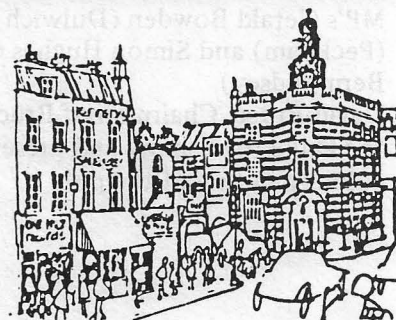


# THE CAMBERWELL SOCIETY

President: Jim Tanner, 107 Camberwell Grove, SE5 (703 8624)  
Chairman: Islay Charman, 26 Grove Lane, SE5 (703 4427)  
Vice-Chairman: Conrad Dehn, 38 Camberwell Grove, SE5 (701 4758)  
Hon. Secretary: Iris Oldridge, 49 Allendale Close, SE5 (703 0414)  
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Asst. Treasurer: James Farmer, 1 Pelham Hse, 14 Grove Pk, SE5 (274 3197)



NEWSLETTER No: 74

February 1987



*The elegant plaque commemorating the Civic Trust Award for Denmark Hill Station and the Phoenix and Firkin public house, unveiled by HRH the Duke of Gloucester on 14th November, 1986.*

## THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER COMES TO CAMBERWELL

H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester unveiled a plaque at the Phoenix and Firkin pub, Denmark Hill, on Friday 14th November 1986 to mark the Civic Trust award last year for the restoration of the fire-damaged railway station.

The Duke of Gloucester was welcomed by the Mayor of Southwark, Cllr. Jessie Carmon, and introduced to the designer of the plaque, Donald Jackson (a former



*David Bruce of Bruce's Brewery, on the left, is not telling HRH the Duke of Gloucester, on the right, an improbable story, aided and abetted by Jeremy Bennett, centre, Chairman of the Southwark Environment Trust and former Chairman of The Camberwell Society. The occasion was the unveiling by the Duke of Gloucester of the plaque commemorating the Civic Trust Award for the Denmark Hill Station and the Phoenix and Firkin Public House.*

member of the Society) and to the Society's President, Jim Tanner, and Chairman, Islay Charman, by Jeremy Bennett, formerly Chairman of the Society and now Chairman of the Southwark Environment Trust (SET).

Jeremy announced later that the Trust will shortly be replacing the Victorian railings fronting the Station along Denmark Hill which were taken down and sold by British Rail some years ago as an economy

measure. He also welcomed SET's three new patrons: MP's Gerald Bowden (Dulwich), Harriet Harman (Peckham) and Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey).

David Bruce, Chairman of Bruce's Brewery, thanked the Duke for coming and presented him with a water-colour painting of the pub.

## TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT NOTES

### A Camberwell station?

The last Newsletter reported continued pressure on British Rail and London Regional Transport for a new station and bus interchange. The Society has challenged the Department of Transport policy which allows credit to be taken for social benefit in appraising road, but not rail, investment. We have also gone back to Sir Keith Bright, Chairman of LRT, on his Estate Manager's too ready acceptance of the lamentably unenterprising attitude of London Buses Ltd., towards planning buses as efficient feeders of trains. We have told Sir Keith a new factor is the *assessment studies* of road problems in four areas of London commissioned over two years ago (page 9 of Newsletter No. 67). Their Stage 1 reports — listing problem rather than answers — were published in December. That for South London (in fact the *Croydon corridor* says "people did not regard bus and rail as providing a co-ordinated transport system". The South Circular study identified "demands for orbital movement, which are not satisfactorily catered for by the South Circular nor by bus and rail services. These demands give rise to serious environmental impacts". Neither study covered Camberwell, but many of the road and rail routes they looked at do pass through our area. We want LRT and BR to take — and be encouraged by Government to take — a broad view of their responsibility to develop an integrated system.

### Pedestrian crossings

Crossings with "green man" protection are due to operate over Camberwell Road at Cambridge House and over Denmark Hill at the lower entrance to Ruskin Park. There is to be a zebra crossing over Champion Park at the Salvation Army College. The Council's Transportation Sub-Committee has rejected the engineers' view that a crossing over Denmark Hill just south of the Champion Hill exit would be too dangerous; there are to be consultations about whether a "pelican" should be provided there and a "zebra" over Champion Hill.

There are to be more consultations about a plea to help the "lollipop lady" with a crossing over Camberwell Grove just north of McNeil Road. Many of us feel that unless traffic is slowed down — as we continue to hope will be possible by means of "speed humps" — marking a crossing would not increase safety.

Narrowing the carriageway by "blisters" on the pavement — as at Stories Road, but on both sides of the Grove — may be more promising. What do members think?

### De Crespigny Park/Grove Lane junction

Engineers are studying whether the land available would allow this dangerous and congested T junction to be re-aligned in the form of a mini-roundabout. We are assured there will be local consultation before any decision is taken.

### OPO Buses

"One-person-operated" buses are loved by no one, except London Regional Transport. Their Business Plan for 1987/8 speaks of 83% of all buses being driver-only by March 1988. They say they "will be testing a new electronic ticketing system in 1987 which should reduce still further passengers' boarding times — already cut by the widespread use of Travel-cards". The Executive Committee of the Society has heard much about poorer services, dangers in design and operation which particularly affect the elderly, and the added congestion which discourages car-owners from using buses and then, in a vicious circle, makes things worse for them and everyone else. We support the continuing London-wide representations of the London Regional Passengers' Committee (the statutory voice of consumers) and of the London Amenity and Transport Association (to which we are affiliated). Locally we are in touch with a study by the London Borough of Southwark of the effects of OPO conversion on traffic in Walworth Road. Informed contributions on this topic would be welcomed from any member, particularly on the LRT argument that it all works well in nearly every other city in this and other countries. Where and why, for example, has there been reversion to using conductors. Has OPO abroad generally followed rather than preceded good ticketing arrangements and stringent measures giving buses priority on city streets?

### Lorry depots

Members may have seen public notices in the local press headed "Goods Vehicles Operator's Licence". Such licences became necessary in 1984 for all "operating centres" for goods vehicles over 3.5 tonne used in trade or business (including the operator's own business). The intention was to control the environmental effects of such centres, whether on or off the highway. The Department of Transport is now reviewing the system, and the Civic Trust is collecting the views of amenity societies. Have any members a contribution to make, particularly if based on local experience of the workings or shortcomings of the present arrangements?

Norman Hutchison  
Convenor, Traffic & Transport Sub-Committee



## SOUTHWARK POLICE CONSULTATIVE GROUP

At the meeting of Southwark Police Consultative Group on 11th November 1986, Martin Seaton of Sceaux Gardens Tenants' Association, on behalf of community representatives in the Group, proposed that the numbers of community representatives on the Group be increased from 20 to 25; the Chairman ruled that constitutional changes could be considered only at the next Annual General Meeting (September). It was however agreed to vary the venue of the meeting experimentally in order that a wider range of people might attend. Accordingly the meeting on 4th February was held at Bermondsey Library Hall, Spa Road. The venues of subsequent meetings (on 2nd April, 1st June and 5th August) will be decided later. The Group noted that a resource library has been established at the Town Hall, to include minutes of Southwark Council's Police Sub-Committee and Southwark Police Consultative Group, subject files, books, journals, HMSO publications, press cuttings, etc., on police, crime, legislation and so on. Anyone wishing to use this library should book an appointment with the Publications Officer, Policing and Community Safety Unit, at the Town Hall, tel. 703 6311 extension 2359. A bi-monthly news sheet will be circulated to all members of the Consultative Group.

A proposal for a management committee for the 'Lay Visitors to Police Stations scheme' had been sent to the Home Office shortly before the meeting. Pending Home Office response, Cllrs. Ritchie, Stafford and Wanmaker were identified as members of a management group along with Tom Sawyer and others as Community Group representatives. Police representation will be selected after Home Office approval has been received. Clearly a considerable number of volunteers will be required to man this scheme, intended to deter any ill-treatment of persons detained by the Police and to allay any suspicions of such treatment.

There was further discussion on the need for, and structure of, a group to study the pattern of complaints against the police in the Borough of Southwark. A Sub-Committee of the Group consisting of Tom Sawyer (Magdalen Over 60's Club), Junior Myers (Unity Society and Cultural Association) and Olge Hunte (East Dulwich Women's Action Group), Cllrs. McTurner, Geddes and Alden and one Police representative was set up and will report more fully later. DAC Siggs pointed out that every Police Officer is required by law to report any complaint against the Police to the Police Complaints Authority for investigation.

A report from Southwark Council's Police Sub-Committee outlined a scheme to prevent victimisation of elderly residents by providing them with printed cards that they could hold up at a window indicating they do not buy from callers at the door. The cost of printing these cards, £540, would be part

of the Council's approved £3000 budget for publicity associated with Southwark Police Consultative Group itself part of the Council's Community Affairs Committee's current revenue budget.

Meredith Yates of Southwark Mediation Scheme described voluntary mediation between quarrelling neighbours, available initially in the area bounded by Camberwell Road, Southampton Way, Commercial Way, Peckham Park Road, Old Kent Road and Albany Road. He may be contacted at Clubland, 54 Camberwell Road (703 4959).

Consideration of ILEA's discussion paper *Police in Schools* covering both Police participation in the curriculum and relations between Police and schools when concerned with an individual offender was postponed.

May I finish this report with the suggestion that more members of the Society might like to consider coming to meetings of the Southwark Police Consultative Group.

*Elizabeth Betts*

## HELP WANTED

### Grand Surrey Canal

Some of you may have visited my small display about old Dulwich at Dulwich Library last January, (mentioned in your February 1986 newsletter). I am now working for a few months at North Camberwell Library in Wells Way, and I would like to stage a similar display at this branch on the history of the Grand Surrey Canal and on its effect on the surrounding area. Neate Street, for example, was lined with factories presumably built to make use of the transport facilities provided by the canal, and some of the timber yards are still working along the line of the other arm, reaching up to Peckham High Street. I would be grateful if any Camberwell Society member can provide me with fresh information about the Canal. Do you have any photographs or documents, or can you tell me any anecdotes about the building, running or closing of the waterway? Please call in and see me at North Camberwell, or telephone me on 703 4788. We have facilities for copying photographs or documents, so you will not lose your family treasures.

*Rosalind Thomas*  
*Librarian*

## ARCHIVES

A member has recently given us a collection of aerial photographs of pre-war Denmark Hill; also a set of architects drawings of the restoration of St. Matthews' Church in the 1930's and the proposed re-building after it was bombed. We are always very happy to receive such gifts and are anxious that any material of historic interest should be preserved.

## FUN AND GAMES IN CAMBERWELL 1910-1925

Born in Charlton 1909, my parents brought me to live in Camberwell within a few months, and we lived in a large house divided into 2 flats at No.25 Vicarage Road (renamed Vicarage Grove) which divided Vicarage Road from Belham Street, where the Good Neighbours Flats are now situated. The road was very wide at the front with no houses and narrowed considerably into Belham Street.

This sort of semi-cul de sac provided ample space for games untroubled by very much traffic. In fact sheep were often assembled there to be taken to the slaughter house which I believe was somewhere in Peckham. Street lighting was by gaslight and a lamp-post was conveniently placed which of course was always lit at dusk by the Lamp-Lighter making his daily round with a long pole with which he switched on and off as necessary. At right angles to the post just beneath the globe was a short metal bar, there for the purpose of placing a ladder if the lamp required attention. On this short bar we often placed a rope to make a swing. There was also ample room in the vicinity for the girls with their skipping ropes – “Salt, Mustard, Vinegar, Pepper” being the popular cry as the rope was swung faster.

Other popular games for the girls were five-stones and Hop-sotch. For the lads a tremendous variety of games included Overbacks (with many variations), Conkers, Cherry Stones, Marbles, Fag-Cards (some of the fag cards lost those days would no doubt be worth a small fortune today).

Then of course there were hoops (wood and iron). I will always remember an iron hoop I once had. I took it out with me for the customary walk with my parents on Sunday evenings to Ruskin Park to listen to the band in the band stand, which was a very popular pursuit. On the way home my Dad took the hoop from me and with a hefty shunt pushed it down Denmark Hill. I raced after it in vain, and alas, it finished down the centre tramline which ran up from Camberwell Green and beyond, turning by Denmark Hill Station past the Salvation Army H.Q. and thence to Dog Kennel Hill. No two trams were allowed up or down on the same track on the Hill which could have caused considerable chaos.

At the top of Grove Lane was a roller skating rink, burnt to ashes by a fire, never to be rebuilt. Roller skating was of course another popular pastime around the back streets of Camberwell as indeed were all the aforementioned games. Then of course we had scooters of varying shapes and sizes.

I well remember playing cricket in Brunswick Square near the Park – what a wonderful pitch that provided and the large lamp-post in the centre of the square a marvellous wicket. Football also during the season on the same site with the addition of a few coats for the goal posts. An excellent alternative site was in the Mews off Glebe Road (renamed St. Giles Road). I attended school at Oliver Goldsmiths' in my early

days and shall always remember getting the stick from Miss Knolder (Headmistress) and my name entered in the Black Book for persistent lateness – can't wonder at it with all these distractions. Sometimes in an endeavour to get to and from school more quickly, or just for kicks I used to jump on the back of a horse and cart. The best of this form of transport was provided by Taylors, the Undertakers, of Southampton Way. Carriages were drawn usually by four black horses wearing black decorative plumes, and at the rear of the carriage was a very convenient platform to sit, but when in proper use an Undertaker, suitably clothed, stood on this platform when going to a funeral. Another very happy memory of Oliver Goldsmiths' School was Empire Day, when all the students with flags waving assembled in the spacious playground for patriotic songs, and selected children formed a Tableaux depicting Britannia and the Empire. Crowds of parents assembled outside to peer through the railings to witness this scene, and of course this meant a half-day holiday in the afternoon. I attended Sunday School at the Presbyterian Church at the foot of Benhill Road. Later I attended St. Giles Church and became a choirboy, although I couldn't sing but it was good fun, especially after Sunday afternoon service I finished up with many of my colleagues at Lyons Tea Shop at Camberwell Green with an ice-cream or knickerbocker glory costing just a few pence with waitress service.

Several enjoyable Garden Parties with numerous sideshows were held in the Vicarage home of the Rev. H.P. Lindsay, this was a spacious garden opposite St. Giles' Church.

As a special treat my parents took me to the Camberwell Palace of Varieties, now the site is occupied by Presto Supermarket, where we saw stars such as Nellie Wallace, Marie Lloyd, Harry Champion, Harry Lauder and others.

Another pastime was Wren Road Church on Monday evenings (Band of Hope). I never got round to signing the Pledge! Also Friday evening service at the same venue. I think it was mainly the girls which attracted me to attend regularly, also as a special entertainment put on sometimes here was a Magic Lantern show. I well remember how always we were shown “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”, and as the stars formed on the screen with meridian splendour, we all sang with great gusto the then famous chorus, the words of which perhaps I dare not repeat here.

There were of course the cinemas – the Empire at junction of Denmark Hill and Coldharbour Lane, the Grand Hall, Camberwell New Road, a tiny cinema in Wells Way, the Purple Cinema, others were in Camberwell Road and Walworth Road, in fact many cinemas within yards of each other, all enjoying a lucrative trade, even though the films then were silent, accompanied by a piano, until a £1000



Organ was installed at the Tower Cinema in Rye Lane.

