices.

Even a socialist council like Camden seems unable to replace or even attempt to replace the variety of established businesses it demolishes. Whole areas of Camden, like Gospel Oak, are becoming wastelands of repetitive housing with no scope for the future growth of shops, workshops and small businesses that our area now sustains. It would be ironic if we one day realised how much had been destroyed and that it could never be replaced. Our area is still threatened by redevelopment and must not become another Regent's Park Estate.

The other factor forcing small shops out of business is ever-rising rents. Residents in Hampstead have been forced to watch local shops changing hands, where grocers and even supermarkets are replaced by boutiques and banks, as medium-priced shops disappear. Hampstead Village is dominated by luxury shops just as Tottenham Court Road is now only good for expensive furniture and hi-fisshops. Our area is likely to face the same problems unless positive action is taken to break the cycle.

Barry Shaw

LOCAL BUSINESSES GET TOGETHER

Following the last meeting of business interests held in the Exmouth Arms, the TVA has been carrying out a survey of all the businesses in the area. There are 74 businesses which are likely to be affected by any development. So far, 24 have completed the survey.

Although too early to draw any conclusions, it would appear that many of the businesses are likely to be pushed out by rising rents as happened in so many other places. It is therefore all the more important that we form some collective opposition to any move which allows this to happen. At the meeting of business interests the idea of a community development company was discussed. Unfortunately, it seems that this is unrealistic in practice and that it would be better to wait until a council C.P.O. and then object to it unless conditions are written in that allow small businesses to remain. The Council Community Planning and Resources Cmte. discussed the Tolmers Square issue at their meeting on Monday and it is likely that some action will be forthcoming soon.

SEE STOP PRESS ON BACK PAGE



NO WAITING



Installation of meters is almost complete. Residents parking areas are being provided, but you have a permit. To save you walking to the Town Hall, application forms are available at the TVA.

AT LAST A LAUNDRETTE



Mr. Ahmed is planning to open a launderette in the basement of his shop in Drummond Street. We are badly in need of a launderette. The nearest, at present, are at the Post Office Tower in Cleveland Street, and at Robert Street. All these are ten minutes walk away, and involve crossing main roads - a struggle for many people, and many have asked for a local launderette. Mr. Ahmed hopes to get planning permission soon, and to be ready for first customers in a couple of months time.

I HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

LEGAL ADVICE

Solicitors are on hand every Wednesday evening from 6.30 to 10 pm at the TVA to give free legal advice. Housing repairs? Rents? Business problems? They may be able to sort it out.

The Vines' Groceries and Provisions shop on Drummond St. has been an integral part of the Tolmers Village scene for 39 years. Mr. and Mrs. Vine moved from Kentish Town to the present premises in 1935 and are now the only survivors of Drummond St. pre-war enterprise. The area then provided homes for many families who the main clientele for the Vines fare of sweets and groceries. Mr. Vine can remember legendary prices like the 4d loaf and 20 Players for 11½d.

Wartime bombing began the evacuation of many of Vines' customers with the demolition of the houses at the end of Drummond St., and the lure of new flats moved many other families away in the 1960's. Adapting to new circumstances the Vine empire has turned to satiating the lunchtime palates of local office workers. Many of their older customers, who now live on the Regents Park estate still return to the shop for groceries and a chat.

The future of the small family run shop looks grim as rents and supermarkets take their toll, but their social role remains as essential. Unfortunately profitability can take no account of it. The Vines recognize that any move would spell the end of their business. Hopefully the Council's turn about in planning the redevelopment of the Tolmers area will allow them to continue to serve the residents with groceries and the office workers with sausage rolls for many more years.

Patrick Allen

Police Seminar on Squatters.

The Police want to 'understand' squatters better. For the next four weeks they are holding seminars for their officers and they would like two or three squatters to go along to each one to explain what kind of people squat and why. Anyone who would like to go, come and see Nick - There might be lunch included.

Did you know that a planning application has been made to make 52 Hampstead Road, which a few years ago was a butchers, but is now empty, into a wine bar, complete with tinted glass and flower boxes outside.

Pam Daly of 61 Coburg St. has a little kitten who can be taken away from its mother in a week. Does anyone want it?



MR. HARIA AND BHAVNEETA NOVELTIES

Pippa and Ron of the Crown & Anchor, Drummond St. Congratulations on the birth of their favourite daughter who weighed in at 7lb 4oz at 2pm on 2nd of April (Aries). Born at U.C.H.



The Vincini family are leaving their house in North Gower St. to return to Italy. Mr. and Mrs. Vincini have been running the Capri Cafe in Euston St. for the past year and will be missed by many. Bon Voyage.

Wanted
Washer up for Tuesday and Friday evenings
7.30 to 9.30 pm. Apply to the C.H.A. Club.
153 Drummond St. any evening after 6 pm.

General Handyman Required for Peugeot Garage in Drummond Street - to work Part Time on a regular basis, i.e. Tea Making, Cleaning Duties, Local Errands, etc.

