

TOLMERS NEWS

Edited and Produced this week by Sheenagh Goodingham and Rachel Syers

NO. 13

Girls & Boys come out to play ...

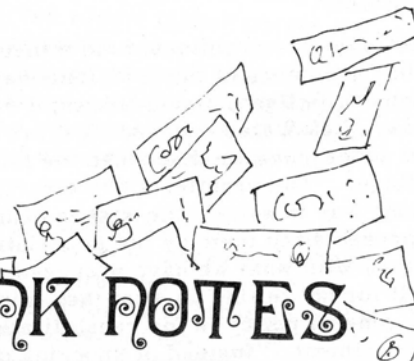
All through August there's going to be a play-scheme for school age kids in the Tolmers Village area. The two people who are going to be in charge are Juliette, who runs a playgroup in Oxford, and who looks something like this



and me (Sheenagh) I look like this. So it should be easy to tell us apart.



BANK NOTES



Most of you probably already know something about how playschemes work. It's not like school. Nobody orders the children about. We just try and help them to enjoy themselves, doing whatever they want to do. If they learn something doing it, that's fine, but we don't want to push them.

On fine days our base will be the village garden, and when it's wet we'll be in the empty bank building on the corner of Hampstead Road and Tolmers Square. Here are some of the things we've thought of doing, but these don't limit the things we can do. Any suggestions from parents and children will be very welcome.....

Building climbing frames.....

dens.....

office blocks???....

Painting garden walls.....

fences.....

Sandcastles.....

gardening.....

.... mud-pies....

Story-telling.....

acting plays.....

Music.....

singing.....

dancing.....

We hope to have disco evenings every so often and film-shows on Sunday mornings.

In the end though, if the Village playscheme is going to be a success, it needs helpers. If you can tell stories, or play an instrument, or show kids how to do anything from building brick walls to developing photographs, or if you're a dab hand with a paint-brush or a mud-pie, come along. We want you.

MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR - On the 30th August we're all going off in the InterAction Bus to an unknown destination... Seaside?... Countryside?... Who knows????

The bank on the corner of Tolmers Square and Hampstead Road has been cleaned out so we can use it as a community centre. It's been repainted, rewired and the hole in the floor mended. It's going to be used for discos, parties, film shows, meetings, rehearsals for drama groups and bands, and the summer playscheme. There are also plans to use the basement as a carpentry workshop. If people have more ideas of how it could be used, come round to the T. V. A. shop and talk about it.

Is our garden a garden OR a dump?

There will be a work party on the garden this Saturday morning (from 11.00). BECAUSE THE GRASS ARRIVES next week and we can't lay the turf without preparing the soil first, so if you would like to feel good in a few months when it's all green and beautiful and you want a share in that overwhelming sense of pride and achievement, WHY NOT COME AND HELP?????

Seven stone wealkings can help to carry cups of tea from the Diwana where Jayant Patel will be free with his teapot. (Thank you gentle Jayant).

Can you dig it?



C.P.O. FOR JOE ?

On the 24th June a deputation from the TVA attended a meeting of the Camden Community Planning and Resources Committee, and put forward the resolutions made at our public meeting on the 3rd May.

At the meeting the committee decided to make a move to CPO the area west of North Gower Street (the Levy triangle) and have asked their architects, Renton Howard Wood & Levin, to prepare new plans to be ready in September. IF the plans are satisfactory the council will apply to the government for a grant to compulsory purchase.

Last week the architects held a meeting in their offices with 7 members of the TVA (Sheenagh Goodingham, Maureen Holland, Gavin Brown, Pedro George, Barry Shaw, Nick Wates and Rachel Syers), and over beer and sandwiches we discussed the fate of Tolmers Village. The architects are clearly concerned to go a long way to satisfy the wishes of the community as represented to them by the association (if anyone disagrees with what we have proposed, it's their own fault for not telling us what they think). As a result the general policy is for rehabilitation instead of re-development. Instead of knocking down what exists, the area will be improved and modernised as much as possible. The new proposals are:-

***All houses in N. Gower Street, Drummond Street and Tolmers Square (Nos 1 & 2 excepted) should be converted and rehabilitated. The density of these buildings can be increased by skilful use of extensions and conversions. (The work done to improve a house depends on its condition - some may need very little but some may have to be largely rebuilt. Such things as kitchens, bathrooms, hot water and heating would be provided. A better home can often be made in this way at a cheaper cost than by new building.)