One could stand near Camberwell Green and observe very many pubs – Father Redcap, Henekies, Tiger, The Cock, Joiners Arms, Golden Lion, all seemed to survive over the years.

I learned to dance at Kimpton Mission Hall in Kimpton Road, and my mates and I often attended dances at Camberwell Baths, only costing a shilling, and we danced to Victor Sylvester and His Silver Stars.

I organised dances at the Camberwell Conservative Club whose Headquarters were at the bottom of Vestry Road, in Peckham Road, opposite the Town Hall. I well remember one occasion when, during the dancing, some members brought in a donkey with a barrel organ. It wasn't long before the donkey made a horrific mess in the middle of the dance floor amid hilarious laughter from those present, and great applause for this unrehearsed 'Cabaret Show'. I moved away from Camberwell in the late twenties, thence to my present home in Upper Norwood, but continue to visit Camberwell where I spent so many very happy days and I often reflect on those very happy fun days of my childhood.

*Ernie Cast*

## LONDON'S GEORGIAN HOUSES

Members' meetings devoted to architectural subjects always demonstrate the strength of interest in environmental issues. So Andrew Byrne, the young author of the latest in a distinguished library of books on our Georgian buildings, was greeted by a packed house on November 20th.

The whole of central London, and the bones of Inner London, were developed or redeveloped in the period between the Fire and 1830. So we should not be surprised at how much Georgian architecture still survives, nor how much remains to be discovered about it. The other side of the coin, as Andrew illustrated, is how much ignorance persists, and how many worthwhile Georgian buildings are still threatened by that ignorance and by commercial or private interests.

Andrew Byrne's predecessors in describing London's Georgian buildings notably include Sir John Summerson and Dan Cruikshank. Both are acknowledged in the preface as encouraging his writing. What makes Andrew stand out as an author is the rapidity with which he produced the book (literally produced – he wrote the text, took all the photographs, drew all the drawings and maps, and published and distributed it himself) and the fact that, until 1985, he was practicing as a quantity surveyor. During that period his enthusiasm for Georgian architecture had escalated, stimulated amongst other things by cycling daily along Camberwell New Road. This development of the 1820s he singled out as especially interesting because of its combination of urban terraces, suburban semi-detached

villas and more rural cottages, in unusually intact form.

Next however comes the tricky bit. One cannot report Andrew's talk without, at the risk of treading on some Camberwell toes, faithfully conveying to newsletter readers his fearlessly expressed views on the relative merits of certain local terraces. In his opinion the two best surviving bits of Georgian townscape in Camberwell are, firstly, the terrace once known as Addington Place, built just before 1797 on Camberwell Road and now backed by Addington Square; and secondly, the imposing 'palace-fronted' terrace of eight houses half way up the West side of Camberwell Grove (opposite McNeil Road) built around 1820 and featuring a powerful symmetrical composition and distinctive Egyptian door mouldings.

But, as Andrew lost no time in reminding us, Camberwell represents only one small part of the immeasurably valuable heritage from the Georgian period in this one city. Hackney, Islington, Spitalfields, Kennington, Whitechapel, Stepney, Deptford, not to mention Bloomsbury, Regents Park, Greenwich and Mayfair, all have wonderful examples (and had many more). Precious inheritances should be cherished, and Andrew Byrne's hard work and rigorously (but beautifully) produced book will help to strengthen the love that nearly all of us feel for the houses from that harmonious period.

*Ian Chown*

## DATCHELOR MUSIC

At 7.30pm on Saturday, 21st March, at the United Reformed Church, East Dulwich Grove (note **not** Grove Lane/Love Walk), there will be an informal performance (sung only with rehearsal on the day) of the Faure Requiem and the Easter Music of Messiah. Anyone interested in joining in to sing or play should contact M.R.Seldon, 703 4427, after 1st March. Audience also very welcome.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 1987 are now due. Prompt payment to the Hon. Treasurer, Alan Riddle (113 Grove Lane SE5) is requested. Cheques should be made payable to The Camberwell Society. Family membership £4, individual member £3, senior citizen £1. You can pay your subscription by Banker's Standing Order. Telephone Alan at 733 3977 for a form.

## MEMBERS' MEETINGS

Members' meetings are held at the United Reformed Church Hall on the corner of Love Walk and Grove Lane commencing at 8.00pm. Make a note in your diary for the following.

February 19th **Why the C.T. Scanner.** John Laws CBE, Director of Radiology at King's College Hospital for 20 years, will give an illustrated talk on the whys and wherefores of the new scanner, how it is used in diagnosis and treatment, how it works and how it differs from other scanning methods. Ever since Rontgen discovered X-rays different forms of radiation have been used in Medicine in different ways and Dr. Laws' talk will give the local community the opportunity to find out about their scanner, which has

March 12th

been bought to a considerable extent by their fund-raising activities, and why it is so important.

April 9th

**Old maps and engravings of Camberwell.** Stephen Marks, a former editor of your Newsletter and an authority on the topography of London, did much research into local history while resident of Camberwell. He returns to tell us about old maps and engravings.

May 21st

**London Wildlife.** Gary Grant will give an illustrated talk on the natural flora and fauna of the pools and woods, hedgerows and open spaces which the London Wildlife Trust works to preserve.

**Annual General Meeting** of the Society, followed by a talk. Subject and speaker to be announced.



*Kerfield Place, Camberwell.  
Rubbish piles up. There has  
been a 50% failure rate in  
collection in recent weeks.*

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Rubbish in Kerfield Place – a New Record?**

Despite appeals in the November issue of the Newsletter, telephone calls to the Grove Vale depot and a request for help from Cllr Ritchie, Kerfield Place continues to be ignored by the Council's refuse collectors (see photo taken on 24th January). Between December 22nd and January 25th there was only *one* rubbish collection when there should have been *four*. This is not a new problem. Between 25 August and 27 October last year, a period of *nine* weeks,

there were only *five* collections. So residents in this part of Camberwell can reckon on at least a 50% failure rate in their rubbish collection, going by the record of the past few weeks.

Protests in January from residents to the Grove Vale depot produced the excuse that bad weather had prevented collections. Possibly, but this would hardly explain a failure rate of 75%, and other vehicles were able to use Kerfield Place during the snow.

Further enquiries reveal that there are two refuse collections to Kerfield Place per week, one on a Friday to the *west* side of the street and the other on a Monday to the *east* side. The Friday refuse collector



refused in January to take away the rubbish accumulating on the east side of Kerfield Place saying it was not their round. As the street is a cul-de-sac and there are few houses to collect from, this seemed unreasonable. Further enquiries revealed that the Grove Vale depot was apparently unaware that Kerfield Place was divided into two rounds. When it was pointed out that residents were furious to see an empty refuse lorry leave a street where rubbish was accumulating and that it was wasteful and inefficient for the street to be divided into two rounds, he said that he would look into it. As this fact has been pointed out to Grove Vale on previous occasions and nothing has happened, local residents now believe that the refuse lorries have a will of their own and are not subject to rational management. Or maybe the management does not try hard enough?

If appeals to Grove Vale and to Cllr Ritchie, who has taken up this issue on residents' behalf, do not produce better results soon, there are likely to be calls for action by those affected. Proposals heard so far range from withholding part of the rates to paying a private collector to remove rubbish and sending the bill to the Council.

However nobody wants it to come to that and all residents in the Kerfield Place area hope that the Council will fulfil its statutory duty to remove household rubbish on a regular basis. In the meantime anyone able to beat the above record for non-collection is asked to contact the Society and also to make their protests known to the Grove Vale depot: 693 4171.

### Star Rating for Phoenix

The Phoenix and Firkin at Denmark Hill station is one of the few London pubs to receive star rating in the 1987 *Good Pub Guide*. The write-up in the guide praised Bruce's beers, the simple furnishings and the relaxed easy-going atmosphere and then goes on to praise the work of the Society.

The Guide says "This pub shows that (Bruce's) atmosphere but it's in another class for architecture. Its remarkable renovation shows what can be done by a small local society determined to rescue a worthwhile building. In this case it was the

Camberwell Society which spent over three years drumming up support and money for the ambitious project that eventually turned a roofless fire ruin of a railway station into one of London's most unusual pubs. Besides a good deal of money raised locally, British Rail, the Historic Buildings Council and the GLC contributed substantially towards the £300,000 cost of restoring the building's fabric. It's a palatial Victorian building spanning the railway cutting – you feel it throb when trains pass underneath. David Bruce has been responsible for the inside – the pub part. The bar is a vast lofty pavilion, with a huge double-faced station clock, originally from Llandudno Junction, hanging by chains from the incredibly high ceiling, and two rows of arched windows in one tall bare brick wall. There's a bar counter made from a single mahogany tree, solid wooden furniture on the stripped wooden floor, paintings of steam trains, old seaside posters, Bovril advertisements, old fashioned station name signs, plants and big revolving fans."

*The Good Pub Guide* is published by the Consumers' Association and costs £8.95.

### Camberwell's Canal

Living History Publications in association with Environment Bromley has just published *Retracing Canals to Croydon and Camberwell*, a detailed and fascinating account of the routes and the history of this canal system in south-east London. The book contains 13 maps which locate the canals' routes: the Surrey Canal from Camberwell to Rotherhithe with its branch to Peckham, and the Croydon Canal from New Cross via Brockley, Honor Oak, Forest Hill, Sydenham, Anerley and South Norwood to Croydon. There are 22 sections of older larger scale maps showing the canals in detail and 16 contemporary views showing the canals in use. The book is A5 size, contains 84 pages and costs £2.40. It may be obtained from the libraries of Southwark, Lewisham, Bromley and Croydon, or by post at £2.70 from Living History Publications, 75 Heathside Road, West Ewell, Surrey KT19 9QS.

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## WE NEED YOUR VIEWS

Your Newsletter is your forum. It is one of the purposes of the Society's Newsletter to provide a public means for members to air their views whether or not – and particularly when they are not – in agreement with editorial comment, the views of contributors or of the Society's Executive Committee.

In this issue we particularly draw your attention to the appeal by Norman Hutchison, our Convenor of the Society's Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee, on page 2 for support and comment. For example: how do you feel about narrowing the carriageway in Camberwell Grove at the intersection with McNeill Road by forming "blisters" on the pavement as at the junction with Stories Road to slow down the traffic and make it easier and safer for the "lollipop lady" to do her job? Are you for or against one-person-operated (i.e. driver only) buses? Have you any extended experience of them abroad?

Norman Hutchison would also like to hear from members willing to join a Camberwell British Rail Users' Group to help us provide information and comment to The London Regional Passengers' Committee, the statutory voice of public transport users in London. Ring him on 272 3529.

## WHERE TO GET HELP

## BOROUGH SERVICES: ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

*From time to time we have published addresses and telephone numbers where members can obtain information and help on various matters. In this issue Executive Committee member, Norman Hutchison, has prepared a consolidated list of such addresses and numbers for both the London Boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth. These are printed below.*

The Development Department of the London Borough of Southwark has moved from 30-32 Peckham Road (which will in due course house the Legal Department).

So this is a good opportunity to revise and expand what we have given our members in previous Newsletters. To help those living west of the former Odeon Cinema, the main Lambeth addresses are also given.

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### LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

Planning (including conservation areas and trees)	The Borough Planner Borough Development Department Angel Court 199 Borough High Street London SE1 1JA	01-403 3322 *	Ext.2111 for general planning enquiries if name of officer dealing with case is not known. Enquiries on trees to ext.2201 or 2202.
Public Works (including highways,	The Director of Public Works Municipal Offices Larcom Street London SE17 1RY	01-703 5464 *	Highways, road safety, cleansing – includes special removal requests. Address to, or ask for, "The Complaints Officer", if appropriate, but to ask for urgent action on certain matters call the special numbers below.
	Lighting failures; dangerous defects, blockages, etc. of streets, pavements, sewers.	01-703 3434 ext.242 *	Office of Highway Inspectors.
	Abandoned vehicles	01-703 3434 ext.202 *	
	Fly-tipping (unauthorised dumping of rubbish)	01-928 9988	Ring at any time with information that could help to catch and prosecute a major offender. This is the "action line" of the London Waste Regulation Authority, which co-operates with Borough services.
Environmental Health (including noise abatement)	Environmental Health Service 19 Grange Road London SE1 3BT	01-231 7332 *	
Other services (if no specific number in Directory)	Town Hall Peckham Road London SE5 8UB	01-703 6311	

\* Number available during office hours. At other times some emergency service may be available from 01-703 6311.

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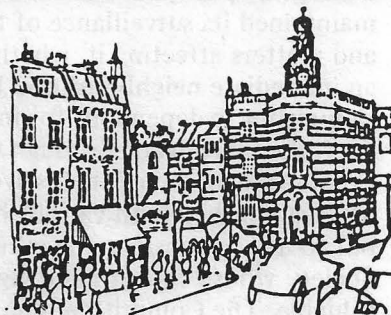
### LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH

Planning (including conservation areas and trees)	Borough Development Department Courtenay House 9/15 New Park Road London SW2 4DU	01-674 9844	
Civil Engineering and Public Services	George West House 2 Clapham Common North Side London SW4 0QW	01-720 2177	Covers broadly the same services as Southwark's Public Works.
Environmental Health (including noise abatement)	138 Clapham Park Road London SW4 7DE	01-622 6655	
Other services (if no specific number in Directory)	Town Hall Brixton London SW2 1RJ	01-274 7722	Also gives some emergency service when offices above are closed.



# THE CAMBERWELL SOCIETY

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Asst. Treasurer:	James Farmer, 1 Pelham Hse, 14 Grove Pk, SE5	(274 3197)



NEWSLETTER No. 75

April 1987

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – Thursday, 21st May, 1987

The Annual General Meeting of the Camberwell Society will be held at eight o'clock on the 21st May at the United Reformed Church, Love Walk, SE5.

### AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Previous minutes and matters arising.
3. Annual Report of the Executive Committee for the year 1986–87.
4. Treasurer's Report.
5. Election of Officers and Committee.

All the Officers of the Society and the members of the Executive Committee retire annually in accordance with the constitution of the Society and are eligible for re-election. Nominations are required for the Officers and Committee. Any paid-up member may, together with a seconder, make nominations. These must be in writing and may be made at the meeting, but preferably should be delivered to the Hon. Secretary, 49 Allendale Close, SE5, before this date.

6. Any other business.

IRIS OLDRIDGE  
Hon. Secretary

The A.G.M. will be followed by:—

### AN ILLUSTRATED TALK ON DULWICH PICTURE GALLERY

The A.G.M. (which is a meeting for members only) will be followed as usual by an open meeting at which everyone is very welcome. This year we have a speaker coming to give an illustrated talk on Dulwich Picture Gallery and its Paintings. Members who know this gallery or are Friends of the Gallery will no doubt enjoy having their memories refreshed. If you are not familiar with its history and collection you will find yourself tempted to visit the Gallery. Currently a collection from Dulwich is on tour in Japan. A Camberwell Parish Boundary stone, dated 1870, lies south of Gallery Road, so once this was in Camberwell! The open meeting will start at about 8.30 p.m.

