

# TOLMERS NEWS

JULY  
1977

Published by Tolmers Village Action Group, c/o 12 Tolmers Square, NW1.

## CARNIVAL PROGRAM

JUNE  
25

ON  
STAGE

OFF  
STAGE

- |           |   |                      |   |
|-----------|---|----------------------|---|
| 1.00-1.45 | HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL<br>REGGAE BAND                                | ALBANY STREET CLOWNS |   |
| 2.00-2.45 | AFRICAN MUSIC AND DANCE<br>FROM LORD ERIC AND<br>AGOR MMBA        | 2.30-3.30            | COVENT GARDEN<br>COMMUNITY THEATRE,<br>CLOWN AND PUPPET IN<br>"The Oggle-Oggle Box" |
| 3.00-3.30 | IMPLOSION   | 4.00-5.00            | ISLINGTON PUPPETS   |
| 3.45-4.15 | THE IRISH FOLK BAND   |                      |   |
| 4.30-5.45 | COVENT GARDEN<br>COMMUNITY THEATRE IN<br>"A Planner in the Works" |                      |   |
| 6.00-7.00 | SOFT SALAMI   |                      |   |
| 7.15-8.15 | ME AND THE REST   |                      |   |
| 8.30-9.30 | DAVE BROOKES AND BAND   | 9.30                 | MUSIC AND DISCO IN<br>BASEMENTS   |
| 9.45      | ENDS  | ONWARDS              |   |

PLUS African drumming from Humphrey and Friends  
Rock from Mike  
Dance from Moni  
Hackney Music Workshop

Games - Sideshows - Jumble Sale - Food and Drink - Stalls and Exhibitions from CAMDEN AGAINST RACISM, CAMDEN WOMEN'S CENTRE, CAMPAIGN AGAINST A CRIMINAL TRESPASS LAW, THE E.G.A. CAMPAIGN, SOUTH CAMDEN COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL, POSTER COLLECTIVE, TOLMERS VILLAGE ACTION GROUP AND RISING FREE.

*P.S. Please do not damage the trees or flower-beds. Have a good time!*

— WITH THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE GREATER LONDON ARTS ASSOCIATION AND CAMDEN COUNCIL

St. Pancras branch of the Holborn and St. Pancras South Labour Party have unanimously passed a resolution in support of Tolmers Village Action Group's alternative proposals for this area. The resolution is to be forwarded to the General Management Committee of the constituency party, together with a report, and states: "This GMC condemns the Council's plans to replace houses in Tolmers Square by offices, and calls on the Community Planning and Resources Committee to produce an alternative plan, giving priority to housing and including the rehabilitation of existing houses."

The resolution arose as a result of a discussion at the branch meeting at which the TVAG had been invited to speak. The meeting decided to press for the one issue of housing at the moment which they think is the most important. We have also been invited back to a future meeting at which St. Pancras hopes to have Councillor John Mills so that we can find out exactly what the council is up to in this area.

# TOLMERS -

Present council plans for Tolmers include: the construction of 300,000 sq. ft. of office space on the south side of the square, and the demolition of the square itself to make room for it; the demolition of housing, shops and small businesses in Hampstead Road and the construction of a housing spine in its place; and some rehabilitation of housing in North Gower Street and Drummond Street. This will mean housing for 350 people less than the council originally proposed. Housing, shops and small businesses in North Gower Street, Drummond Street and Starcross Street will mostly be rehabilitated with some demolition if the council gains a Compulsory Purchase Order when the results of the Public Inquiry come through in the autumn.

Many tenants have already been

decanted and squatters evicted and some small businesses have had to move completely out of the area. Many of those remaining face an uncertain future and have no idea where they will go if the council plan is implemented.

Whilst rehabilitation is continuing slowly in North Gower Street, redevelopment plans for Hampstead Road and the area bounded by Hampstead Road, Drummond Street, North Gower Street and Euston Road have been set back at least until next year because of the cuts in public expenditure. Plans for the Square have been postponed indefinitely since the Community Land Act is in cold storage and no money is available under it for the council to purchase the rest of the proposed office site from Morgan Grenfell, the merchant bank who owns it. Neither has the council as yet managed to

## Poster Collective

The poster collective has been working in Tolmers for two years in which time it has steadily developed from a few people working mainly on printing posters to a larger group centred around a study group on cultural and political questions, which in turn gives structure to our productive activity (which now ranges from showing films, talks, exhibitions, posters, media analysis, and gradually making films.)

