

TOLMERS NEWS

The Tolmers News is issued by the Tolmers Village Association at 102 Drummond Street. Contributions always welcome. Editorial team this week: Shirley Hall, Kathy Zablotsky, Rachel Syers and Nick Wates.

NEW CHAIRMAN FOR THE TVA

The TVA now has the largest chairman of any community association in London. John Stansfield, who was elected unanimously by the public meeting, is 6'1½" tall and weighs 19½ stone! He has lived at 30 Hampstead Road for five years. He is a mathematician by profession, and is at present working for Clarksons as a computer programmer. John has taken to his new post with immense enthusiasm. Evening after evening he can be seen at work in the TVA sorting out our filing system, writing letters, fixing the lights, and attempting to prevent the kids from destroying everything in sight.

Changes Afoot

Other changes in the TVA are that Gavin Brown of 160 N. Gower Street has taken over from Mr Shah as treasurer, and Maureen Holland and Giant Patel have officially been elected as committee members. Pedro George has resigned, but says he will continue to help in any way he can.

Public Meeting

Over 70 residents, shopkeepers and local workers attended a Public Meeting at St. Aloysius Convent School, N. Gower Street, **ON 3RD MAY**. The meeting was called by the Tolmers Village Association as a response to the publication of the Camden Council's new proposal for the area and the Council's decision to Compulsory Purchase parts of Drummond Street and North Gower Street. Councillors John Mills (Chairman of the Housing Committee) and Andrew Bethell were present.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE PASSED BY THE MEETING

- *****1. THE TVA DEMANDS a guarantee from the Council that none of the existing residents or businesses will be displaced against their will when the property comes in to Council ownership. Unless this guarantee is made formally in writing the TVA will not support the Compulsory Purchase.
- *****2. THE TVA CALLS ON THE COUNCIL to:
 - a) put a Compulsory Purchase Order on all Levy property immediately and restore them to a habitable condition forthwith.
 - b) rehouse immediately all existing tenants who want to move.
- *****3. THE TVA SUPPORTS the general principles of the second Renton Howard Wood Report, and welcomes the Council's initiative in consulting local opinion in its formulation. However, before this report is implemented, detailed changes are essential because of factual inaccuracies in this report and the TVA calls for further local consultation.
- *****4. This meeting supports the application for grant aid from Camden Council prepared by the Tolmers Village Association.

Since the public meeting we have sent copies of the resolutions to all Councillors. We are also preparing a deputation to take to the Community Planning and Resources Committee - the committee which makes decisions about Tolmers Square. This gives us an opportunity to tell the members of the Council what we think they should be doing. (After all, we did elect them). Our deputation will be largely based on the resolutions passed by the public meeting, with any background information and proposals for the renovation of Tolmers Square, North Gower Street and Drummond Street. The deputation will be discussed at the TVA meeting on 6th June at 6.30 at the TVA, 102 Drummond Street. ALL WELCOME.

Issue 10

21 May

Squatters Carry-on

NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK TAKEN

Last weekend the National Westminster Bank on the corner of Tolmers Square was taken over by squatters. The bank is owned by Stock Conversion and has been empty for eight years, but is still in very good condition.

The Colsons, who live next door at 82 Hampstead Road, were quite happy about having squatters next door and gave them a bed which they were not using. Other residents were not so pleased as they were afraid that the squatters would climb over into their backyards. The squatters have assured them that this will not happen.

220 RE-OCCUPIED - SQUATTERS VICTORIOUS

Last Tuesday, 14th May, squatters moved back to 220 Camden High Street. Three weeks ago the bailiffs came, evicted the squatters, and the place was boarded up. Now Mr Levy will have to get the court to issue another Court Order, because different squatters have moved in.

BUILDINGS OF INTEREST

During the last week several occupiers in Tolmers Village have been told by the Department of the Environment that their buildings are 'of special architectural or historical interest'. The Department of the Environment keeps lists of buildings which they think should be preserved, and soon Sid's the barbers in Drummond Street and several houses in North Gower Street will be on the list.

What does listing mean?

1. Listing is meant to provide a guideline to local planning authorities. The emphasis for any development should be on preservation rather than demolition.
2. When a building is listed no demolition or alteration can take place without the approval of the LA.
3. Various government grants are available for restoration.
4. Owners are not allowed to deliberately neglect their buildings. If they do so they are liable to prosecution and the council can purchase the property very cheaply.

Local reactions so far have been of astonishment. Sid the barber finds it 'totally unbelievable' that anyone should think his building is of architectural or historic interest. Other reactions have been of delight, because it means that it will be very difficult for anyone to pull them down, and it will provide incentive for people to start repairing the buildings, so ending years of uncertainty and neglect.

What about Tolmers Square?

What has to be considered now is whether Tolmers Square could or should be listed as well. Or whether it should be declared a Conservation Area. If it was, it could well put an end to Mr Levy's plans for demolition, and it would ensure that resources were provided for renovation.

DO YOU WANT TO MOVE?

It seems that several people who approached John Mills at the public meeting about being rehoused have now received letters offering them accommodation in Robert Street or elsewhere by November. Anyone who was not at the meeting but who wants to move should write to John Mills, 72 Albert Street, N. W. 1., explaining their reasons for wanting to move.