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 1986-1987

During the past year the Camberwell Society has maintained its surveillance of the local environment and matters affecting it, whether at a national or at an immediate neighbourhood level. The Executive Committee is dependent for information on letters from the Southwark Borough Council, observation of Committee members themselves, contacts which they have established with various bodies and organisations, but to a very considerable extent on members of the Society whose concern and vigilance is infinitely valuable. The Committee thanks everyone who contributes in this way. It is then necessary for the Executive Committee to decide upon appropriate action, to define or re-define, to change in the light of changed circumstances or re-affirm the Society's policy. The Society is greatly indebted to the Convenors of the two main Sub-committees, Norman Hutchison for Traffic and Transport and Ian Hunter for Planning, for the detailed work they and their Committees undertake and the recommendations they bring before the Executive Committee.

The Traffic and Transport Sub-committee in the past year has been more than ever involved in bus and rail services, traffic management and road safety. The Society is pressing for a new rail, if possible bus/rail, station near the Green, to give full access to the new "Thameslink" services through to North London when they open. We are also supporting the moves to improve public transport by integrating bus and rail, not just in Camberwell but throughout South London, believing this to be essential to any strategy with hopes of making real improvement in Camberwell's worsening traffic problems. This has meant co-operation with other societies, with Southwark Council and with the statutory body representing users, the London Regional Passengers Committee, which has recognised the Society as a user group. Our pressures on London Regional Transport, on the Department of Transport and, through MPs, on its Ministers have been reported in Newsletters; we only wish there had been results to report as well.

As for our roads, Southwark has the former GLC responsibilities (with confusing exceptions such as traffic lights) but no funds for major works other than those in progress, if that is the word, at the Green. Failure to close the road on the North side to compensate for what is being lost on the West and South of the Green is a wasted opportunity. A few less costly works have squeezed through. We have welcomed the protected crossings opposite Cambridge House and at the lower entrance to Ruskin Park. Safety measures in Grove Lane at De Crespigny Park, in Denmark Hill at Champion Hill, and in Camberwell Grove at McNeil Road are at the consultation stage as this report is prepared, and bus lanes are being laid out in Champion Park and Denmark Hill. Many such matters, on which the Sub-committee has to take a view, are contro-

versial and it would be good if more members would volunteer their views or, even better, their time to help in the work.

The nature and extent of the work of the Planning Sub-committee is shown in its most recent monthly report to the Executive Committee. It contained fourteen items needing special comment. These included re-development of garage premises off Denmark Hill to provide residential accommodation, change of colour of a building, development plans for the site adjacent to the Father Redcap at the North end of the Green, a planning appeal for the redevelopment of a site in Grove Park, use of St. George's Church, Maudsley Hospital plans, demolition of an old building in Camberwell Church Street, a new iron fire escape, and so on. As with the Traffic and Transport Sub-committee, the Planning Sub-committee needs more volunteer helpers if it is to continue to survey, support or object to these multifarious planning matters.

A representative of the Executive Committee has attended most meetings of the Southwark Policing Consultative Group. We are pleased that at last representatives of the Council, Police and local groups are meeting together and that discussion is leading to progress and some understanding. As a Society, representing a wide cross section of Camberwell residents, we shall continue to press for representation on this consultative group.

The Committee has once again tried to produce a varied programme for members' meetings, including the philosophy and practicalities of a London Comprehensive School, the King's Scanner, London Wild Life, Georgian Houses, a Trip to China, and Local Maps and Views. The AGM will be followed by an illustrated talk on the Dulwich Picture Gallery. The decision to use the larger hall for all meetings this year has been justified and more members and friends have attended. Irene Taylor undertook to provide refreshments and members have enjoyed coffee and conversation and the exchange of ideas before the meetings. The Christmas Party was, as always, the best attended meeting (I wonder why?) and many people contributed material and time to make it a success. This year's entertainment was provided by the Cavendish Wind Quintet and their lively programme ranged through Haydn from Be-bop to Beriot. Suggestions for members' meetings, entertainment for the party, and other offers of help are always welcomed.

It has been several years since the Society had new greetings cards. During the Autumn the Publications Sub-committee undertook the necessary research to produce, in time for Christmas, four new coloured cards and, a new venture, four smaller cards suitable for notelets. (Two of these cards are illustrated elsewhere in this Newsletter).

The Society's new Treasurer, Alan Riddle, together



with our ever-generous-with-her-time Billie Densumbe have overhauled the membership list. If you have a friend who no longer receives a Newsletter, it is for the simple reason that a subscription has not been paid for many years or a change of address has not been notified! Our current membership is however very healthy with new members joining every week.

Another debt of gratitude is owed to the Editor of the Newsletter, Jim Tanner, who provides the main link between membership and committee and also maintains a record of the historic and topical, important and trivial. He is always pleased to receive contributions from members and to be able to publish a wide spectrum of opinion. From time to time the Committee considers a matter of sufficient importance to include a supplement or occasional paper in the Newsletter. This always involves a great deal of research and collation of material. In a recent Newsletter Ron Watts, Convenor of the Burgess Park Sub-committee, produced a very comprehensive and informative supplement on the present position of the park following the demise of the GLC.

The Committee is grateful to the Hon. Secretary, Iris Oldridge, and the Assistant Secretary, Kate Crawley. Theirs is an unglamorous job but they keep track of meetings and correspondence and minutes and are vital to the smooth running of the Executive Committee and the Society. Another group of members who do valiant service are the Newsletter deliverers. We also rely on their feedback and without them our lines of communication would soon break down.

Of necessity this annual report is written before the end of the Society's year. As we go to press we are busy with plans for Environment Week in which it is hoped members will take an interest and play an active part.

*Islay Charman  
Chairman*

## PLANNING NOTES

*The following notes on the activities of the Society's Planning Sub-committee are by its convenor, Ian Hunter.*

Residents, readers and members (and the Society would welcome more residents and readers as members) will be well aware of the many changes to properties in the Camberwell area over the past 10 years and the spate of change continues unabated. They will also be aware that since taking over as convenor of the Planning Sub-committee after the 1986 AGM I have been remiss in not contributing to the Newsletters a report on the activities of that Sub-committee. That does not

mean that the Sub-committee has been inactive but it would welcome the assistance of more members who are prepared to attend meetings about every three weeks and, more particularly, can make time to attend the Borough planning offices at Angel Court, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JA, to inspect the plans of proposed changes to premises and comment upon them. This does not require you to be a trained architect but if you possess that expertise you would be doubly welcome.

The Borough Planning Officer provides the Society each week with a list of the planning applications to the Borough and to the London Docklands Development Corporation, between 20 and 50 applications weekly covering everything from a shopfront in Butterfly Walk to the hundreds of new dwellings being erected in the Docklands area. The Society confines its comments to those applications within its area of benefit, bounded roughly by Albany Road, Wells Way, Southampton Way, Talfourd Road, Grove Hill Road, Champion Hill, Denmark Hill, Camberwell Road, which it has been proposed should be extended westwards to include Denmark Road, Flodden Road, Farmers Road, John Ruskin Street and Bethwin Road.

Many of the applications are generally accepted to be improvements, whereby properties designed for large prosperous Victorian families which are no longer suitable for, or capable of being occupied and maintained by, a single family are internally subdivided into flats. The Society is concerned that the external appearance is largely maintained and any structural alterations are in keeping with adjacent properties. Demolitions and re-builds, in-filling of small open spaces and major re-developments of virgin or vacant sites are a different story and require close scrutiny and detailed constructive criticism to avoid the horrors of which we can all quote examples.

The area is blessed with several conservation areas where there are established guidelines as to what changes may be effected to existing premises, listed buildings and the area generally, to ensure the quality of the conservation area is maintained. Problems arise where, since the erection of the original dwellings and appurtenances, changes have taken place prior to most memories, and the existing premises, which may be totally out of keeping with the area, have become an accepted part of the neighbourhood. The factory premises described as Stories Mews Warehouse at the rear of 176 Camberwell Grove, and the builders yard and buildings at the rear of 164/166 Camberwell Grove are such examples. Whilst the Society for over 15 years has maintained a policy of objecting to back developments in those mews, following appeals planning permission has been granted for conversion of the buildings at the rear of 164/166 Camberwell Grove into residential accommodation and, similarly, the Stories Mews Warehouse is being converted to residential use. The proposed redevelopment of 26/27 Grove Park to provide 137 dwellings was objected to on density, design, the unsuitability of the site for overall development and the height and proximity of the proposed buildings. Revised plans were presented

and following further objections, the matter went to public enquiry in November 1986 when the Council Officers, Council members, local residents and the Grove Park Residents Association were represented and opposed the application of Rialto Builders. Notwithstanding these objections an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment has allowed this appeal. A modified plan for a reduced number of dwellings on the site would have been acceptable to the Society but it appears the views of local residents and the local authority have been over-ruled. The secondary plan for 100 dwellings on this site has now been withdrawn.

Plans are afoot to expand further the Maudsley Hospital and to link it with Kings College Hospital by a bridge over Denmark Hill. The Society considers this totally unacceptable and that the area cannot cope with the volume of staff, visitors, outpatients and traffic already generated by these two hospitals. The Area Health Authority should give greater consideration to their other sites before further desecration of Denmark Hill, De Crespigny Park and Windsor Walk where their taste in building design is hardly compatible with existing buildings in those streets.

In addition to the above examples, there are a mass of lesser schemes within the Society's area involving reconstruction, extensions and refurbishments. Anyone considering any changes should acquaint themselves with the booklet *Planning Permission, A Guide for Householders*, and for those in business the booklet *A Step by Step Guide to Planning Permission for Small Businesses*, both published by the Department of Environment, available from HM Stationery Office and, in limited quantities, from the office of Southwark Planning, Angel Court, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JA.



## TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT NOTES

*These Notes are by Norman Hutchison, Convenor of the Society's Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee. His number was unfortunately misprinted on page 7 of the February Newsletter. It is 274 3529. His address is 9 Champion Grove, SE5 8BN. The appeal on that page for comments on a number of controversial local traffic issues and for members to volunteer for a Rail Users' Group seems to have fallen on deaf ears (or maybe an unanswered phone). What about it, members?*

### Camberwell Station a step nearer?

A major step forward was taken on 2nd April when the Council's Planning Committee agreed in principle that there should be a new BR station where the closed Walworth Bus Garage (which in fact lies between Camberwell Road and Camberwell New Road) adjoins the lines which now run into Holborn Viaduct. From, probably, May 1988 these lines will instead carry trains coming from both Denmark Hill and Loughborough Junction right through to Farringdon, King's Cross and further north, taking in on the way several tube interchanges which are due to be improved. So a chance to use, to and from Camberwell, what promises to be a frequent service would be a spectacular improvement in our public transport. It would be even better if London Buses – despite the myopic Ministerial directives imposed on them through LRT – had the vision to plan feeder services to a station whose “location also provides a unique opportunity to provide a bus/train interchange, which research has shown would enhance the train station catchment area”.

This quotation, from the report to the Planning Committee, means that the benefits of a new bus/rail station need not be limited to those living or working nearby. It could be a vital part of the strategy which some Government, some day, must surely be compelled to adopt – a strategy which would give us a tolerable environment by deliberately providing public transport to meet demands for movement

*The Lutheran chapel built in 1855 was pulled down to make way for the blank facade of the Maudsley building in Windsor Walk.*



instead of encouraging yet more cars to choke our main streets and turn every side street into a rat-run.

The obstacle, as usual, is cost – or rather the blinkered attitude which ignores future costs if opportunities like this are not taken now. It is good to learn that Southwark Council and BR are to work together on the case which has to be made to the Department of Transport for this and other new stations to be funded in the rail investment programme. Pressures by the Society may have helped a little in getting matters to the present stage. We shall go on pressing.

#### **Threat to the 184 bus**

The short-term view taken by, or imposed on, London Buses has hit us all already through the withdrawal and worsening of services, but there is a new threat from 6th June. One element in a massive package of proposed cuts, with only a few compensatory extensions, is the total withdrawal of the 184 bus on Saturdays and Sundays and after 6.30p.m. on other days, with no peak-hours extension to Mansion House and with frequency cut by 43% during peak hours and by 50% in the middle of the day. The only “compensation” proposed is to run the 176 on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as on weekdays as now; but it would be between Goose Green and Oxford Circus (via Waterloo) only. The 185 service would not be increased: indeed its peak-hours extension from Lewisham to Greenwich would disappear.

The Society is vigorously objecting to what is proposed for the 184, whose capacity and frequency are already often inadequate. For those going south of Camberwell Green – not only residents but the heavy traffic to King’s and Dulwich Hospitals – it is, to put it at its lowest, the least unreliable connection with the tube at the Elephant, and many more are now threatened with the horrors of the scramble at the Green for a bus “up the hill”. Our representations have gone both to London Buses Ltd and to the London Regional Passengers’ Committee, the statutory body representing passengers’ interests. They have also been made known to our local MPs, since the underlying issues are Government policies and their interpretation by LRT.

#### **The London Assessment Studies**

As briefly noted on page 2 of Newsletter No. 74, the four lengthy and expensive studies by independent consultants, which the Secretary of State for Transport commissioned in a trunk roads context, confirmed – not surprisingly – that the problems now identified in “Stage 1” reports need to be answered in terms of the whole transport system and the environment with which it interacts.

In response to the invitation by the Department of Transport the Society has submitted comments on the findings for consideration at “Stage 2”. In summary, we have stressed that without measures to contain or reduce total demand for private transport the Department’s present strategy of “improving” the main roads and “restricting” the side roads will be ineffective or worse. We have asked for examination of incentives and disincentives which would affect that demand, with particular emphasis

on an adequate and co-ordinated public transport system and on priority on roads for its bus component so that services could run to time. Other topics we suggested the consultants should consider – and we hope jolt unimaginative Departmental thinking – were absence of enforcement of existing traffic management measures, pointing maybe to giving powers and resources to the London Boroughs, and the links between good public transport and good public order.

To judge from their “Stage 1” reports the consultants’ conclusions might do more for the objectives of societies such as ours than at one time seemed likely. But there are at least two years to wait for them, and meanwhile the task goes on of watching for the wrong decisions and missed opportunities that could make traffic even more of a threat to the Camberwell environment.

