

JUNE

# TOLMERS NEWS

NO.20

PUBLISHED BY THE TOLMERS VILLAGE ASSOCIATION 102 DRUMMOND ST. N.W. 1.

## CARNIVAL!

Carnival Day this year will be Saturday 28th June and preparations are already under way. So far we have Punch & Judy, giant inflatables, puppet shows, InterAction's Fun Art Bus, a steel band, a firemen's tug-o-war team, and the Pearly King of St. Pancras among our attractions. But all this is NOT ENOUGH without a bit of local participation.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

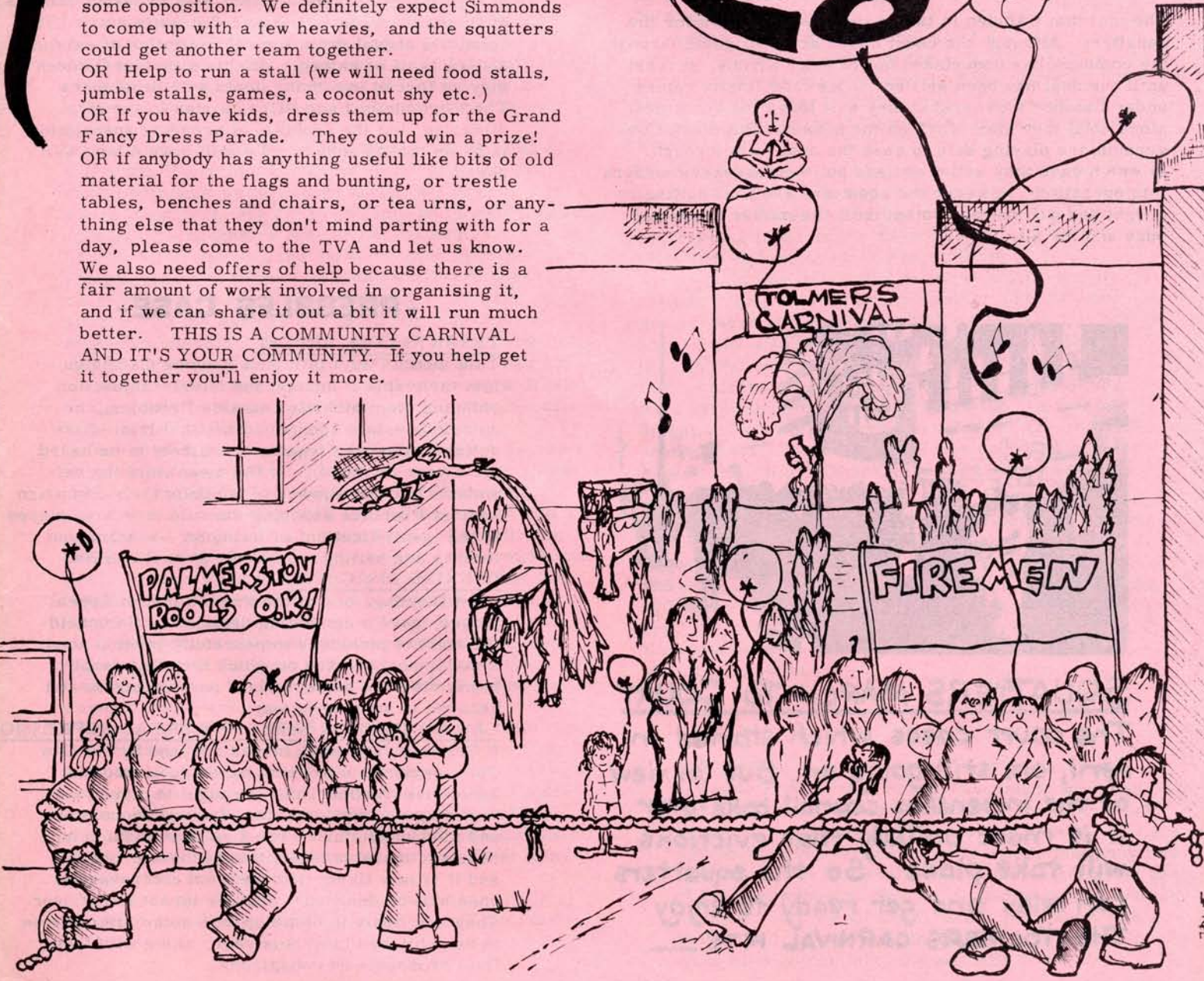
We need a tug-o-war team to give the firemen some opposition. We definitely expect Simmonds to come up with a few heavies, and the squatters could get another team together.