But it is worth pointing out that by the end of July, after the Council Meeting on the 17th, we should know one way or the other whether the houses owned by Levy are going to be compulsorily purchased by the Council, and whether they are going to be modernized. If they are, many people will want to stay in their own homes. Preference should be stated in the letter to Councillor Mills.

It should be possible for people to move into Robert Street in October or November, and then be moved back into their old houses when they have been done up.

LEVY STARTING TO RE-LET

Levy has changed his policy of leaving commercial property empty. He has recently leased shops in Hampstead Road and the builders yard in Drummond Street to Rootsteins, and the builders who were using the yard are moving into the Sanger building in Tolmers Square, which they are going to use for workshops.

This is an interesting development. Does it mean he has given up the idea of pulling everything down in the near future? The builders seem to think that the Sangers building will be standing for another 8 years. The TVA has been urging for empty property to be used ever since its inception. But there is no sign as yet that he is thinking of re-letting residential property.

EVICCTIONS IMMINENT

In the last few days some men, saying they act for Levy's solicitors, have been trying to get the names of all the squatters in their property. This is the first step towards taking a writ out against the squatters before going to court to get them evicted.

There are over 25 squatters in Levy's property who are using houses which would otherwise remain empty, while at the same time helping to alleviate Camden's housing problem.

IF LEVY WAS GOING TO REPAIR AND LET THE EMPTY HOUSES the evictions might be justified - BUT WE KNOW HE WON'T. He will board them up and leave them empty for a few more years. It is very important that people support the squatters against Levy's attempts at eviction.

COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDERS

We have not printed any information about CPOs in this issue as it takes up too much space, but we have information about CPO procedure in the office for anyone who is unsure about it.

GARDEN WORK PARTY

Come and help with the garden after work on any fine evening. If it is ever going to look nice it needs people to work on it.

CAFNIVAL... CARNIVAL... CARNIVAL...

Permission has been granted to close Drummond St., N. Gower Street, Euston Street and Tolmers Square to traffic on the day of the carnival - 29th June - so it seems a shame that Mr Levy feels that he cannot open Tolmers Square cinema site for the occasion. Especially since it is the obvious place to have a stage for the theatre and the bands, as we explained to him. These things are sent to try us.....

There will be Morris dancers, fire-eaters, Punch & Judy, Giant Inflatables, lots of music, the street theatres and lots of sideshows and stalls.

We need help with the sideshows and with decorations. Anyone wanting to assist, please come to the TVA office on weekends to help make TOLMERS VILLAGE CARNIVAL banners.

JUMBLE SALE

The TVA held a jumble sale on Saturday, 2nd May and made £60 in aid of the Carnival.

There will be another jumble sale in the near future, and we will be trying to raise some more funds with raffles shortly. Donation of prizes for the raffles would be gratefully accepted.

 BRIGHTER*****

 The Rendezvous Cafe and Shanes newsagents are *
 both looking beautiful after being repainted. Things *
 are looking up for Drummond Street. *****

BALLOONS



If you want to know where to find clean, cheap, secondhand linen, go to Holland's in Drummond Street. The shop supplies all kinds of ex-army goods, including boots, jackets, sleeping-bags pyjamas, etc. etc.

Mrs Moore, who now runs it, enjoys keeping an old-fashioned interest in personal service, and welcomes her customers to just come in and look around. "People come from all over London to see what we have in stock. The shop has been established now for forty years, and our customers pass on the word, so we don't really need to advertise."

I asked her what she thought should happen to the area. "Keep it as a community. We don't want office blocks. The small businesses can't carry on with high rents. If rents go up, so do prices - we want to keep it 'old-fashioned'."

If Mrs Moore means that she wants to keep giving her customers the personal service that is so hard to find these days, she's right. **FIGHT THE ON-COMING FACELESSNESS!**

How Divine!

Beware all you poor bastards, for if you stand on any corner of the streets you'll get an all-pervading odour, not of the usual kind - old oil, dirty dustbins, rotting carcasses, the occasional whiff of curried corporation constipation, barbed wire blues or garden gimmicks - but a whiff of something much more sterile, almost ghostlike in its elusiveness, and if challenged by your senses, disappearing in a puff of Divine Smoke. **WATCH OUT** for that "I've seen the Light" look. Don't fall for that one, it's the oldest trick in the world. Human beings have been using it as a substitute for the light of good living for thousands of years. Just let's make sure we're busy being, and we won't have time for blights, divine or otherwise.... **GURUS COME FROM PUSSIES JUST LIKE ANYBODY ELSE.**

Brooksie.

A Vicious Attack

This poem was sent to us by an anonymous reader....

Eloquent,
Wealthy,
Intelligent too,
Playing around with me
And with you.

Living with the other half,
But just for a while,
They are given away by their insincere smile.

They're here for our benefit,
Improving our homes,
But our cause is only a stepping stone.
Tomorrow, Town Planning and back to the wealth,
And Madame Andre will be left by herself.