### **ENVIRONMENT WEEK**

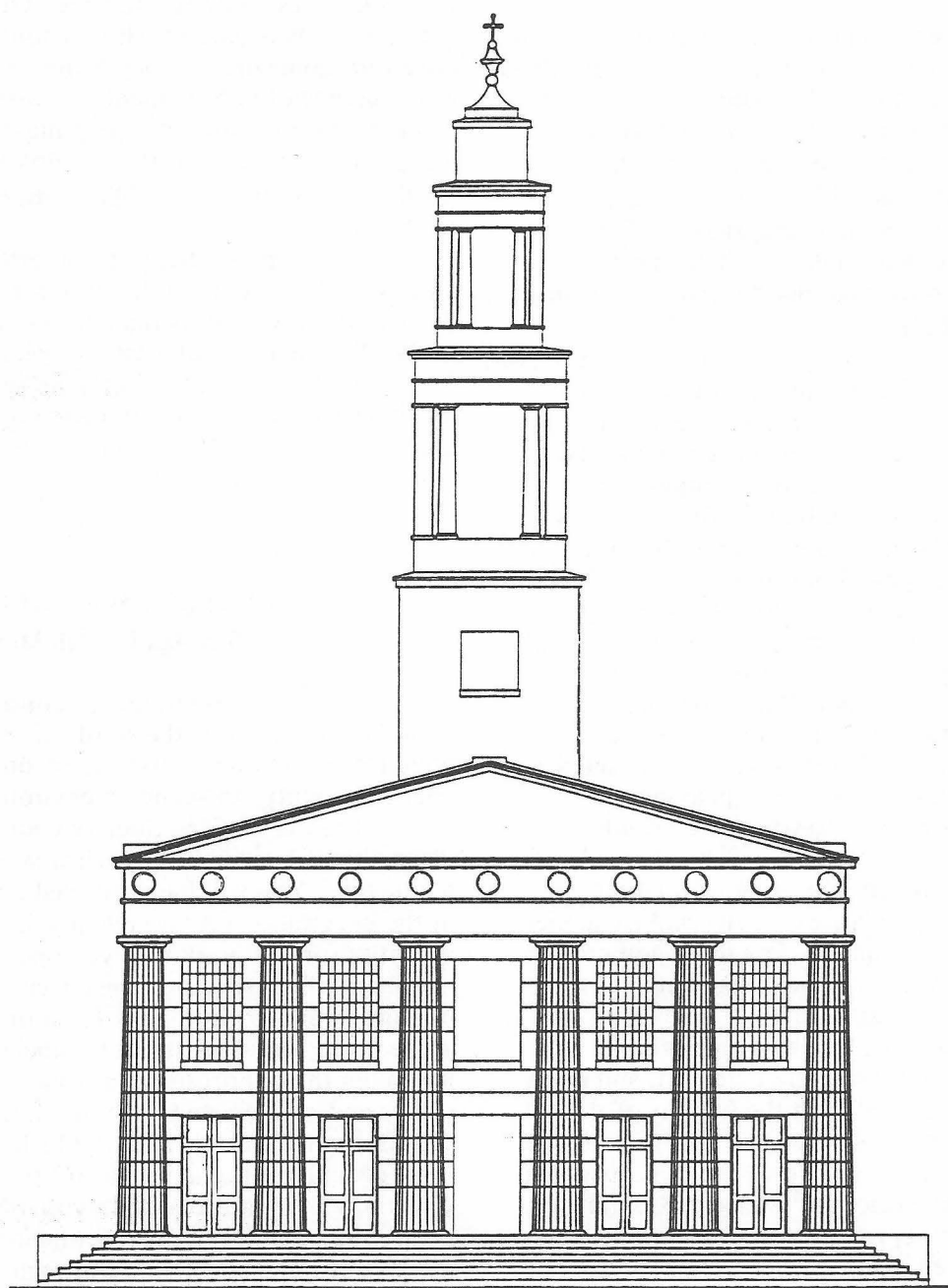
**25th April – 4th May**

Everyone today is environment conscious (if only to complain!) but this is the third year that, on a nationwide front, the Civic Trust has encouraged people all over the country to spend an environment active week. The Camberwell Society could justifiably claim that it is constantly environment conscious and active. You will have received a Society circular at the beginning of April telling you about special activities for this week and we hope that some members will have joined the coach tour organised by Southwark Environment Trust or Andrew Byrne’s guided tour round Georgian Camberwell. The Society has taken the opportunity to begin a survey of historic stones and markers and we hope that this will be an ongoing activity at the end of which we shall have a mapped and photographic record for posterity. If you know of a parish boundary marker, a manor stone, trig point, milestone, foundation stone ... in the area covered by the old Borough of Camberwell, please ring the Chairman (703 4427) or Hon. Secretary (703 0414) to see if it is already recorded. If not, we would like to have a note from you, describing it, quoting the inscription, giving its location and, if possible, a photograph.

Casual litter, dumped rubbish, hedges sprawling over pavements, decaying buildings, tipping paving stones, vandalised trees, unswept pavements, anyone who sweeps rubbish onto the pavement, thoughtlessly parked cars, fouling of the pavements (not only by dogs), blocked drains ... all destroy our environment, and all are not the Borough Council’s responsibility. The Society bombards Southwark Borough Council, and will continue to do so, about its derelict property, inefficient (and sometimes non-existent) refuse collection and other causes of squalor ... but are we ALL really doing all we can to make Camberwell a more pleasant place to live and shop, work and walk about in? This is what Environment Week is about, helping to clear up the mess and to prevent it.

*Islay Charman*

## ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, WELLS WAY



*The west elevation*

*One of Camberwell's most distinguished buildings is now in a ruinous state. Can it be saved? Andrew Byrne reports.*

"Jim", I said after the last members' meeting, "what is happening with St George's Church at Wells Way? It may well possess a certain sublimity and appropriate dignity in its dereliction, but compared to its ancestors in Greece it is still young and worthy of repair and use."

"Andrew", replied our President with more than a hint of determination in his eyes, "go forth and make enquiries, seek out any clues, consult the architectural oracles, make investigations on the wires and do not be put off by unfriendly and misleading advice." Fired by such mystical directives, I set off into the darkness.

St George's is a product of the Church Building Act

of 1818 whereby parliament decreed that one million pounds was to be spent by the Church Building Commission to erect an unspecified number of churches in expanding towns and suburbs. Designed by Francis Octavius Bedford (1784–1858), it is a near identical twin to his St John's, Waterloo Road, both constructed within two years of their start in 1822. Two further Commission churches by Bedford survive in south London – St Luke's, Norwood (1823–5) and Holy Trinity, Trinity Church Square (1823–4).

For the front of St George's, Bedford designed a mighty six-columned Greek Doric portico with staged tower above. Inside were three galleries in Greek Doric columns with a flat ceiling. The decorative plasterwork (of which small portions survive) was in the delicate neo-classical style so typical of the period.



The church was given a fine location adjoining the newly completed Grand Surrey Canal, but sadly closed its doors to worship in 1970; the canal became redundant in 1971, to be drained shortly after. Guttled by vandalism and fire after its closure, the church now stands roofless, a sodden brick and stone shell on the edge of Burgess Park, without doubt the finest building in the area.

After several telephone calls regarding its ownership, I received a call from someone offering to show me around the church, inside and out, to see what we could see and discuss the plans that exist for its rescue. Only a small amount of arm-twisting was necessary.

On a sunny March afternoon, having got through the corrugated iron fortifications, I found myself inside St George's with my contact. The floor is buried beneath mounds of earth that bear much vegetation and shrubs — like some overgrown walled garden — and in the middle a mass of rusting scaffolding that supported the roof before its collapse. Plaster mouldings and huge structural timbers litter the place. A sad sight if ever I saw one.

But the news is good. Camberwell's oldest church and one of its finest buildings, is to be saved. Rusjon, a building contractor from east London that specializes in refurbishment of old buildings — particularly those that have reached seemingly hopeless stages of dereliction — are the innovators of the scheme. After several other possibilities had been weighed up and discounted, the plan is to convert the church into housing association flats. The builder has for the past year spent a lot of time and money finalizing the project with the architect, the Southwark planners,

English Heritage, the Church Commissioners and the local community. All have been sympathetic because the proposals have a keen sense for the new needs of the building.

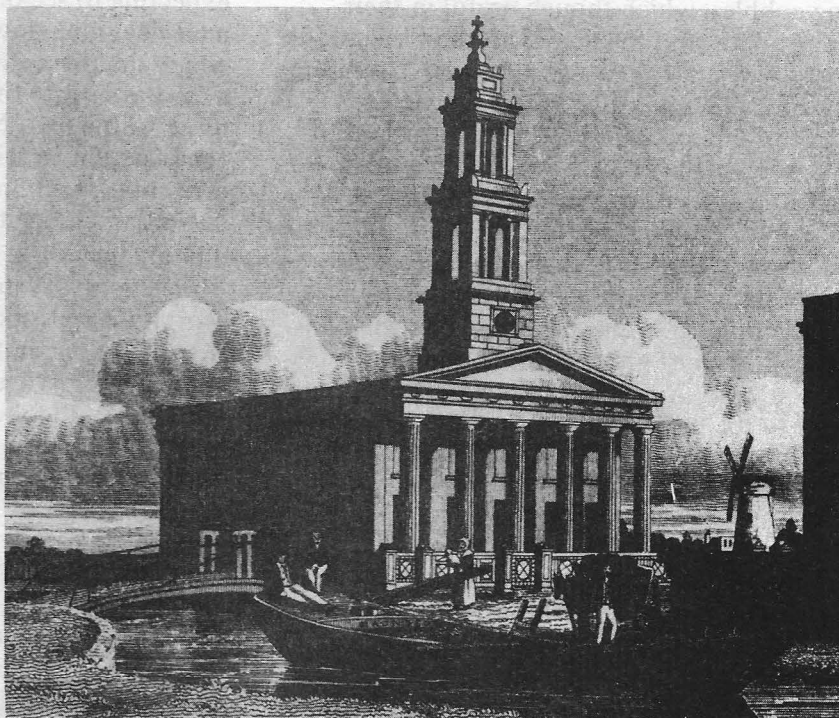
The facades and tower will be repaired and, inside, the flats will lead off either side of a central open courtyard. As the structure cannot support a replacement roof, the new roof will slope down from the side elevations towards the central courtyard. The surviving plasterwork will allow for moulds to be taken to provide new and the original baptismal font — found in the nearby rectory — will be reinstalled. As far as the refurbishment side is concerned, the most important thing is the repair of the stonework which will receive a large grant. The walls are merely stone blocks tied by cast iron straps to the very thick brickwork behind. Many of the straps have failed, forcing the stonework to bulge.

If everything goes to plan, work will start in the autumn allowing, at the very least, for protection to be given to the structure for the winter. The work will probably last for eighteen months. By then, a worthy scheme — reasonably priced housing association flats — will have saved a fine building.

*Bedford's association with Camberwell stretches beyond St George's. In the 1820's he lived in the area and designed some houses in North Terrace, Peckham Road, between present day Benhill Road and Havil Street.*

*The work will be carried out by Rusjon Ltd., for the Co-operative Dwellings Society. Architect for the project is Peter Currie.*

*One of a set of four notelets (actual size) published by the Camberwell Society showing St. George's Church, a barge on the Grand Surrey Canal in the foreground.*



## TWO BOYS AND A STATION ONE BOY RETURNS

*Readers of the Newsletter have been privileged to read a series of articles by Tom Griffiths recounting his boyhood years at Denmark Hill Station in the early part of this century. Tom, who now lives in Bristol, made a sentimental journey back to Denmark Hill in 1983 when he was invited to attend a ceremony marking the award of a high commendation in the Civic Trust's Pride of Place Competition for the restoration of the Station. In this, the concluding article of the series, he compares past with present.*

It was a newspaper story that started me thinking. I was surprised to see Denmark Hill Station in the paper, after all it was an important station in its time, but with the passing years, and different modes of travel, railways in general declined. But on seeing my station mentioned, it was like a flood of light to my memory, like a ray of sunshine lights up a landscape as it comes from behind cloud, recalling nostalgic memories of my boyhood, and when I received an invitation to be at the Heritage Ceremony, I was overjoyed, and accepted immediately, then started to wonder if any old landmarks still remained. So I set out from the West country with my mind full of questions, which only could be answered by a visit. I alighted outside Maudsley Hospital, which hadn't changed over the years, so I had one landmark, and of course Kings College. But I couldn't help reflect, what happened to the large grit bin which used to stand, where the bus stop now is, though the bin was so insignificant, there were many people very grateful for its contents, to give a grip to the wheels of all sorts of vehicles, which were delivering essential goods up Denmark Hill and Champion Hill, also Champion Park. It was very strange not to see tramlines and surrounding cobbles, which though useful in their day, are out of date, and the men who took the middle lines up, must have thought they had struck a treasure trove, with the coins, and other trinkets which fell down the slot in the road. So I was very surprised to see a set of traffic lights at just the place where the hardest pull up was required. But then modern transport has overcome the age old question of potted power, and how to apply it at the right time. I turned into Champion Park, and with a nostalgic look at where I used to live, which I am glad to say is a nice green stretch of grass, because after the bombing it could have been a heap of rubble, I turned my attention to the railway below, but the view was obscured by black chain link fencing in keeping with the colour of the plot of land it protected. How I remember sixty years ago, the stout and staunch railings where people grasped upright rods and children strained their faces nearer to the bars, the better to watch the speeding Express dash past and, sometimes in the child's case, many a head has been wedged between bars, and with a liberal libation of grease, been released, but in some cases it was a job for the Fire Brigade. The plot was a veritable wild flower paradise, with blue and white clover, buttercups, wild marguerites, pink convolvus, dandelions,

scarlet pimpernel, but of course to small boys they were all weeds. Now I saw none of these: just a jumble of dried grass, and blackened soil. I gave a sigh as I approached the station and, walking past, saw the damage that had been done from the south end only, as I stood and looked where Mr. B's office had been. I reflected in anger that the perpetrator of this crime could not have known their mother, and their father must have come from a long line of batchelors. I turned and viewed the damage from the entrance: all those windows, so lovingly cleaned every day, with the arched tops, now blanked off with wood, like the closed shutters of a dead building. But I took heart as I knew plans were developing to restore the light again. After all that was the object of my visit.

A small sign directed me to the ticket office, which was the waiting room of long ago, a very clinical window, well lit, dispensed tickets for travellers, but what a difference from the main booking hall in yesteryear. There, on any day of the week it would be bustling with activity and smells with packages and fish crates, which had to be moved quickly, in the corner a basket of pigeons cooed, and waited to be taken outside and released, the slap of parcels and periodicals, this combined with the bustling and shouting of the porters, gave life to the station. Even the barrier, which was guarded by an official of the Railway, a ticket collector, seemed as if the barrier was not meant for that room, it slanted from one corner to the other, and made of such strength it would have held back a mob.

I passed through the barrier on to the walkway, which in my day was glass covered, and a great comfort to passengers on a cold night, but now it was open to the elements. I paused at the top of the stairs and looked at the ornate carvings, half expecting to see one of our paper darts wedged into a crevice, then down the stairs to the platform on which the presentation was going to be. I am afraid even the surface of the platform was ageing; it felt loose to the feet. No friendly signal at the end of the platform to tell passengers of the imminent arrival of a train, no large signal box with its shiny levers and connecting rods and cables and, most of all, no large black board with white letters, proclaiming "Denmark Hill Station for Kings College Hospital and Ruskin Park". I did look for some identification, and all I could see was a small paper sign, just with "Denmark Hill" on it.

I turned and looked up at the embankment — at least what I could see of it in between the chain link fencing — so many things had altered since I saw my boyhood playground. Gone was the cable box, gone was the neat little patches of garden, the trees now a good half century older, looked more gnarled and the lilacs which gave such a colour, now had a large amount of suckers and they resembled a thicket, no more wild flowers for butterflies and bees to alight on; I didn't even hear a bird in any of the trees: oh how my embankment has declined. Then without warning a train passed through; it was as if the locomotive had been left



behind, it was only the rush of air, that you were aware of a train.