***Nos. 50 - 58 Hampstead Road and 1 & 2 Tolmers Sq. should be demolished and replaced because they are in very bad structural condition.



***62, 98 Hampstead Road should be demolished and the new design should incorporate the derelict centre of the triangle. Outline proposals for this site should be drawn up straight away, although as it is unlikely that it will be implemented for several years, these should be modernised in the short term.

***The site on the south side which fronts onto the Euston Road has previously been thought fit only for the inevitable office block. But it seems that the council would like to see as much housing there as possible so that the minister would be more inclined to grant a CPO for that site.

***There will be more shops - suggestions for these would be welcomed.

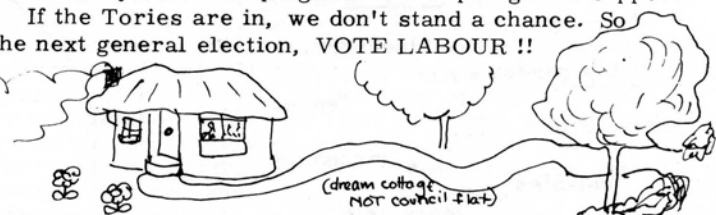
***Street improvements in N. Gower Street should include immediate tree planting, and a traffic management scheme to prevent through-traffic.

***The centre of Tolmers Square should be made into a garden, and an entrance to St. James Gardens should be made from Cobourgh Street.

***Alternative accommodation should be provided in the area for all businesses and residents displaced by demolition.

Well, at least they're asking us what we want and are trying to consult with local people (THAT MEANS YOU - so let us know what you think. IF YOU DON'T IT'S YOUR OWN FAULT if things are changed without your opinion being taken into account). But this step, although good, is obviously not necessarily going to mean that it's all going to happen. It very much depends on the government in power at the time when the application is presented. If the Labour government survives we stand a good chance. The present housing minister, Reg Freeson, was one of the main signatories to the Stop The Levy Deal Campaign. He has pledged to support us. If the Tories are in, we don't stand a chance. So at the next general election, VOTE LABOUR !!

NETLEY ST. FLATS



I would like to be considered for a flat in the Netley Street Development.

name.....

Address.....

No. of adults.....No. of children.....

No. of rooms in present accommodation.....

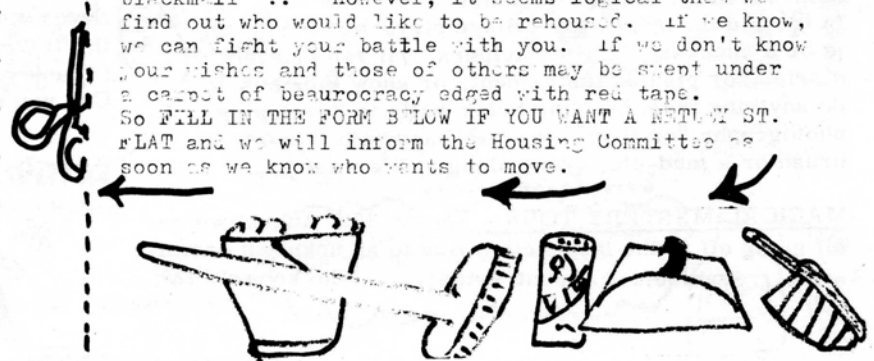
No. of rooms required in new flat.....

How long have you lived in present address.....

Are you already on the housing list?.....

If so, how long have you been waiting?.....

At the last council meeting it was agreed that many residents in Tolmers Village were living in appalling conditions and therefore should be considered for rehousing in the Netley Street development. As usual, no promises were made, and they declined to put it in writing "In case it's used as blackmail" !! however, it seems logical that we find out who would like to be rehoused. If we know, we can fight your battle with you. If we don't know your wishes and those of others may be swept under a carpet of beurocracy edged with red tape. So FILL IN THE FORM BELOW IF YOU WANT A NETLEY ST. FLAT and we will inform the Housing Committee as soon as we know who wants to move.





WATCH IT SQUATTERS!