At present we are working for the strike at Grunwicks, producing posters, placards and filming, in such a way as we can make consistent inputs against various media distortions. The dominant media consistently create and reproduce concepts that

invert real social relations. Just as more and more people are told that the state enables people to live off welfare or aid when it is in fact the capitalist class, who have historically lived in a state of welfare (Rolls Royce, etc., don't come from the sky), they counterpose the right to join a union with the freedom not to, in order to uphold the bosses freedom and right to exploit the workforce to its maximum. Whilst the media talk about abstract freedom rights we have to show they are entirely conditional on the capitalist class's freedom and right to exploit the collective labour of the producing class. The process whereby the class becomes divided by chauvinism,

racism and sexism, although political in essence, is mediated primarily through culture and that by being able to counterpose a culture based on the political unity of the producing class these divisions can be actively fought. Although what we do is only a tiny part of the overall effort which is required on all levels, we think it is important to utilise any skills and abilities we have in this direction.

## All change at EGA ?

At a meeting on Monday, 13th June 20 men and 7 women sat round a



# THE FUTURE

find a developer to invest in the site.

Meanwhile, many people are living in deteriorating housing conditions, employment is draining away from the area as rents and rates rise and planning blight settles in.

Tolmers Village Action Group, however, is campaigning for a plan for the area based on social need; for housing, employment opportunity and community and recreation facilities. We are asking for the retention and rehabilitation of existing houses, small shops and businesses, more housing, provision of light industrial and craft workshops, and community and recreational facilities, mainly on the site fronting Euston Road. We are proposing that this plan be drawn up by residents of Tolmers Village, representatives of other residents' groups in Camden, the Trades Council and the

Direct Labour Force with the co-operation of the council's architects. Considering the difficulty in getting private enterprise to create and maintain employment, we are asking the council to build and take managerial responsibility for the light industrial development. Copies of the full proposals are available from 12 Tolmers Square, or come along to our regular Monday night meetings at 9 p.m. to say what you would like to see in your area.

Tolmers Village Action Group meetings are informal and open to anyone who lives or works in the area. As well as campaigning for a plan for the area based on social need, we have many other functions. We aim to give information and active support to those who require it, to build a stronger community, and to assist in organizing social and community events.

Though we have not been able to do as much as we would have liked due to lack of time and resources, we have managed to help some people with their housing problems, and have now produced the third monthly edition of Tolmers News. We have helped to organize two successful work-ins at the basements to build a community centre, held three fund-raising jumble sales, and have been responsible for organizing this year's carnival.

We are also building links with outside organizations. We are affiliated to Camden Federation of Tenants and Residents, and the Campaign against Criminal Trespass Law. We have just decided to affiliate to Camden Against Racism, a broad-based, non-party political organization open to individuals or groups who wish to oppose racism in the borough. (Contact Graham Shaw, 837.0396). So come along to our meetings with your ideas, problems, or for information, or if you would like to take an active part in what we are doing. See you there!

table surrounded by a hundred or so angry people. It was a meeting of the Camden and Islington Health Authority, who were deciding whether to close the EGA Hospital for Women in the Euston Road. And although none of these twenty-seven have been directly elected to this position by people in the area, only they have the right to speak and the right to make decisions.

Outside the meeting a picket had been staged. As well as EGA workers, who included cleaners, canteen staff, clerks, nurses and doctors, there were shop stewards from ten other hospitals who have pledged support to the EGA. And of course there were the faithful who have kept the 24 hour picket at the EGA for the past seven months, including some of us from Tolmers. Even

Jock Stallard, M.P. for Camden North, was there.

After over an hour of discussion, amid angry shouts from the public breathing down the necks of the AHA members because there weren't enough chairs, there was a vote. This was that the EGA should move to the Whittington Hospital in Islington, but that long-term accommodation for the hospital would not be ready for about another two years. This was not a surprising decision because it was exactly what the AHA proposed over a year ago - and they STILL are no nearer finding an alternative site for the EGA to move to. The only changes since then are that the EGA Maternity Home has been closed without any consultation; the lift, found to be faulty in January 1976, still has not been

mended and operations now have to be done at the Whittington; and now, the AHA are insisting on a 'temporary' move of the facilities at the EGA to - guess where? - The Whittington. One other thing has changed since a year ago - the determination of the people who work at the EGA to stop their hospital closing has got even stronger. The hospital has been occupied since November - and two other hospitals in London are now occupied against their closure. The EGA still needs help with the picket to stop patients and supplies being moved out - Tolmers shift is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursdays. And there is a meeting for all pickets on Tuesday, June 28th at 6.30 p.m. to discuss the future strategy of the campaign.

- \* Camden Tenants at a district management committee meeting voted unanimously for no increase in rents. Many tenants feel that the council is heading for a rent strike over the increases!
- \* Demolition workers arrived at the house on the corner of Hampstead Road and N.Gower Street while Leam, who has lived there for two years, was still in occupation with a friend. A possession order was granted on the house recently, but no-one has been to see if it is empty. Leam is in the process of moving to a new home, where we wish him luck!
- \* Mayells, the magazine and newspaper distributors, who have

## LATE NEWS LATE NEWS LATE NEWS

Marion Spencer of Kings Cross Community Association Environment Group has sent us copies of the Group's comments on the Borough Plan, and invited us to a Dickens evening on July 14th. Members of the Group have also been invited to a future TVAG meeting in order that we can better understand each others situation and problems. Marion also congratulated the Tolmers Shop on its home made bread, and sent us 2 recipes, one of which we print below:

White Haricot Bean Salad

Rinse beans and soak over night in plenty of water. Bring to the boil and take of any scum. Simmer gently for 40 minutes (but be careful not to overcook or they will go mushy). Drain and before beans cool, toss them in oil and lemon juice with 2 cloves of crushed garlic and chopped fresh herbs. Leave for a few hours so that the flavour is absorbed. It goes well with Tolmers Bread!