The members now started to gather and the platform filled with people, as keen as I was to see the station alive again, and looking around I noticed, like shining jewels, the gentry were still with us, the lady with a toque hat in grey and the gentleman with her, the people in tweeds, all signs of the rapidly disappearing class, but they are still with us, and so the future of this lovely old station is having new life breathed into her by a group of people who care. May the phoenix rise from the ashes, and Denmark Hill Station still give comfort to the traveller as it has done for all its lifetime.

## CHINA AND ITS RAILWAYS

Society member, David Rhodes, who is a railways enthusiast and a keen amateur photographer, went to China last September and in a period of some three weeks travelled on 2000 miles of railway track.

David gave a lively account of this Odyssey to a select audience hardy enough to brave the Arctic weather on 15th January last at our members' meeting and illustrated his talk with an impressive set of colour slides of the Chinese railway system and of Chinese life. The centrepiece of his journey was his visit to the renowned (amongst railways enthusiasts) Datong works which are still producing one new steam locomotive a day, mostly to Japanese or Russian designs. We were bombarded with some fascinating statistics: there are about 60,000 parts to one locomotive; Datong employs 8700 workers, half of them women and the average pay is £6 a week.

How long, we asked, will China be able to depend on steam locomotives? Well it seems that the layer of coal now being mined will be exhausted in 90 years time. Beneath it are another 17 layers.

To this reporter, who spent his early childhood in pre-Mao China, it was both an entertaining and a highly evocative evening.

*Jim Tanner*

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Conservation

Many buildings in Camberwell have gone through a period of decay, once restored they are taken for granted. There are many examples of current restoration which should be commended. The shop with two flats above at the foot of Grove Lane, has fine cornices and plaster work and there is an elegant staircase; what a pity there are still no occupants. Pesh, the florist, is currently restoring what is perhaps the oldest existing building in Camberwell, and it is very exciting. Southwark Borough Council have given more than a face lift to the terraces at the top of Camberwell Grove; now the residents need to tackle the gardens. The new owner of 'Camberwell Hall and Tea Gardens' is doing much to obliterate the alterations of previous owners. New buildings which are designed to fit their locality and the surrounding architecture are not to be condemned. The disasters

are fewer and the destruction less. The vigilance of the Camberwell Society's Planning Sub-committee contributes much to this situation and the present results are encouraging. Perhaps the Society (or a benefactor) could institute a prize for the best restoration or the best new design in Camberwell.

### Pavement peril

Even those who regretted the loss to the Salvation Army College of part of the open space fronting Champion Park must have been glad to see how quickly the scars were healed within the building site. But the Champion Park pavement was another story, with metal projections left dangerously protruding for weeks on end from the muddy depths whence slabs had gone. This was an example of the notorious delays in communication between "statutory undertakers" (electricity, gas, water, etc.) and Southwark Public Works. On 30th March a Committee member of the Society spotted an inspection in progress by men who proved, on inquiry, to be from the Council's Highways Inspectorate. Apparently the Thames Water Authority was continuing to deny that the obvious "W" on every projection placed any responsibility on them. The Inspectors, who were courteous and concerned, said the continuing hazard was intolerable and that the Council would try to remove it within the week and recover the cost thereafter.

We hope that by the time members read this the pavement will be safe — and that the recovery will not prove to be from the ratepayers. One lesson is that it is worthwhile ensuring that the Highways Inspectors do know about dangers like this. Their number (703 3434 ext.242) was one of those in the table on the last page of the February Newsletter.

### Where to find recreation?

Perhaps as well as our list of where to get help, see Newsletter 74, we could collate a list of where to get recreation. Crotchets (157 Denmark Hill, 737 4361) provides dinner and chamber music on Saturday evenings. Tecnotile will shortly provide facilities for tennis and short tennis in the Save The Children Fund grounds. Members can still swim with the Society on Monday and Wednesday evenings (for information ring Beryl-Christine Bates, 274 8946). There must be many more local ventures, please let us know.

## SOUTHWARK POLICE CONSULTATIVE GROUP

The Southwark Police Consultative Group is at last beginning to get into its stride and the Society's observer at the meeting held in Bermondsey in February reported 'more talk and less confrontation', a development much to be welcomed. The Society was, unfortunately, not represented by an observer at the most recent meeting of the Group, held at Dulwich Baths on 2nd April. We would greatly welcome volunteers to attend such meetings and hope to have a nominee to stand for election to the Consultative Group at the next opportunity — Elizabeth Betts 274 6532 can give you more details.

## OLD MAPS AND VIEWS OF CAMBERWELL

When was the earliest detailed map of Camberwell published? Where was Walnut Tree Avenue?

The answers to these questions were revealed by Stephen Marks, together with other facts about the early history of Camberwell, in a fascinating talk to members on 12th March last.

Stephen illustrated his talk with a large number of slides depicting early maps and views of Camberwell as it emerged in the eighteenth century from being a piece of rural Surrey to a part of the fabric of London.

Much pictorial history is contained in contemporary postcards. A considerable number, Stephen explained, were produced from the end of the eighteenth century up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Then there was a flurry around 1900. The earliest detailed map, taken from a manuscript book,

appeared in 1739. Dewhurst's map of 1842, published in facsimile for the Camberwell Society, was based on the tithe Act of 1836. Stephen illustrated an 1870 Ordnance Survey map to a scale of 5 inches to the mile. Sadly OS maps are no longer produced to so large a scale.

Views of Camberwell, in the form of engravings, varied in excellence, according to Stephen. Many were copies and not very good. The audience was given the opportunity of judging this from some of the examples shown. The Society, of course, has a stock of cards for sale, which it has published, showing early Camberwell. Two of these – Fountain Cottage and the Old House on Camberwell Green – which were illustrated in Stephen's talk, are shown here. Walnut Tree Avenue, by the way – laid out in the 1750's – was what is now known as Camberwell Grove.

*Jim Tanner*



*The Old House on Camberwell Green, was built about 1709 and demolished in 1851 when Wren Road and the Congregational Church were built in the grounds. One of the views recently published by the Society as a card and used by Stephen Marks to illustrate his talk.*



*Fountain Cottage, Camberwell. The cottage with its pool and fountain in the grounds of Dr.Lettsom's house stood where the railway emerges at the junction of McNeil Road and Camberwell Grove.*



*Another of the views illustrated in Stephen Marks' talk and obtainable from the Society as a greetings card.*

## KING'S SCANNER

At the Society's meeting on 19th February, Dr.Laws, Director of Radiology at King's College Hospital, spoke lucidly about the inception and progress of the King's Scanner Appeal, how the scanner works and its advantages to the patient, and kindly answered all our members' questions.

The Appeal began some two years ago when Evening Standard reporters waiting at the Hospital to see a patient, chanced to see P.C.George Hammond, then recently wounded, being wheeled out to an ambulance en route to Cromwell Hospital for a C.T.Scan. They were absolutely shocked to see a very sick man being taken out of King's, and reported the matter publicly.

Money was raised through much hard work by many people. Sponsored fund-raising activities ranged from wind-surfing across the Straits of Gibraltar to silence amongst school children and a luncheon with Princess Anne. The red line on the thermometer outside the Hospital gradually rose to £850,000, where it stuck — but only because there was no safe ladder to reach it! The money was still coming in and soon George Hammond was hoisted up by the London Fire Brigade to reveal the red line up to the required £1,000,000; £700,000 to buy the machine and £300,000 to help run it through the next five years. The scanner had been ordered by the time of Dr.Laws' talk, should be working this month and will be formally opened in June. Dr.Laws expressed his gratitude to all members of the Society who

contributed to the appeal.

Modern scanners employ either ultra-sound or electromagnetic resonance to examine the patient meticulously from all angles. Ultra-sound scanners emit blips of sound of 1,000,000 to 10,000,000 Hertz considerably above the hearing of dogs and bats (50,000 Hz), from a small cylindrical probe which is passed over the outer surface of a patient's body. The machine waits for the return of the sound and measures the distance from the outer surface to a difference in body texture to reveal the shape and position of the organs, a baby in the womb or a gall stone.

The new C.T.Scanner being bought with the Appeal funds works on a similar principle but uses electromagnetic waves of approximately  $10^{-3}$  Angstrom units wave-length (X-rays). The equipment is in the form of a tunnel into which the patient is inserted lying prone. The X-ray source and its detecting unit are at opposite sides of the tunnel and rotate rapidly round the patient. The detecting unit records digitally how much energy has been absorbed in each of some 65,000 pixels or recording units using the coarsest grid, or a million pixels for a more detailed examination. These measurements are processed by computer and presented pictorially (CT = computer-assisted tomography) as a series of cross sections through the patient's abdomen, etc., at variable distances apart, from 1mm through a pituitary gland, for example, to 2.3cm to show the abdominal organs. The radiologist then examines visually some 30-40 slices, either perpendicular or oblique, through the patient's head or part of his body and uses his own 'No.1 computer' to interpret the pictures and any abnormalities they reveal. Dr.Laws' slides included pictures of various organs, dilated fluid spaces in the head of an hydrocephalous person, a cancerous growth pushing an eye forward and a blood clot beneath a skull that required draining to prevent brain injury.

Examination of a patient by the scanner normally lasts 30 minutes to an hour; some 16 patients can be examined in a day (8am to 6 or 7pm) and the machine is available for emergency use at any time. It is particularly valuable for examining patients with head injuries as X-ray photographs reveal nothing within the skull and the only alternative investigative procedures were both dangerous and costly.

The Society is most grateful to Dr.Laws for his most interesting presentation.

*Elizabeth Betts*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Help for the disabled

Sir,

May I invoke the help of the Society in connection with the needs of the disabled in the Borough in particular the provision of more sensible kerbs to enable wheelchairs to negotiate the hazards at crossings and other road junctions.

The Council has made some provision but far too little if one attempts the journey from Camberwell Green to Peckham (Rye Lane) or even from Camberwell Green to King's College Hospital! Many of the chairs provided by DHSS for use with an attendant have small wheels and even a 50mm (2") rise can prove difficult. I often assist an elderly disabled lady and therefore speak with firsthand knowledge. A difficult problem, may be, but one which I'm sure can be solved.

*C.Phillip Woolley*

### Litter, rubbish and street cleaning

Sir,

Some 18 months ago, we moved into a house in de Crespigny Park and joined the Society. Unfortunately we have not yet had time to attend your meetings as we have been very busy converting the house but we hope now that we shall be able to attend on a regular basis.

My reason for writing to you is my concern about the litter and street cleaning within the Camberwell area. I have taken some black and white photographs showing the mess and pollution that is caused in the main streets and the surrounding areas by litter being left out, or alternatively simply not cleared up, by major trading companies in our area.

At the last local elections a number of political parties including the elected councillors had the clean-up of the environment as one of the major issues in their campaign literature, but so far they appear to have done nothing about it. Would it be possible to focus attention on this subject within the local Press, or alternatively to make strong representations to the Council.

I have received a letter from the European Year of the Environment, and I am wondering if there is any possibility of the Camberwell Society availing itself of the grants which will be available from the European Commission.

*Pamela Entwistle*

*Extract from a letter dated 8 February, 1987, from A.M.B. (Peter) Williams of The Bothy Cottage, c/o Tudor Hall School, Wykhams Lane, Banbury, OX16 9UR. He has been a member since June 1986. "While writing may I ask if it is possible to mention in a future newsletter that I wish to contact anyone who lived in or knew the Denmark Road end of Station Road in 1920-1936. I am writing a history of This Place & Times and I would welcome help from anyone. Southwark Council have been helpful but surprisingly there is very little known and all the residents have vapourised. Even a Radio 2 broadcast failed to come up with anyone. I wonder if any of the Camberwell Society's 1000 members could help."*

*A.M.B. Williams*



## PRESTO CAR PARK

*In our last Newsletter we drew attention to members' concern about the car park in terms of the lack of tree planting, the amount of litter and the problem of noise from lorries delivering in the middle of the night. We print below a letter in response addressed to our President, Jim Tanner, by Mr. J.A. Lehan of Estates Property Investment Company (EPIC).*

Dear Mr. Tanner,

I have recently received your Newsletter No. 73 and refer specifically to the article concerning the above development.

I have noted the three items which are still causing considerable dissatisfaction among your members and I think it worth while responding to each item individually as follows:—

1. The landscaping scheme forms part of the planning consent issued and as far as I am aware there is no provision for it to be increased within the boundaries of our land. Some damage has been sustained to the new trees (see below) and some shrubs have been taken from the beds in Orpheus Street, but generally speaking the landscaping is as originally approved.
2. I fully accept that the level of litter in the car park was unacceptable but I hope that by the time you receive this letter that you will be able to notice a great improvement for the reasons stated below.
3. I think you and your members must accept that most supermarkets are serviced in the early hours of the morning which will give rise to a certain amount of noise from vehicles at these times. With regard to overnight lorry parking it is hoped that for the reasons stated below this will be eliminated.

In more general terms it was originally envisaged that Presto would manage both car parks as part of their

occupation of the supermarket. However it rapidly became apparent that because of vandalism and other unauthorised activities the degree of management required was greater than that which Presto was prepared to dedicate. As an example I would advise you that a local Scout master, having requested to use the main car park for a Car Boot Sale for his Troop one particular Sunday morning recently, was refused. Despite this refusal the Car Boot Sale went ahead and I am advised that various wares for sale were suspended from the newly planted trees and that the amount of litter generated was almost incredible. You will have seen that the car park Kiosk and the associated equipment has all been damaged by vandalism thus rendering control impractical.

However just recently it has been agreed that we will resume control of the common areas and although there is a delay while new equipment is obtained, this matter is now in hand and we have already made arrangements for the car park to be manned and for a more comprehensive system of car park management to be instigated. In addition with effect from the middle of November we have employed a resident caretaker who will be responsible for making sure that all common parts are kept clean at all times. My sincere hope, therefore, is that over the course of the next few months, the trend will be reversed and we will be able to achieve the desired results of cleanliness and management.

I would just make the point that, to the best of my knowledge, none of the points raised in your newsletter have been discussed with members of the London Borough of Southwark and certainly no negotiations are in hand with this company. May I also suggest that, in future, when you are preparing copy for your regular newsletter, you contact me so that I can give an up to date report.

Yours sincerely

J.A. Lehan

## EVENING STANDARD ARTICLE ON CAMBERWELL

Many Newsletter readers will have seen the article on Camberwell in the Evening Standard on 11 March written by Janice Morley. Some people thought it a realistic, if somewhat depressing, portrait of present-day Camberwell. Others felt it bore little resemblance to the area they feel they know better than a visiting journalist. Quite a few felt that, despite the references to muggings and crime in general, a large amount of space devoted to Camberwell in the Evening Standard could only be beneficial.

Personally I was upset by one section of the article when the writer described, somewhat flippantly, the early days of the Camberwell Society. She wrote "In 1970 the locals, with Jeremy carrying the banner, launched the Camberwell Society. Now there are more than 1000 members."

I would like to place on record that in 1970 I carried no banner and was not responsible for launching the Camberwell Society. I do not know why this statement was put in the article nor where the information came from. It certainly did not come from me.

I regret deeply that this inaccuracy got into the article because it belittles the initiatives and achievements of many others who at that time were responsible for founding the Camberwell Society and setting it on its course. They are too many to mention but their names can be found in the early editions of the Newsletter. They carried the banner, to them belongs the credit of launching the Society and, if anyone was mentioned in the article, they should have been — not me. Then I was just one of the members of the Camberwell Grove and Grove Lane Residents' Association which in 1970 became the Camberwell Society.