OR Help to run a stall (we will need food stalls, jumble stalls, games, a coconut shy etc.)

OR If you have kids, dress them up for the Grand Fancy Dress Parade. They could win a prize!

OR if anybody has anything useful like bits of old material for the flags and bunting, or trestle tables, benches and chairs, or tea urns, or anything else that they don't mind parting with for a day, please come to the TVA and let us know.

We also need offers of help because there is a fair amount of work involved in organising it, and if we can share it out a bit it will run much better. **THIS IS A COMMUNITY CARNIVAL AND IT'S YOUR COMMUNITY.** If you help get it together you'll enjoy it more.



FAN 75



# CAMDEN TO BUY LEVY

Camden has announced that it has reached an agreement with Stock Conversion to purchase all their property in Tolmers Village for £4 million. The contract is due to be signed on Thursday 12 June and should be completed within 28 days.

This will mean that Camden's plans for the area will be put into operation as soon as possible, though it is likely that they will be considerably modified - we can expect more commercial development than was suggested in their last plans in order to pay for the overall cost of buying and developing the land. However, it is to be hoped that it will not mean a cutback in the proposed housing, or vast office development. Now that almost the whole area will be in the hands of the council it is important that people in the area use the TVA for liaison with Camden. In this way we can get a true idea of the problems and questions which are of concern to everybody, and can pass on the information to the right people at the Town Hall.

The fact that Camden is taking over is good news for the squatters. Although the court cases are still going through, the company has undertaken not to evict anyone, at least until the deal has been settled. If the land finally comes under Camden's ownership they will leave the squatters alone until they start work on the houses. But Stock Conversion are playing safe in case the deal falls through, in which case they will doubtless put the possession orders into operation. However the squatters are still putting up a fight and will not be content until the matter is settled once and for all.

## I AND BILL & TOLMERS

At the end of March the Community Land Bill was published, which brings the implementation of the government's proposals on the nationalisation of development land one step nearer.

This legislation is crucial to the council's plans for this area. It will enable Camden to buy the land at its existing use value rather than at its inflated market value, which has been forced up by speculation and reflects the potential of the area for an office development.

But even if the council is able to go ahead and buy the property, it will still have problems. The Community Land Bill only lowers the price of the land; it offers no solution to how councils should finance the development. This means that they are forced to turn to the city financiers and borrow at high interest rates. Also, Reg Freeson, Minister of Housing, recently announced drastic cuts. The council's annual grant for rehabilitation of existing houses is to be halved. In this situation Camden may be forced into doing deals with developers. The Community Land Bill is a step in the right direction, but the problem of property speculation is by no means ended. We still have a long wait ahead.

## -PREBBLES CASE-

### TENANTS LOSE APPEAL

This month (May) Islington Tenants Campaign lost their appeal against the interim injunction stopping them picketing outside Prebbles, the notorious estate agents. The final trial of the action against the tenants is unlikely to be heard for a year or more. In the meanwhile the defendants are not allowed to continue their campaign against Prebbles exposing the role they have played in the 'gentrification' of Islington - winking out tenants and selling the houses at vast profits.

### DENNING DISAGREES

Lord Denning, one of the three Court of Appeal judges, gave a dissenting decision. He upheld the right of picketers to peacefully protest about a major social issue on which they felt deeply. In his view the picket caused no obstruction and behaved in an orderly way.

### LAW COMMISSION SEEKS POLITICAL REPRESSION

A Criminal Trespass law as proposed by the Law Commission in a working paper published last June would further limit the right to picket, as well as outlawing squatting, factory occupations and student sit-ins. The Law Commission has received massive opposition to these proposals and it is now likely that the most controversial ones will be dropped. But the threat is not over. They are likely to come up with some alternatives to be published later this year, along with their final proposals on conspiracy.