We have just received a letter from a man serving a 3 year sentence in Spring Hill prison near Aylesbury. He is very interested in community work, particularly in urban housing shortages and action groups in this field. He would like newsheets and job lists, or names of other s who could help him. When he is released, possibly next year on parole, he is hoping to find a job in this field, though he realises there will be difficulty because of his record. We will be writing to him, but if you can help please contact Moni at 17 Tolmers Square.

## SUPPORT THE GRUNWICK STRIKERS

Everyone who believes in the right to join a trade union, to organise a picket line, and to fight against sweatshop conditions like those at Grunwicks, should support the strike by workers there now in its tenth month. The strikers' racist boss has the back

- been here for many years, have finally decided to sell up and move out. Whoever buys the premises will also have the planning permission granted by Camden to Mayells.
- \* Cecil Residential Club, the hostel for women, has to move out by July 2nd because its lease has expired. It will become instead a home for nurses from UCH.

Council legal officials have been visiting Gower House (183/185 North Gower Street) recently asking for the names of the occupants. The first step in proceedings for eviction. More than twenty people squatting there will have to leave by October so that the Council may rehabilitate the ten flats. Some of them wish to be rehoused by the Council but have not yet been offered an alternative. Meetings are currently being held in the house to determine what action should be taken to ensure that those who want rehousing will get it.

The Tolmers Village Action Group decided at its last meeting to support the squatters in their demands for alternative housing but at the same time agreed that the rehabilitation of the house should take place.

## Basements

The huge space in the basements under 20 Tolmers Square is at last ready for use. We'll be celebrating its opening with a disco at the Carnival and then hope we can use it for a wide range of Tolmers events (pool, parties, darts??). After initial 'discovery' by Alex and friends a major work-in a month ago saw all the rubbish cleared, the area scrubbed, a water supply installed and a stairway built. A grand summer picnic lunch on the square kept us all going.\* The recipe was repeated last weekend for the final painting and furnishing of the area. Big thanks to all who have lent a hand, and see you all at the Carnival disco!

ing of the extreme right-wing National Association for Freedom, and the support of the police-who have continually intimidated the strikers, most of whom are Asian. The police have now brutally laid into the picket line and have arrested 200 people in a week.

## WHAT'S ON

Sat. 25th June 1.p.m. till late  
TOLMERS CARNIVAL.

Thurs. 30th June: 8 p.m. Camden Against Racism meeting at Malden Road Community Centre, NW5.

July 1st - 3rd: Somers Town Festival.

Sat. 2nd July: Queen Square Festival in Holborn.

Mon. 4th July: 1p.m. Counteract present The Cuts Show at Kings Cross community centre, 62 Marcomont Street, WC1.

Wed. 6th July: 7.30 p.m. Camden CACTL conference planning meeting at 30 Camden Road, NW1. Also chance to see E.G.A. tape slide show.

Thursday July 7th 8pm: Benefit for Camden Tenant at the Tenants Hall, Clabence Way Estate, Hawley Rd, NW1. Broadside Mobile Workers Theatre performing "We have the Power of the Winds". Admission 25p.

Friday July 8th 8pm: In TOLMERS BASEMENT! Films & Music, (EGA tape & slide show; film of Grunwicks made by poster collective; film of Chloride workers occupying a dinner party held by the directors of their firm on a boat on the Thames!)

Sat. 9th July: Kings Cross Festival.

Sat. 9th July: Bloomsbury Festival.

Sat. 23rd July: Camden Square Festival, NW1.

Mondays 9 p.m.: TVAG meetings at 12 Tolmers Square.

Thursdays 10 a.m.-2 p.m.: TVAG picket duty at the EGA Hospital, Euston Road.

The plans for Camden has now been completed by the planning Dept. and all objections to it must be made to the Town Clerk before July 8th. Copies of the plan are available in the Town Hall and libraries.

Because Tolmers is an Action Area it is not included in the plan but obviously since we are part of Camden the plan is bound to affect us. The TVAG will discuss whether or not to make any objections to the plan next Monday (June 27) at 9pm at 12 Tolmers Sq. A welcome.

Massive support on the picket line to close this factory.

JOIN THE MASS PICKET-From 7.30am when the scabs bus tries to get in. Near Dollis Hill (Bakerloo line) See Candy at 155 Drummond St if you want to know when people from Tolmers are going.