Jeremy Bennett  
Chairman 1979–86



## CORRECTIONS

Sloppy proof-reading by your Editor resulted in some errors in the last Newsletter. Corrections for two of the more significant are given below:

1. Our Mayor is Cllr Jessie Cannon (not Carmon).  
The alert eye and prompt last minute action by our Committee member, Billie Densumbe, ensured that some copies of the Newsletter were corrected by hand. (See picture).
2. On page 74.7 Norman Hutchison's telephone number was incorrectly given. It is 274 3529.

*The real Mayor of Southwark, Cllr Jessie Cannon, speaking at the ceremony at Denmark Hill Station on 14th November 1986 when HRH the Duke of Gloucester unveiled a plaque commemorating the Civic Trust Award for the restoration of the fire-damaged Station.*

## ANY MORE FOR TENNIS?

A new club will be located in the grounds of the former Mary Datchelor School in Grove Lane, SE5, now the headquarters of the Save The Children Fund. The Fund has agreed in principle to lease the former playground so that a tennis club can be established for the benefit of the community.

The unique feature of the Camberwell Tennis Club will be its attractive all-weather cushioned surface which will permit all year play and which will have permanent white line markings for two tennis courts and two Short Tennis courts.

Short Tennis is a smaller version of tennis played on badminton sized courts with lightweight racquets and soft tennis balls.

The Lawn Tennis Association is actively encouraging the game as a means of introducing tennis to children in a form they can enjoy and which will encourage and develop their skills. It is also an ideal game for adults who find normal tennis rather too strenuous!

Camberwell Tennis Club will be the only club in London to have all-weather Short Tennis courts. Membership fees will be kept low with court charges free to members. Professional coaching will be available and tennis clinics organised for children during both school terms and holidays.

TECNOTILE, a locally based company, is proposing to establish this tennis club for people living and working in Camberwell. A percentage of the Club's membership income will be going towards the work of the Save The Children Fund.

The provisional opening date is April 1987.

For further information or membership details please contact TECNOTILE, 64 Oakhurst Grove, London SE22 9AQ. Tel. 01-693 6287.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you have not yet paid your subscription for 1987 it is now due. Please make prompt payment to the Hon. Treasurer, Alan Riddle (113 Grove Lane SE5). Cheques should be made payable to the Camberwell Society: family membership £4, individual member £3, senior citizen £1. You can pay your subscription by Banker's Standing Order. Telephone Alan at 733 3977 for a form.

## STOP PRESS

Evening paper reports on 9th April that the Bakerloo might come to Camberwell are, LRT tell us, based on the fact that London Underground Ltd., are considering a wide range of possibilities for a long-term expansion programme in London as a whole. They cannot yet say which will be practicable in engineering terms, let alone meet the Government's investment criteria. We already knew that running Bakerloo trains beyond the Elephant was under consideration in this long-term study, with the option of surfacing and then running on BR track apparently more favoured than extending the tube as such. Moreover, as reported in Newsletter No. 73, surfacing at the former Bricklayer's Arms Goods Station and then running south-eastwards seemed the most likely to be chosen.

Obviously it would be good for Camberwell if the extension were southwards, whether underground or on the BR line. If it is the latter, it would be even more important to get our new station near the Green (see page 75.4), and as the new BR services are to run from 1988, we need that station quickly, whatever the longer term prospects for the Bakerloo line may turn out to be.



# THE CAMBERWELL SOCIETY

President:	Jim Tanner, 107 Camberwell Grove, SE5 8JH	703 8624
Chairman:	Islay Charman, 26 Grove Lane, SE5 8ST	703 4427
Vice-Chairman:	Conrad Dehn, 38 Camberwell Grove, SE5 8RE	701 4758
Hon. Secretary:	Iris Oldridge, 49 Allendale Close, SE5 8SG	703 0414
Hon. Treasurer:	Alan Riddle, 113 Grove Lane, SE5 8BG	733 3977
Asst. Secretary:	Kate Crawley, 6A Flodden Road, SE5 9LH	733 8194



NEWSLETTER No. 76

July 1987

## ENVIRONMENT WEEK

As far as the Camberwell Society was concerned Environment Week at the end of April, beginning of May, was not a big publicity campaign but an endeavour to ensure that the people of Camberwell know that an Amenity Society exists which minds about their environment, a Society which needs their support and their ideas if they too mind about the environment. It was also an endeavour to encourage Camberwellians to look at Camberwell, to recognise some of its historic features, to appreciate its buildings of character and architectural worth, to look ahead and to pose the questions and find the answers to What Next? We need shops, transport, leisure facilities. We need preservation, conservation, re-development, but it is no good ringing our hands at the end of the day and saying "Why did THEY do THAT"?

The week started with a Georgian trek round Camberwell and finished with a coach tour of the environs. In between these two Sunday events, we had an exhibition, enquiry and sales stall in Butterfly Walk. As a result of the enquiry stall and the leaflet "Why you should join" we have had a steady flow of new members. About 200 questionnaires have been returned (we distributed 800) and these are still being analysed. We hope to report the findings in the next Newsletter.

The Society thanks Epic Properties most sincerely for allowing the use of the shopping mall for this purpose. It provided an excellent site, in the market place, shoppers passing to and fro constantly to Presto and the carpark. But why the empty shops? There are plenty of people in Camberwell wanting to shop. Why force them to go elsewhere? Where are the retailers to sell the goods we want to buy? A frying pan, water jug, washing machine, reel of cotton, dustbin, knitting wool, clothes, fresh fish, birthday presents, books, writing paper, china, glass ware, delicatessen foods, records, videos, fabrics ..... the list is endless. Healthy competition is also needed for existing shops; if shoppers can compare prices and quality and have a choice they will "shop local".

In the exhibition we tried to illustrate the good and bad in Camberwell. We tried to draw attention to the trees and green, to restored buildings, the roofs, turrets and chimney pots of the skyline (look up) as well as (look down), litter, broken paving stones and the problems of traffic and blight. Improved pavements and kerbstones, a re-assessment of the needs of pedestrians to cross the roads, the disappearance of black bags, filth and litter would help and encourage people to walk about more freely. Bright attractive window displays would encourage them to spend in Camberwell money which will otherwise be spent elsewhere.

Burgess Park, our open air recreational centre, must be finished. A library with an abundance of books and other facilities is a dire need. Our librarians do their best but two shops can never be other than a temporary substitute. The opportunity to provide a bus/train interchange station on the site of the Walworth bus Garage to improve our transport facilities and ease some of the congestion on the roads must not be missed. Perhaps one day the road works at the Green will be finished and the irritation of perpetually disrupted traffic and impossible conditions for pedestrians will disappear. And then perhaps the Green can once again become a green oasis. And what of the public lavatories? Where are these to be re-sited?

There is room for improvement in our environment!

*Islay Charman*

### RAIL PROSPECTS IN INNER SOUTH LONDON

**First meeting of next season — note it now!**

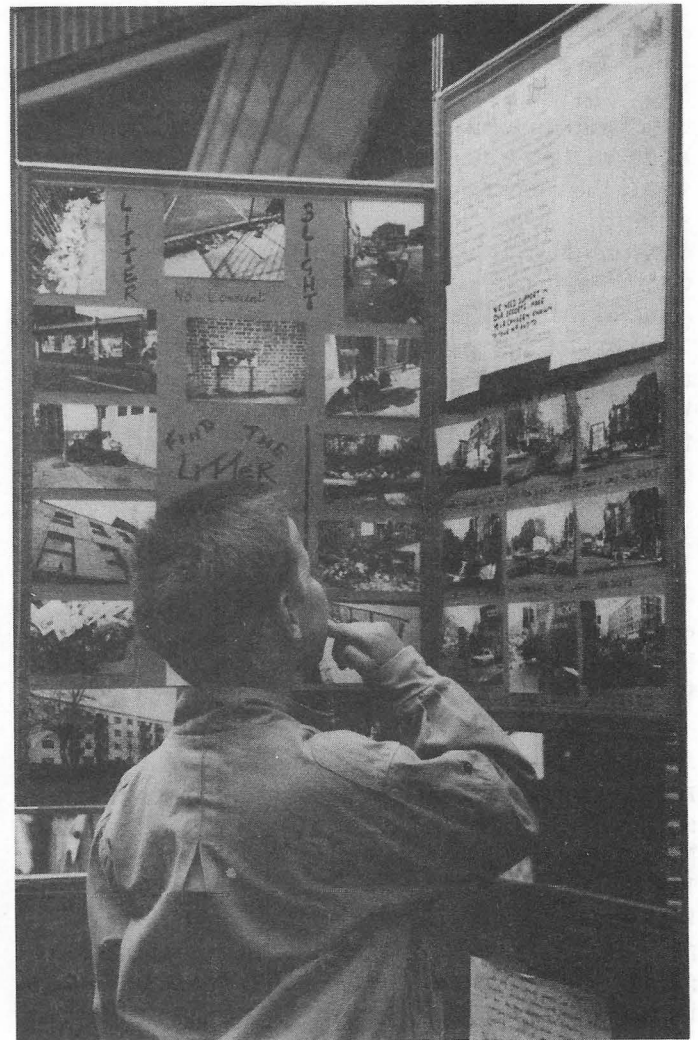
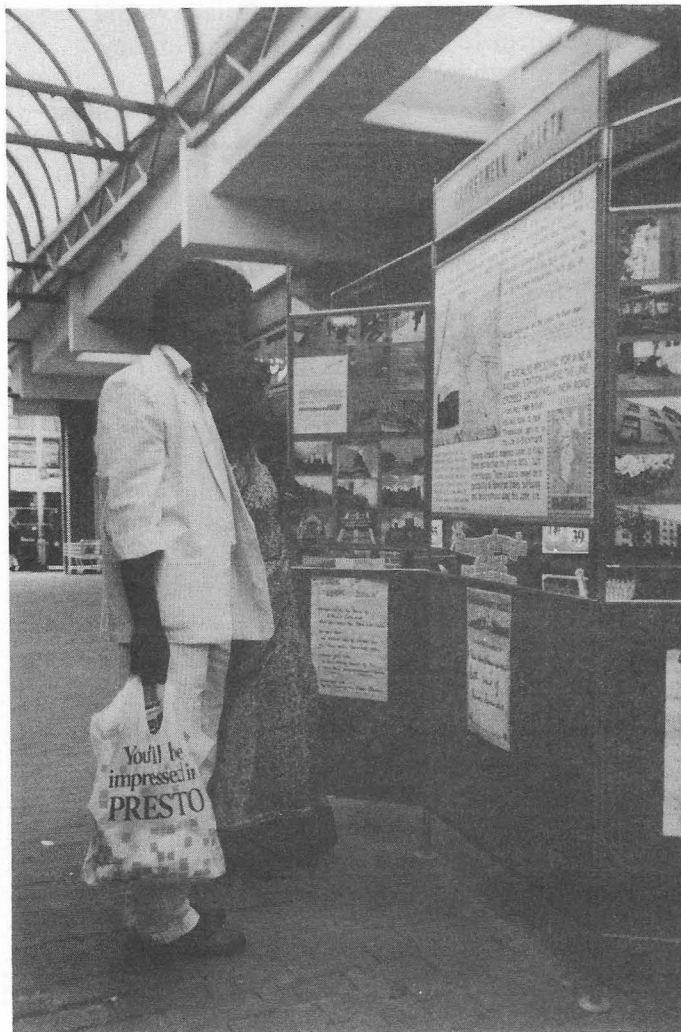
A chance to question planners from B.R. and the Underground and to make your views known.

**THURSDAY, 15th OCTOBER at 8.15p.m.**



## ENVIRONMENT WEEK

*Members were kept busy at the enquiry and sales stall while many people paused to study the exhibition during our three days in Butterfly Walk.*



*A younger citizen gives it careful thought.*

*Two residents consider the bus/rail link.*



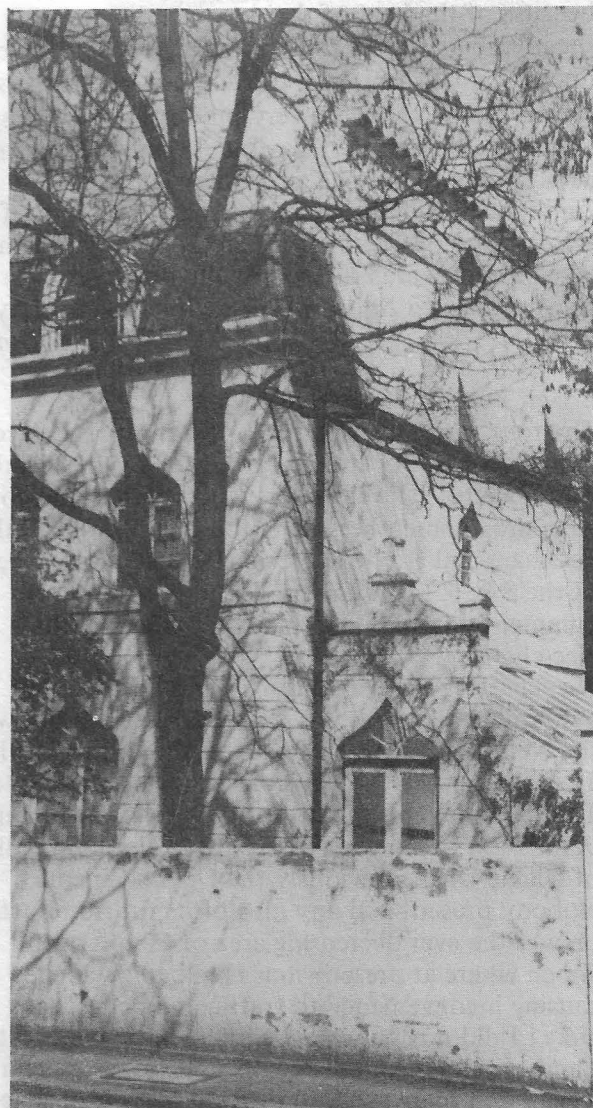
## Georgian Walk around Camberwell

Eighteen interested members of the Society met outside the Phoenix and Firkin one of the hottest afternoons in April. Andrew Byrne, who has recently written a book on Georgian Houses in London, was our guide. He pointed out that 'Georgian' covers the period from about 1700 to 1830 and he began with an 1820 house at 83 Grove Lane. This house was built in the Gothic style with 16 chimneys on the outer roof and the design was unusual for London at that time. Further along at 67 Grove Lane we looked at a detached house, with a smaller cottage adjoining. This Andrew thought could have been a separate mews or coach house.

We then arrived at the fine Georgian terrace on the east side, opposite the United Reformed Church. The houses still have the original features of door knockers and ironwork on the balconies. One wonders how many feet have trodden the worn stone steps leading up to the front doors and how many changes in domestic life have occurred beneath these Camberwell roofs. Another area I found interesting was Jephson Street, tucked behind the lower end of Grove Lane. At one time it had been called Wilby Road. This terrace, built about 1840 (possibly upper floors were added later) was restored about 6 years ago.