It's trendy to squat,
To save beautiful houses,
To be seen helping others,
And doing their bit.
Like self-righteous missionaries, they can afford
Self-denial for a while, it's good for the record.

But the system is our problem, it seems to me,
And these people are tools of the bourgeoisie,
For we are led to believe that they are "left-wing"
And I think this is the most dangerous thing,
Because when they return to good jobs and the wealth,
And their politics are put to rest on the shelf,
The people then laugh at socialist talk,
And believe even more in "each man for himself".

Your problem is housing, they say to us all,
But really the problem is not nearly so small,
The system's at fault, yet so well in control,
Because it works the country as a very clever whole.
No change will be forced without public unrest,
And with associations like ours, they are doing their
best,
To get immediate improvements, and I ask them why?
Because all it can do is to pacify
Those who should really stand up and rebel
Against all who manipulate their lives so well!

So I ask you to look closely at our TVA
And maybe you too will be filled with pessimism
Because there's a socialist cloak that's hiding away
What is really radical **PROGRESSIVISM**.....
A **REPLY**.....

Dear Anonymous,

I agree we should not be primarily concerned with short-term improvements. The main objective ought to be to get people to start taking more control over their own lives. Striving for better housing is only a means, in the process of which people hopefully start to realise the true nature of the forces acting against them, and so can stand up and fight. Involvement is essential for understanding and consequently action.

Much of your poem is an accurate, though cynical, analysis. But you fail to provide any clues as to what us wealthy, eloquent and intelligent members of the bourgeoisie should be doing instead.

Nick Wates(one of them).

A PIECE of HISTORY PART 2. STREET NAMES

In Tolmers News No. 8, a sketch of the history of the area was given. This part will deal with the origins and ownership and street names in the area.

The manor of Tottenham Court was church property until the suppression of the monasteries, when it came into the possession of the Arlington family. Lady Isabella Bennett, the last descendant of the Arlingtons, married Henry Fitzroy, 1st Duke of Grafton, and the manor came into the Fitzroy family as her dowry.

Henry Fitzroy was born in 1663, the illegitimate son of Charles II and his mistress Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland. He was a favourite of James II, but this did not prevent him from deserting James completely when William III of Orange landed.

Henry was also Baron Sudbury, Viscount Ipswich and Earl of Euston - Euston being a village in Norfolk where his descendants still live.

His great-great-grandchild was Lady Caroline Drummond who built Drummond Street in 1821.

Tottenham Court Manor passed to the second Duke's grandson, Charles Fitzroy, 1st Baron Southampton.

He married Anne Warren and built the Fitzroy Square area (Cleveland Street, Grafton Way, Hertford Place, Conway Street and Warren Street).

Ferdinand, 2nd Baron Southampton, built along Hampstead Road with Stanhope and Harrington Streets, and in 1821 he built Mornington Crescent, named by Ferdinand's sister-in-law Anne Wellesey, daughter of the Earl of Mornington. By 1840 Lord Southampton had covered his fields at Chalk Farm and Kentish Town, building Southampton, Malden and Grafton Roads and Ferdinand Street.

Euston Street and Euston Square were built between 1800 and 1810 by the Earls of Euston.

The Exmouth Arms on Starcross Street was built by Lord Exmouth, Starcross being a title of that lord, about 1816. Gower Street was built at the time of George III and was originally called George Street in his honour.

Tolmers Square was built on property owned by the New River Water Supply Company, and was named after the hamlet of Tolmers in Hertfordshire, which is the source of the New River.

Further research is being done, and periodic essays on our local history will appear from time to time.

John Stansfield
30 Hampstead Road.

SUMMER PLAYScheme

The TVA is going to run a summer youth project for five weeks during the summer holidays. We have got a grant from the ILEA to pay 2 playleaders and to pay for any equipment. We would like to use the opportunity to do something constructive with the garden. We could also organise an outing or two. Kids from five to eighteen are eligible.

For this we will need 2 playleaders, from 22nd July to the end of August. Salary between £15 and £30 per week, negotiable, depending on age and experience. Anyone interested come and see Nick or Rachel at the TVA, 102 Drummond Street.

HOW THE TOLMERS NEWS IS PRODUCED

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. Up until now each issue has been produced by 2 or 3 different people who have done all the work, but this method has become increasingly less successful as it is very time consuming. Starting 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.

Offers would be welcome, especially for cartoons and crossword puzzles. Bring or send all news items, letters, adverts, etc., to the Tolmers Village Association,
102 Drummond Street, N.W. 1.

LEGAL ADVICE...LEGAL ADVICE...

Our legal team are there to help with your problems every Wednesday evening at 6.30 so if you're worried about a legal matter, come and see them at the TVA office in Drummond Street. THEY WILL SORT IT OUT.

ADVERTISEMENTS

BOOKS bought and sold - esp. pre1920 & paperbacks. Bob, 241 N. Gower St.

LIGHT REMOVALS. Van & driver for hire, £1 per hour. Bob, 241 N. Gower St.

SANDWICHES, Rolls etc. from the lovely Ethel. Vines, Drummond Street.

Get your NEWS & SMOKE from Shanes, Drummond St. BUBBLEGUM TOO!.....

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