TOLMERS VILLAGE CARNIVAL

The sun came bursting through the clouds at 1.58 p.m. and put to sleep all the worry of a rained-off carnival. Despite a few delays - accounted for by some frantic organising - all the stalls opened punctually in North Gower Street, whilst an old blue van chugged into Tolmers Square to be redecorated. The Night Blues Steel Band started a day full of musical and theatrical entertainment on stage in Tolmers Square. The fund for the Carnival collected just under £50, and just in case you missed all the fun, some of the things you could have bought were: jumble, jellies, sandwiches, alternatively hazelnut butter and thick home-made bread. There were games to play and candles for sale. Local talent abounded. There were a couple of stray guitarists dying to get on stage; a set of stocks to cool you off in the old-fashioned way; a wind and string quartet competing with a determined band of drummers. The Chingford Morris Men danced in the sunshine and the Punch & Judy show was the best in town. The kids dressed up for the Fancy Dress Competition - Cleopatra, Little Bo Peep, Pirates, a Pearly Prince, even Queen Elizabeth 1 !!

Mayday performed their play "Seeing It All Come Down" - they were good, and so were some of the hecklers in the audience!

In the evening three neighbourhood rock bands played. Thanks to Chris O'Kelly at the Fender Sound House in Tottenham Court Road, who provided equipment for them. Thanks also to camera crews who were about on the day - we hope to see the carnival film in the Bank some time soon. And to all the local businesses who helped; John and Ethel Vine who held the raffle in their shop and supplied some lovely prizes; Villa Bella Cafe for holding the Peas in a Jar Competition; Avis Truck Rentals for the very cheap van hire to collect and return the staging supplied by the RoundHouse; Simmonds for the benches and Elizabeth 1's costume; Glenrifer Finance Co. for the keys to the square; the Council's Art Department for their valuable and unobtrusive help; St. John's Ambulance Brigade for waiting in the wings all day; and thanks finally to all who helped to arrange things for Saturday. (John and Vera in 213 N. Gower Street did an amazing job making the bunting, which still cheers the streets).

I hope everyone enjoyed themselves - perhaps next year it'll be better still!!

.... Ian Cooper.....



The Law Commission has recently produced a report which, if implemented, would effectively make squatting a criminal offence, punishable by six months imprisonment. At a time when the housing crisis is worsening every year and the local and central authorities show themselves incapable of meeting the needs of the homeless and badly-housed, these learned gentlemen have come up with proposals which enormously strengthen the hand of the speculator.

However, the scope of this attack goes far beyond the question of squatting. The report makes illegal any demonstration which involves the occupation of buildings (for example, the Chilean generals would have the full force of criminal law on their side against demonstrators occupying buildings in protest against the thousands of murders carried out daily by the military junta).

It is clear that workers occupying a factory in a campaign against redundancies could be arrested if they did not leave on being 'instructed' to. Occupations are one of the most powerful forms of struggle at the immediate disposal of the workers' movement. The proposals of the Law Commission, together with the Industrial Relations Act, the conspiracy laws against the Shrewsbury building workers etc. etc. form part of a general assault on democratic rights. The leadership of the Labour Party must immediately make it clear that it has no intention of implementing these proposals. At the same time, sections of the labour, tenants' and squatters' movements will be organising to make sure that they are not taken up by any future government.

..... Patrick Birnie.....



GOOD-BYE NICK

After a year of very hard work for the TVA Nick Water has decided to seek his fortune in foreign parts. A little over a year ago you may have noticed a group of long-haired students from University College School of Architecture, rying our streets with questionnaires about housing conditions, and wielding funny little machines with which to record traffic.

Nick Water and Pedro George were involved in this project as the last part of their degree course. Their findings were so horrific that instant local reaction found a voice in the ad hoc committee of the TVA. Since our early meetings in the office of the Browns over Peter's Barber Shop the Tolmers Village Association has progressed by leaps and bounds. Nick negotiated a grant from Mountrose Trust and became our first employee, working as a co-ordinator for the association's various activities.

Since then we have acquired an office, our garden, and now we are about to open our new community centre. Not to mention our diplomatic successes of which Nick has been a worthy representative. All in all, he's worked hard to try and fulfill the aims of the TVA and we're going to miss him very much. We wish him luck, health and happiness in his adventures and hope he'll visit us on his return.

NOTICES....

Goodbye & Farewell to the Perrotta family of Tolmers Square. We hope that you will be very happy in your new home & that you will come back and see us all sometimes!