Andrew then walked us to St. Giles Church and into Camberwell Grove pointing out various houses in the Grove which had probably been built for merchants working in the City. Andrew's favourite terrace, built from 1810 to 1820, has many fine features and one particular doorway shows the Egyptian style of architecture, obviously influenced by the Brighton Pavilion. Houses of this period had the first floor built as the living area so most of the windows tended to be longer at that level. Servants of course were given the smaller rooms either in the basements or attics.

By this time feet were becoming a little slower



*"16 chimneys"*



*Andrew Byrne's  
Georgian Walk  
(Andrew top left)*

because of the heat of the day, but the majority of the members stayed the full distance which covered Champion Hill and back to Denmark Hill. The walk took 2 hours and was a very interesting way to spend a Sunday afternoon. I suggested that Andrew might perhaps like to arrange a further walk in the Camberwell New Road area, to show us more of the architecture of Camberwell and hopefully this may take place towards the end of the summer. Many thanks to Andrew on behalf of the Society.

*Iris Oldridge*

### **Coach Tour of South Southwark**

The tour was organised by the Southwark Environment Trust (SET) and co-sponsored by the Camberwell Society. The travellers who boarded the coach were mostly members from the Camberwell, Dulwich, Peckham and Herne Hill Societies. Nicholas Reed of the S.E.T. Management Committee was our commentator and introduced Liz Bendall, the vice-chair of S.E.T.

We started from Denmark Hill and heard of the overbridge plan to link King's College Hospital with the Neuro-Science Centre at the Maudsley Hospital. The Camberwell Society considers this unacceptable. The Regional Health Authority is awaiting planning permission. Then we passed the sad looking building of Dickie Dirts, previously the Odeon Cinema.

Nobody present had any idea of its future. Further on was the ever decreasing area of Camberwell Green where at present roads are being widened causing inconvenience to traffic and pedestrians alike. I did not know Artichoke Mews, next to the Camberwell Baths, existed. S.E.T. hopes to gain a lease and renovate it to provide workshop space for businesses and co-operatives.

Continuing along Camberwell Church Street, Havil Street and Wells Way we came to the old St. George's Vicarage where I was often invited to Sunday tea by the Vicar's family in the early 1950s when I was nursing. The Rev. Vile was then Chaplain of St. Giles' Hospital. The shell of St. George's Church is to be saved and housing association flats are to be built within it. We admired the mural of the Camberwell Beauty Butterfly, originally on the Samuel Jones factory but now on the wall of the old Public Baths.

S.E.T. is based at 48 Willowbrook Road. The Willowbrook Urban Studies Centre was opened in 1985 and is a centre for education and action. It is housed in a splendid Georgian house. Over the Grand Surrey Canal we passed to Bird in Bush Road to admire the mosaic mural. We reached Asylum Road and Caroline Gardens, the alms houses built by the Licenced Victuallers Benevolent Society and now Council sheltered housing. It is a pleasing curve of houses with lawn and trees. All this sounds as if rubbish dumps and overflowing skips were invisible, not so, but not as many as I thought there might be.

Clifton Terrace, a pleasing sweep of renovated houses built in 1847 was in danger of demolition but in 1976 were listed Grade 2 and saved. In Queens Road we drove through rows of well preserved Georgian and Victorian houses. We walked along Gordon Road to

the "Spike", now closed but once a men's hostel. Built in 1879 it was originally the Workhouse. Shortly it is to be taken over for housing.

We boarded the coach again and arrived at the large iron gates of Nunhead Cemetery. Here we met the Friends of the Cemetery working hard to clean, tidy and repair the overgrown Victorian memorials. We heard about the Crystal Palace high level railway built in 1865 and terminated in 1954.

After Horniman's Museum we came to Sydenham Hill Woods and noted the new wire fencing replacing the corrugated iron. On to Dulwich Upper Wood, Dulwich College, Belair House. The old houses of Dulwich reminded us that this area was known to Oliver Cromwell's men and much later to Charles Dickens.

We came through the Sunray Estate, built after the Great War, to Ruskin Park, with mention of Ruskin and Bessemer and of course Mendelssohn who wrote his Spring Song here, first called Camberwell Green.

This was our tour completed. An enjoyable afternoon and cheap too, only £1. Many thanks to Nicholas Reed and his colleagues of S.E.T.

*Joan Piper*

### **LONDON WILDLIFE**

The nearest 'ancient woodland' to St Pauls, and more significant than Hampstead Heath was how Gary Grant of London Wildlife Trust (LWT) described Sydenham Hill Wood. This is one of the jewels in the crown of L.W.T., particularly since the Trust won the fight to prevent development of the large Beechgrove site within the woodland.

Speaking at the April meeting of the Society, Mr. Grant, who is Southwark Field Officer for the Trust, added that a smaller part of the woodland (Lapswood) was still threatened, and that any development would impinge on the wildlife of this unique Southwark site.

The indicators of an ancient woodland are the oaks and hornbeams present there, but the wood also supports 50 other tree species, and similar numbers of bird and butterfly species, with a diversity of plants, insects and mammals. All three British woodpeckers are found there, the speaker told the meeting. Slides illustrated the richness of the woodland habitat, and work done by L.W.T. volunteers (of all ages) to manage the site for the benefit of wildlife and visitors. It is an increasingly popular venue for school visits and there is now a full-time warden.

Gary Grant explained that hazel trees, once properly coppiced there, are now on the decline, but that rare and interesting plants such as butcher's broom, solomon's seal and a woodrush survive. Sadly though there are early signs of acid pollution on beech trees.

The London Wildlife Trust began in 1981 and is a voluntary body which manages 30 nature reserves in Greater London, and does valuable work at public enquiries.

On our doorstep the Grove Park site beside the railway deserves protection for its tawny owls and other wildlife but the case was lost. Likewise,



Bricklayers' Arms is unlikely to get its sought-for 7 acre wildlife park.

The main message from Gary Grant was: be aware of Southwark's open spaces, all must be preserved, all can be improved for wildlife, all are under pressure, so join London Wildlife Trust!

*John Turpin*

## DULWICH COLLEGE PICTURE GALLERY

An illustrated talk on the history and paintings of the Dulwich College Picture Gallery followed the Annual General Meeting of the Society. In his vote of thanks to the Speaker the President said it was a change, and a very pleasant one, for the AGM to be followed by a talk which was not controversial, had not been followed by a "slanging match" but by something which had given everyone present an interesting, stimulating and relaxing (even peaceful) evening. Eileen Coltart said that many of the pictures in the Gallery showed real life in real paint. The gallery was built in 1814 by Sir John Soane and his colour scheme and presentation of the collection by stacking the pictures have recently been restored. Not only the paintings but the beautifully designed building, with its contemporary furnishings and ornaments, give the visitor pleasure.

Edward Alleyn, with his original foundation of 12 elderly people (the ladies tended the roses and the gentlemen swept the aisles) and 12 boys, started the gallery at the same time as the school, in 1619. By 1842 Sir Charles Barry (who designed the Houses of Parliament) had created the little Grammar School, and there were 46 boys. The Art Collection increased when Sir Peter Bourgeois and Noel Desenfans were able to acquire the collection of King Stanislaus of Poland. The British Government (typically) turned down the offer of gaining his collection on his deposition, but Desenfans stepped in and we still benefit today.

Dulwich Gallery is the earliest public gallery in England; probably the only one to include a mausoleum under its roof. Desenfans, and his wife, and his friend Peter Bourgeois are buried there but, in spite of a space being left for Sir John Soane, he was buried in Highgate. Have you ever noticed the beautiful light through the orange panes of glass there? What else have you noticed when visiting the gallery?

Members were delighted by a sequence of extremely good slides, colour and definition were perfect, but of course all the pictures were the same size and this was, as Mrs. Coltart pointed out, a little misleading as some are quite small. Our speaker led us through the early Flemish School with portraits from Rubens and his pupil van Dyck; the Antwerp School with atmospheric paintings, as well as every day scenes. We saw snow-laden skies, windmills, pictures of the countryside which influenced Constable and Turner; on to Italianate landscapes, Roman fountains, cows and mountains ... in Holland; ordinary people drinking and singing.

There were three perfect examples of Rembrandt (an early portrait of the Canon of Utrecht, the

famous Girl on the Windowsill and a late portrait of his son Titus), A Lady at the Clavichord by Gerrit Dou, marine paintings of van de Velde ... and so to Canaletto (you knew he lived for a while in England? It's not surprising the bridge over the Thames at Walton fell down!). We saw a variety of paintings from the English School, Joshua Reynolds (first President of the Royal Academy), Gainsborough (he loved putting his sitters in an outdoor setting) and Hogarth (poking fun at the aristocracy).

Thousands of people poured in to the Royal Academy to see the Murillo Exhibition. Some of the most famous are in England in the Dulwich Gallery, for us to see every day of the week. We can sample Watteau (as many as 72 figures in one small painting), classical Claude and Poussin (who greatly influenced Turner) — why go to the Tate?

The aim of the gallery from its earliest days has been to make visitors feel they are enjoying pictures in someone's beautiful house. It is sad that some of Edward Alleyn's collection of 1619 (28 pictures) may now seem inferior, but a visitor can ask to see any of the pictures in the stockroom. It is not the policy of the gallery to increase the collection further.

Do you only visit the sights of London if you are entertaining a visitor from abroad? Remember the Dulwich Picture Gallery is a treasure house on our doorstep. We can often return to see paintings as old friends.

*Mary Rose Seldon*

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Southwark Pedestrians Rights Campaign

During the day of action on 18th May, 3 members of the Society handed in a letter from the Society to the Director of Public Works expressing once again our concern at the state of local pavements. In particular we drew attention to the area in the vicinity of the library in Camberwell Church Street and 12 hazards counted on the opposite side of the road.

### Self Defence of Women

Concern for women's safety has caused London Borough of Southwark to make money available to train 6 women to become self defence teachers. Anyone interested should contact Policing and Community Safety Unit, 703 0911 Ext. 200.

### Another "First"

The Society has for a long time expressed its concern at the extent of derelict property in Camberwell. In March 1984, Newsletter No.62, we triggered a debate on Public Property — Public Waste which continued in several subsequent Newsletters. The houses at the south end (i.e. top) of Camberwell Grove were one of the illustrations. We were glad to be able to report two years later in Newsletter No.72 that at last work on these houses was in progress.

To mark the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, the Housing Corporation and National Federation of Housing Associations announced a competition and we are delighted to report that in the London and Home Counties (South) Region,

this was won by London and Quadrant Housing Association for its rehabilitation of these houses. Sufficient money was not available for complete restoration but at least the houses are now weather-proof, no longer an eyesore and provide more adequate accommodation for over 100 people. Hopefully the London Borough of Southwark will eventually find the money to ensure the full restoration of these listed buildings.

#### Local History

The Friends of St. Giles have produced a new Short Guide and History (£1.50). There is a brief account of the old church 1152-1841 but most of the text (much of it produced by the inimitable Mary Boast) is about the Victorian Gothic church with whose spire everyone in Camberwell is so familiar. This is the first major Gothic building by Sir George Gilbert Scott.

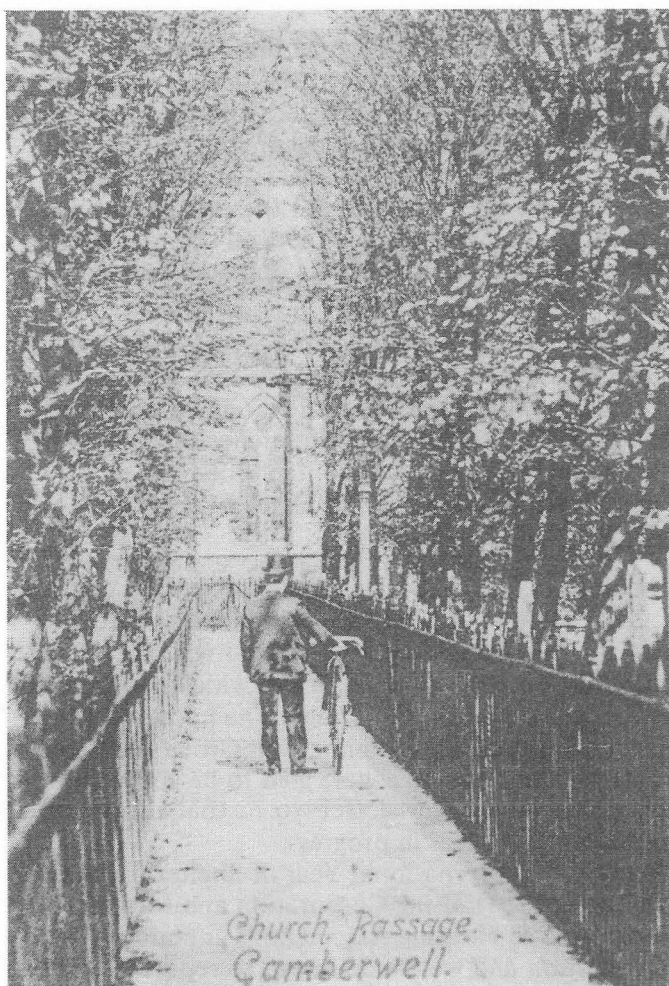
And inside? An east window by Ruskin, an organ designed by Dr. Samuel Sebastian Wesley, a copy of an early triptych presented by the Hostel of Disabled Workers in Love Walk, some brasses which survived from the old church. ... If you have bought the cards printed by the Camberwell Society recently you will have seen the one of the 1st Surrey Rifles in their Hall in Flodden Road. Their memorial was transferred from the hall to St. Giles in 1962.

The guide is designed by Gillian Johnson-Flint and can be obtained from the church or from local book sellers.



*The ancient parish of St. Giles stretched from Boundary Lane, just north of the present Albany Road, south as far as Sydenham Hill. During the 19th century Camberwell changed from a rural village to a crowded urban area. The population increased from 7059 in 1801 to 259,425 in 1901. New churches were built and new parishes carved out of the one large parish. A "new" boundary stone dating from 1870.*

*Churchyard Passage is part of a very old series of footpaths which lead from the church via Love Walk to Denmark Hill, the high street of old Camberwell. In Gilbert Scott's original plans, the church would have been longer, extending over the footpath, but local residents would not agree to the loss of their traditional right-of-way.*



*by courtesy of Chris Wallace  
obtainable at Great Expectations*

#### Galley Wall

Have you a copy of Dewhurst's map of Camberwell dated 1842 and re-printed by the Society several years ago? (Copies are still available).