Active O.A.P. welcomed.
Contact Mr. Finch in Showroom.
Tel. 387 3621

Mr. Haria of Bhavneeta Novelties, Hampstead Rd. has already suffered from the actions of planners and councils. In 1958 he started a grocers shop at 32 Hampstead Rd. which flourished to such an extent that queues sometimes extended as far as the Cyprus Travel Agency. It did not last long. In 1962 the Council decided that it had to be knocked down to allow road widening in Euston Rd. Funnily enough, the site has still not been used and there was no real need to pull it down at all. Mr. Haria thinks that racial prejudice may have had something to do with it, although Council incompetence is just as likely.

But what happened to Mr. Haria? First he went to Uganda, but was pushed out by the government. He then took a shop in Drummond St., Whitfield St., and Grafton Way, but could not regain his custom. "We went down and down". His factory in Kentish Town also had to close down, as there was no retail outlet.

The ultimate result is that years have passed before he can work up his business again. He now owns Bhavneeta Novelties - the Indian silk shop in Hampstead Rd. - which he has finally built up into a going concern, and which has a regular clientele.

"What happens if this shop is demolished?"
"We are finished!"

A PIECE OF HISTORY part 1

Hampstead Road is very ancient being part of the main road from Westminster to Hampstead village which has existed from the eleventh century.

To the east of Hampstead Road between what is now Warren St and Highgate lay the Manor of Tottenham the manor house being just south of the Euston road which itself was not built until 1746.

Edward IV visited Tottenham manor in the middle ages and since that visit the manor was known as Tottenham court which eventually was corrupted to Tottenham court and the lower half of the Hampstead road became known as Tottenham Court Road.

To the north of the manor house was a pond used for water supplies where Tolmer Square is now. By the pond was a house known as King John's Palace, which is shown on Rocques' map of 1746 but it is doubtful whether there is any connection with the English king of that name. It is interesting though that a part of the road then called the new road, now Euston road, between Hampstead Road and Gower St was known as Palace Row.

In 1847 the first St Pancras public baths and washhouse were built by the pond in the manor and the entrance to these facilities became the entrance to Tolmer Sq from North Gower St.

The pond was filled in and Tolmer's Square built in 1863 and the Chapel in the centre of that square was opened in 1873. The church institute still standing in Drummond St was built on the site of the bath and wash houses in 1879. The Church was closed for worship at the beginning of this century and was converted to a cinema in the 1920's and as we all know the cinema was demolished last year.

Further parts of this article will deal with the origins of land ownership in the area from the time of the original Tottenham Court Manor which was owned by the Dukes of Grafton (the Lords Fitzroy) at the time of Charles II.

John Stansfield,
Hampstead Road.

SMALL ADS

RATES
50p per column inch,
10p per line.
personal ads and
information free.

A M B A L A

Indian Sweet Centre
Goey treats for all

112 Drummond St.
387 7886

Eurasian Foods 125 Drummond St.
All groceries - English Continental & Pakistani
Fresh Meat, Fruit, & Veg
We remain honoured by your repeated visits

Mr. Gordon from the taylor's in
Hampstead Rd has his arm in plaster.
He fell down the stairs.



THE GARDEN IS FOR EVERYONE, BUT IT STILL NEEDS TREES,
PLANTS, SOIL, SEATS ETC. BRING STUFF ALONG.

All donations welcome

Everyone interested in organizing the
festival (see T.N. no. 7), come to
the TVA weekly meeting next thursday
(April 18) at 6.30 pm.

STOP PRESS

The Council seems to be delaying things yet again. The Community Planning and Resources Committee meeting last Monday considered the architects new scheme (which we have not seen yet). According to John Mills they decided to recommend that a CPO be issued for Drummond St. but no decisions were made about the Levy triangle. Instead the Town Clerk's department has been asked to prepare a report on it. This means that nothing is likely to be decided for another 3 or 6 months because of Council elections and the summer recess. The implications of this will be discussed in the next issue.

FOOTBALL FOOTBALL FOOTBALL FOOTBALL

The season is not yet over. Midfield dynamos and the rest should report to trainer Colin who will be coaching the finer points of tactics and ball control, Tues evenings at 119 Drummond St. Sunday afternoons games on Hampstead Heath or Regents Park.

LOST BUCKETS

Three mop buckets and one fire bucket have disappeared from the Cecil Residential Club. It would be much appreciated if they could be returned.



Peg-leg Pete is in
hospital for a month
or two. Best wishes.



Adrienne - our condolences on the loss of your affectionate
dog Brandy. We know you miss him very much.

The Camden Square Area Tenants & Residents Association
is holding its Annual Social at the Irish Centre on
Tues 7th May. There will be a buffet, bar and disco.
Joek Stollard M.P. will be guest of honour. Tickets are
£1 (buffet included). Contact Nick Wates at the TVA
or Sally Mulhorn at 267 2846.

TOLMERS VILLAGE ASSOCIATION 102 Drummond St.
387 4004
OPENING HOURS: Every weekday 2-15 to 6-00
Open Evening: Thursday 6-00 onwards
Free legal advice: Weds 6-30 onwards

drop in for a cup of tea and see what is going on.