We were sorry to hear of the death of Mr Alexander Homatas of the Cyprus Travel Agency, 36 Hampstead Road. We offer our condolences to his family and colleagues.

Get well soon John, we miss having you around.

Sandy, Pam and Stan - we were very sorry to hear of your misfortune and wish you all well, and hope Richard has a good recovery.

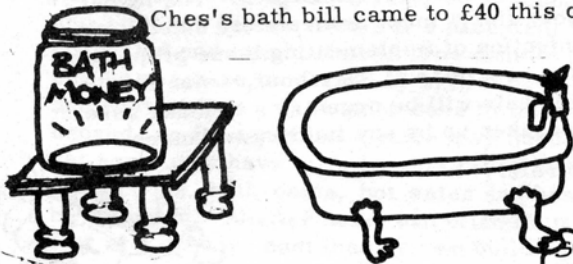
TOLMERS DESTROYED --- AN AMAZING REPORT ON WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THIS AREA OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, WITH 22 PHOTOGRAPHS AND A DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLAPSING HOUSES IN HAMPSTEAD ROAD, THE OLD CINEMA AND CASE HISTORIES OF INDIVIDUAL HOUSES. AN INCREDIBLE PICTURE OF PROPERTY SPECULATION AND COUNCIL INADEQUACY. WE HAVE ALREADY HAD PEOPLE WRITE FROM AS FAR AS BIRMINGHAM AND LIVERPOOL ASKING FOR COPIES, SO EVERYONE IN TOLMERS VILLAGE SHOULD HAVE ONE. THE REPORT COSTS 15p AND CAN BE OBTAINED FROM SHANE'S NEWSAGENTS, VINE'S GROCERS OR THE T. V. A. - ALL IN DRUMMOND STREET.

WANTED....

Has anyone got a gramophone they would give, loan or sell us very cheaply - we need one for the summer playscheme. Other things we would be grateful for are: empty cardboard cartons, washing up liquid bottles, eggboxes, scraps of wool and material, old gramophone records, half used tins of paint, odd rolls of wallpaper etc. etc.



TOLMERS VILLAGE CLEANEST PERSON
Ches's bath bill came to £40 this quarter.....



J. D. SHAH for exciting spices. Drummond Street.

AMBALA SWEET CENTRE for delectable Eastern goodies - their sweets are nice too !!

VINES - the Tolmers Village Store. Fresh bread and dairy produce, sandwiches, hot sausage rolls & sandwiches

John & Vera have righteous food for sale, organic brown rice, wholemeal flour, beans & lentils, also home-baked wholewheat bread, nutroast & seaweed pasties.....

AT THE BANK
MON 22ND at 8.00 p.m. DRAMA. Would-be actors join Gerald Donaldson + start a community theatre.
SUN. 28TH 3.00 p.m.
Films + disco for the kids

"Thank you very much for sending me a copy of 'Tolmers Destroyed'. Please find enclosed a cheque for £1.00 as a donation towards the cost of producing this very interesting document"Letter from John Mills, Chairman of Camden Housing Committee.

"...first of all let me say how good I thought it was both in the range of facts and information and in the method of presentation"...Letter from Michael Norton, InterAction Trust.

"Congratulations on your excellent booklet 'Tolmers Destroyed'. I hope you will be able to give it wide circulation to highlight this utterly despicable and almost unbelievable state of affairs."..... Letter from David Christie, Sec. of Camden Civic Soc.

Cameras are seldom absent from Tolmers village nowadays. Cameramen have been in the area shooting for a film called 'Tolmers Village - the beginning or end'. The producer is Phillip Thompson who works at Judd Associates in Euston Street. He is a freelance film producer, and has made a documentary on Northern Ireland - or you may have seen his film on Lowry, the painter, which was on television a few weeks ago. The purpose of this film is to show what the area is really like and why. No sentimentality, no glamour (that would be hard to find!), just the stark staring horrible reality of it all - but witty, we hope. It will be sold to television or shown locally when it is ready in a couple of months' time.

Food Co-op
Business as usual. (Sat. 12-3 p.m.)
[if possible]

Diwana
Bhel Poori House

LOST Benjamin's bike. He would be overjoyed at its recovery. It is a child's red bicycle with BEN written on the mudguard.

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