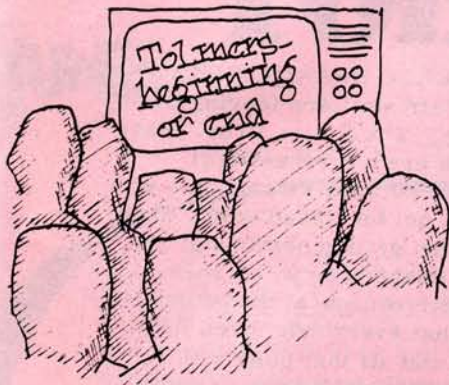


## SQUATTERS MARCH TO COURT

The court cases, which started in April, are still going on. But in view of the impending council take-over it is most unlikely that evictions will take place. So the squatters can relax and get ready to enjoy THE TOLMERS CARNIVAL 1975 —



# TOLMERS ON T.V.



'TOLMERS - BEGINNING OR END' was shown on BBC2 last Monday (repeated last Sunday). As a result the TVA has received many letters from concerned people all over the country, and so far donations received amount to £90. We thought that locals would be particularly interested in the letter printed below.



## EX TOLMERS VILLAGE RESIDENT WRITES,

I have pleasure in enclosing a cheque for £50 to assist in the furthering of the aims of your association. My interest is that I was born in No. 10 George Street, which is now part of Gower Street and that when only months old we removed to 129, Drummond Street to live, which is almost opposite your office, I believe. I was born in 1900, so that I am in my 76th year. My Grandfather's French Polishing business was in the mews on your side of the road and my father became french polishing foreman for Messrs. Oetjman and so we were out of the grinding poverty of those days.

On the corner of the mews and Drummond St. was a single bar Public House run by Mr. Winrworth ( I think ) with gold watch chains and 2, handsome, buxom daughters. We children could go in pubs those days and the daughters used to pat my head.

Next to our house was the barber's shop and the Fitzgeralds lived there with many small pet dogs in the back yard. We used to go into the Crown and Anchor with my parents and loved our soft drink and arrowroot biscuits. We children knew most of the inside of the pubs around Tolmers Village but I can assure you we came to no harm. I watched many a drunken fight outside the pub and often saw the drunks collected in the police hand carts.

On our side of the road by Cardington Street was the wash-house run by Mrs. White and many times I went inside and talked to the women through the steam. The new tube was being built around the turn of the century and we could hear them running beneath the house. The huge dynamos were on the corner of Euston Grove ( ? ) and we would look in and watch amidst the terrific hum of the engines. There was the bakery in Cardington St. and the poor would take their only real meal of the week to be cooked there on Sundays. We played in James Gardens and had happy times there and I remember that the keeper had the finest collection of Fushias I have ever seen.

Tolmers Square was where we really played, with its iron railings to go through and here outside the first 2 houses on the right hand side we played tippitt ( ? ) - cat for hours; played with home-made wooden sticks and a piece shared down to make two points to tip up and hit or to play doubles by being thrown and hit. I think I remember my girlfriends' names - Ethel MacFarland and Edie Scott.

I have seen the bailiffs in and the house boarded up in an effort to exclude on the left-hand side of the Square.

In my days a church stood in the middle and we ran races round it. There was a small skin hospital going out on the right-hand side into Hampstead Road. The good old Seaton Street market was opposite. I used to attend the Band of Hope where I still think it mentions the school there and opposite was Mays, the big furniture removal firm.

I attended Netley Street school and I won one of the first school scholarships of the L.C.C. I remember the horse trams being replaced by electric ones. The trams to Hampstead, Highgate etc., were turned round at the junction of Hampstead Road and Euston Road.

Our end of Drummond St. was fairly respectable but the Somers Town end was terrible. The poverty was awful and children really had no shoes. I remember reading in the paper about 1903 that our street was the worst in London and I was thrilled.

My boyhood was dominated by horse traffic and the horses falling down in frosty weather. There were the growlers and hansoms which we used to run behind. I was also fascinated by the drivers urinating through the cart wheels.

Euston Street was a very rough street in my young days saved only by the shops at the top, by Gower Street, where we drank our Sarsparilla and ate Tottenham cakes. The church hall was opposite and belonged to St. James Church, where I sang as a choir boy (goodness knows why).

I wish you the best of luck in your efforts and a copy of your paper or news would be welcome. Please excuse this scrawl (written in bed) NO! I am quite fit and well. I thought perhaps some news of the old days of Tolmers Village may be of interest to your members.

Yours sincerely,  
Mr. H. J. Arnold.

Idle gossips with nothing better to do have been heard to rumour that Philip Thompson, who made the Tolmers film, made a vast fortune on it which he was greedily keeping for his own benefit. In case anyone believes this nasty little story, they may like to know that in fact Philip had to fork out a great deal of his own money to finance it, and is still in debt as a result. As we all know, every good story has a moral; and the moral of this story is If you don't know what you're talking about BELT UP.



## NICK SPEAKS OUT -

### THE FUTURE OF THE T.V.A.

Over the last few months there has been a noticeable lack of internal criticism in the T.V.A. There has been little discussion about the future. If we do not think about what we should be doing and then start doing it, we are likely to become an ineffective reformist social club.

As an organisation of residents and workers we potentially have considerable power, but only if we organise collectively. As individuals we can do little when faced with the power of property companies. We can't sit back and let Camden Council do everything for us. We have to do it ourselves. And that means each one of us, not just Rachel or the committee.

I want to mention three ways in which the T.V.A. is failing at the moment.

1. Failure to involve people. I recently met two people in Tolmers Square, who have been living here for years. They did not even know where the T.V.A. was, or what it was. One had just moved to Netley Street, had not wanted to go but did not realize that she could have refused.

2. Failure to make or keep external contacts. The T.V.A. depends largely on support from other groups. We expect trade unions and other groups to support us, yet little is done to find out what is going on elsewhere. We do not even know what Camden Council is doing half the time.

3. Failure to organise the office. It is essential that the office be used as a resource centre for the community. It should be stocked with materials which can be used by people in the community. It should also be kept well stocked with pamphlets and information about the area, about contacts in the council and any plans for future developments in the area, so that all this information is easily available to anyone who wants to know.

The T.V.A. has only existed for 1 $\frac{3}{4}$  years. In that time it has achieved some major victories. But it must maintain the pressure and start thinking about the demands we want to make to the council when they own the land. Should we set up a Tenants Co-operative or accept standard council management?

## - HEATHER REPLIES

There is no excuse for residents not knowing where the T.V.A. is, or what its activities are. The Tolmers News is distributed to all households in the area.

Before the council's plans to move some of the residents to the Netley Street flats were executed, all the tenants who had been approached about this move were visited by someone from the T.V.A. and the situation as we knew it explained to them. All possible support was given to those people who did not want to take the flats they had been offered.

The T.V.A.'s liason with Camden Council has been quite extensive and if we are not always sure of what they are doing it is not surprising as they often do not seem to be very certain themselves.

In the last few weeks, many offers of help for our Carnival have come from people who live outside the area, who have heard of the situation here and what we have been doing about it.

We would still welcome anyone who feels like giving us a hand.

## CLOSING TIME

### PALMERSTON TO UNDERGO DRASTIC CHANGE

Tom and Betty and all their staff are leaving the Palmerston on 17th June. The Rolles Bros. lease has run out and Trumans are not renewing it.

Tom seems to think that Trumans will put in a new manager, and that it will not be closed down. Many faithful regulars have been getting nervous at the thought of a new trendy image and can be seen every night drowning their sorrow at the prospect. In case Trumans think that everybody loves jukeboxes and flash carpets and all that goes with it, we can assure them that they don't have to spend their money that way. We like it as it is.

So it's a sad farewell to Tom, Betty, Peter and John; hope you'll be happy at The Wolsey (Kentish Town).

WHOEVER BORROWED THE LAND OWNERSHIP MAP FROM THE TVA FOR THE SQUATTERS CONVENTION - BRING IT BACK, PLEASE!

John & Sylvie Whitehead and their 3 delightful daughters Mandy, Lorraine & Donna - Good wishes in your new home. Come and see us sometime.

SCOTTISH ANNIE - GET WELL SOON!

CONGRATULATIONS to Roberta and Alan on the birth of their baby son, who has all the right number of toes and fingers, was born at approx. 9p.m. on May 27th, weighs 7lb9oz and will probably be called Dan John.

Nick Wakes is editing a book about Tolmers. Anyone who can help with writing, drawing, photography, ideas etc contact him at 12 Tolmers Square or 387 7050 ext 626 or 603. Historical information and photographs especially welcome

Charrington St. squatters case will be on 19th June at 10.00 a.m. at Marylebone Court. They would appreciate your support.

FREE LEGAL ADVICE Wednesdays 7.0-9.0 pm. at the TVA - a team of trained barristers to help you with your legal problems.

TO ALL IN THE THROES OF EXAM FEVER  
GOOD LUCK AND NO CHEATING.....