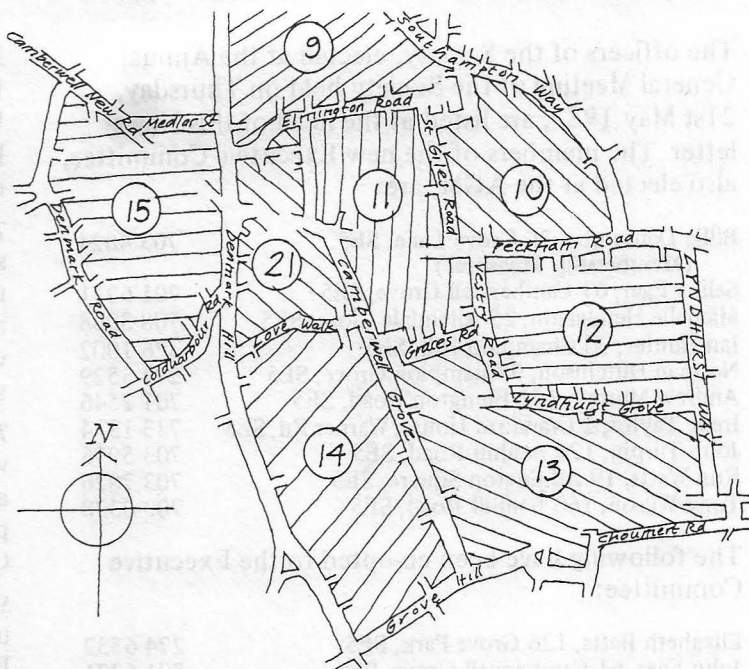
If so, you will notice Galley Wall printed along the northern boundary of Camberwell. Possibly part of this old embankment is still there concealing remains from Medieval, Saxon, Roman and even Celtic times. Further research may resolve the mystery of Galley Wall.



## HOME BEAT

We published maps in Newsletters No. 69 and No. 72 showing the areas covered by Home Beat P.Cs. in Camberwell. Some of these have now been changed and the police have provided a new map showing the revised areas and the names of the Officers assigned to them. In an endeavour to increase foot patrols the number of Home Beats operating in our area has been increased with a subsequent reduction in the area covered by each, which the Police hope will improve their service to the local community. The Camberwell Home Beat Officers continue to work from an office in the Station in Camberwell Church Street and messages can be left at the desk in the front office or by ringing 703 0866 Ext. 57.

- 9. PC 278 'M' Samuels
- 10. PC 260 'M' John McNab
- 11. PC 431 'M' Martin Quinn
- 12. PC 510 'M' Peter Baxter
- 13. PC 389 'M' David Snow
- 14. PC 158 'M' John Mercer
- 15. PC 460 'M' David Skinner
- 21. PC 315 'M' John Zissler



A map of Camberwell showing the areas covered by Home Beat Officers.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

In presenting the accounts for 1986/87, at the A.G.M., the Treasurer said:

"The excess of expenditure over income during the year gives no cause for alarm. It resulted from the purchase, late in the year, of a stock of new style greetings cards which will be sold at a profit over

the next two to three years. Our total stock, worth in the region of £4000 to £5000 and an important asset, is not shown in the balance sheet.

Expenditure generally was well contained, notwithstanding rising costs, and the total payment for the printing of newsletters was rather less than in the previous year. On the income side there are noticeable increases in subscriptions and the proceeds from the sale of cards and maps etc."

### THE CAMBERWELL SOCIETY ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 1986

1985					1985
£	INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£	£
1443.50	Membership Subscriptions	1545.50	Hire of Hall	40.00	45.00
24.50	Donations	33.00	Printing of Newsletters	1427.00	1480.00
719.28	Sale of Cards, etc.	1193.23	Printing of Cards	2611.83	19.00
632.94	Swimming Receipts	600.27	Swimming Payments	200.10	195.00
246.02	Christmas Party Takings	199.20	Christmas Party Expenses	75.28	220.26
81.49	Bank Interest	124.76	Stationery, Copying, Postage		
167.40	Miscellaneous Items	22.75	General Expenses, etc.	389.97	354.25
			Subscriptions & Donations	137.50	85.00
3315.13		3718.71		4881.68	2398.51
—	Excess of Expenditure over Income	1162.97	Excess of Income over Expenditure	—	916.62
£3315.13		£4881.68		£4881.68	£3315.13

### Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1986

(1985)				(1985)
193.22	Bank Balance as at 31st.Dec.1985	1109.84	Bank Balance as at 31st Dec.1986	
	Deduct : Excess of Expenditure over Income	(1162.97)	Current Account Overdraft	(190.88)
916.62			Deposit Account	137.75
£1109.84		£(53.13)		£(53.13)
				£1109.84

The officers of the Society, elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Society held on Thursday, 21st May 1987, are listed at the head of this Newsletter. The members of the new Executive Committee, also elected at the AGM, are:

Billie Densumbe, 36 Grove Lane, SE5 (Membership Treasurer)	703 4824
Selina Eger, 61 Camberwell Grove, SE5	701 6771
Michelle Henderson, 25 Allendale Close, SE5	708 3968
Ian Hunter, 25 Champion Hill, SE5	326 1002
Norman Hutchison, 9 Champion Grove, SE5	274 3529
Andrew Murray, 171 Elington Road, SE5	701 2546
Irene Taylor, 2 Crawford House, Warner Rd, SE5	733 1334
John Turpin, 126 Benhill Road, SE5	703 5976
Ron Watts, 19 Addington Square, SE5	703 7026
Tony Wilson, 160 Benhill Road, SE5	703 0398

The following have been co-opted to the Executive Committee:

Elizabeth Betts, 126 Grove Park, SE5	274 6532
John Eger, 61 Camberwell Grove, SE5	701 6771

The Society wishes to thank those members who served on the Committee last year but decided not to seek re-election again.

#### Sub-Committees of the Society and Representatives

<b>Traffic and Transport</b>	<b>Planning</b>
Norman Hutchison (Convenor)	Ian Hunter (Convenor)
Elizabeth Betts	John Eger
Katie Crawley	Selina Eger
Michelle Henderson	Bill Knights
Andrew Murray	Irene Taylor
Ron Watts	Ron Watts
	Tony Wilson

<b>Publications and Members' Activities</b>	<b>Burgess Park</b>
Islay Charman (Convenor)	Ron Watts (Convenor)
Billie Densumbe	Selina Eger
Michelle Henderson	Andrew Murray
Mary Rose Seldon	Ros Tabor
Jim Tanner	John Turpin
John Turpin	Tony Wilson

<b>Camberwell Green Working Party</b>	<b>Conservation Areas Forum</b>
The Society's representatives are:	Selina Eger is chairman of this body and is also the Society's representative.
John Eger	
Norman Hutchison	
Jim Tanner	

**Southwark Policing Consultative Group**  
Members who cover meetings of this group are:  
Michelle Henderson  
Elizabeth Betts  
Ann Jewitt  
Iris Oldridge

*Members' meetings* are generally held from October to May on the *third Thursday each month* at the United Reformed Church, Love Walk, SE5. If you have any ideas or suggestions for members' meetings contact the Hon. Secretary.

*The Sub-committees of the Society* exist to cover specific areas of interest. If you have a problem or need information within these areas of interest contact the relevant sub-committee convenor who will try to help. If you would like to serve on a sub-committee, contact the convenor.

*This is your Newsletter.* We want to know your views on the issues raised in the Newsletter. We are always prepared to consider articles or comment for publication. Write to Jim Tanner, 107 Camberwell Grove, SE5 8JH.

*Swimming:* Society members still have the private use of the Camberwell Swimming Bath (Artichoke Place) on Wednesday evenings 9 – 9.30 and the Mary Datchelor Pool (lower end of Camberwell Grove) 7 – 8.30 on Monday evenings: 8 – 8.30 is adults only. The charge is 50p per member per evening session.

*Social Activities:* The Society would welcome any suggestions for other activities. Coffee before monthly meetings has been a success but we need a member to convene a small Social Committee to organise a rota to provide coffee and to get the hall ready before meetings. Please contact the Hon. Sec. with ideas and offers of help. Convenor urgently required.

#### STOP PRESS – MEMBERS' VIEWS NEEDED

The London Regional Passengers' Committee wants our contribution to a new study of the options for London's buses – one person operation (OPO), or retention of conductors at higher costs which would have to be paid for by passengers, public funds and/or service reductions. Studies so far assume that safety regulations mean no more open platform buses can be made; so should buses with doors have conductors, and would increased patronage and shorter journey times offset higher crew costs, or would we as passengers, ratepayers or taxpayers, willingly meet the bill?

We are analysing what the replies to our Environment Week Questionnaire had to say about OPO buses, but we need more members' views. Newsletter No. 74 (page 2) asked for – but did not get – “informed contributions ... particularly on the argument that OPO works well in nearly every other city in this and other countries”. We also wondered whether it was true that OPO abroad had generally followed rather than preceded good ticketing arrangements and stringent measures giving buses priority on city streets.

The LRPC wants our reply by 15 August. So please send your thoughts **no later than 1 August** to Norman Hutchison, 9 Champion Grove, SE5 8BN. He is also still waiting to hear from more than the one member who has so far offered to join a Camberwell British Rail Users' Group; he has been away a good deal but should be available throughout July on 274 3529.

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

are due in January.

Please make sure you have paid, *if not*  
**why not complete a Bankers' Order?**

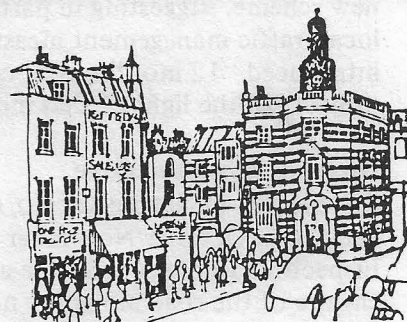
Contact the Hon. Treasurer for information.



# THE CAMBERWELL SOCIETY

Jim Tanner  
(27 Copies)

President:	Jim Tanner, 107 Camberwell Grove, SE5 8JH	703 8624
Chairman:	Islay Charman, 26 Grove Lane, SE5 8ST	703 4427
Vice-Chairman:	Conrad Dehn, 38 Camberwell Grove, SE5 8RE	701 4758
Hon. Secretary:	Iris Oldridge, 49 Allendale Close, SE5 8SG	703 0414
Hon. Treasurer:	Alan Riddle, 113 Grove Lane, SE5 8BG	733 3977
Asst. Secretary:	Kate Crawley, 6A Flodden Road, SE5 9LH	733 8194



NEWSLETTER No: 77

July 1987

## TRAFFIC AT AND NEAR THE GREEN

*Although most of the new traffic arrangements at and near the Green will have been in operation for some weeks when members get this Newsletter we are clearly going to be much concerned with the subject in the months ahead. So this issue contains a location plan, prepared by Michelle Henderson, and this account by Norman Hutchison, Convenor of our Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee, of how and why these changes came about, and how he now sees the situation.*

### History: what might have been

There is a brief account of attempts to improve the environment at the Green on page 2 of Newsletter No. 66. This is an even briefer summary. The Camberwell Society's preferred scheme, known since 1975 as Road Option 7, was adopted by both the GLC and Southwark Council, but abandoned by them in 1983/84. Had it been implemented in the way the Society wanted, there would have been three main differences from what has now been done. First, west to east traffic, other than buses, would have been taken completely away from the Green, via Medlar Street and a short new link continuing to join Kimpton Road, which would have become one-way southward. The engineers had said this would be the only way to accommodate existing traffic and at the same time improve the environment and the safety of pedestrians in the ways that everyone wanted. Secondly, the road along the north side of the Green would have disappeared, so allowing a substantial enlargement of the Green itself. Thirdly, many important environmental consequentials which had not been fully worked out by either the GLC or Southwark Council would have been settled in time for them to be implemented simultaneously with completion of the main engineering works.

### The 1984 Plan and the Society's objections

In 1984 Southwark Council proposed a new scheme to fill the gap which deletion of Road Option 7 had left in the Mid South Southwark Development Plan. A major difference from that Option was the omission of the link which would have taken east-bound traffic away from the Green. The engineers' view now was

that this new scheme would initially involve local congestion and delays, but that in the longer term traffic would settle into a similar pattern to what then existed, with essential traffic no more affected than it already was. The new scheme still did not cover consequential measures which would obviously be needed, especially on side roads, but it offered some environmental gain. The Executive Committee of the Society acquiesced in principle in it, but reserved our position on such matters as pedestrian protection and the absence of specific proposals to deal with consequential effects on other streets. The details are on page 2 of Newsletter No. 65 and pages 2 and 3 of No. 66.

Very soon, however, the Council modified its new scheme, most importantly by letting the road on the north side of the Green stay open on an experimental basis. The Society's objections to this and to what the Plan did not cover – notably the consequences for other roads such as Camberwell Grove and Benhill Road – were argued at a public inquiry in February 1985 (Newsletter No. 66). The Inspector strongly supported our case on the north side of the Green, but stopped short of making specific recommendations about the side roads likely to be affected. He did,

### NOVEMBER PUBLIC MEETING

#### CONCERT

by

#### KINGSDALE SCHOOL

An exciting programme reflecting many aspects  
of the work of the  
Music Department  
from Classical Duet to Pink Panther.

THURSDAY 19th November, 7.30 p.m.

United Reformed Church Hall  
Grove Lane/Love Walk, SE5

Coffee in the interval      Bring your friends

(Note 7.30 p.m. start – earlier than usual)

however, single out Camberwell Grove as a priority area for traffic restriction, emphasising "the undisputed need to discourage through traffic". He also recommended monitoring of the effects of the new scheme, suggesting in particular that further local traffic management measures should be introduced "12 months after completion of the project" in the light of that monitoring.

#### What has now been done

As reported in Newsletter No. 69 the Council decided in October/November 1985 to accept the Inspector's findings, with the exception of the closure of the road along the north side of the Green, and to implement their scheme accordingly. Its main effect is to return through traffic to the enlarged and redesigned central crossing by removing it from

- (a) the east and – to some extent – the north of the Green, and
- (b) the stretch from the foot of Grove Lane along Daneville Road as far as its junction with Orpheus Street.

By the time this Newsletter reaches members the lowest part of Grove Lane should have been reopened, but only for northbound traffic, which will have to turn left at Church Street. Daneville Road will then have been made into two culs-de-sac, the eastern one being intended to allow a new entrance to the EPIC car park.

At the intersection of the four main roads both left and right turns are now allowed, with two exceptions. There is no right turn into Camberwell New Road for traffic coming from Camberwell Road, which means that buses terminating at Camberwell Garage which used to circle the Green now go round the block at Orpheus Street. There is no right turn, except as before for buses, from Camberwell New Road into Denmark Hill. This manoeuvre is provided for by the now one-way Medlar Street and a turn at new traffic lights on to Camberwell Road, from which all traffic and not just buses may now go straight across into Denmark Hill. There is still no right turn, except for buses, into Coldharbour Lane when coming from the Green, but the route round Orpheus Street has now been signposted on Denmark Hill since traffic for Brixton comes this way instead of from Grove Lane along Daneville Road.

Other changes provide greatly improved pedestrian protection, particularly from turning traffic, across all four main roads and – it is hoped – better conditions for buses and waiting passengers on the south side of the Green. Although the road on the north side is still open it is being narrowed so that a strip can be added to the Green. Moreover westward traffic on it will come to an obligatory left turn, which will reduce the appeal to ratrunners. The exit from Bullace Row is also to become an obligatory left turn.

#### What next?

At the time of writing it is difficult to distinguish between teething troubles and problems that will demand solutions. The Society's Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee has endorsed two representations made immediately by their Convenor.

One was that signs for the Medlar Street route were inadequate to tell drivers coming from the Oval that this was now the way to Dulwich and Herne Hill, so that Medlar Street has been empty and Camberwell Grove even more congested. The other was that there must be no further delay with the measures to slow down traffic and discourage ratrunning in Camberwell Grove which the Executive Committee of the Society had accepted as necessary even before traffic flows were altered by the new scheme. One such measure is the island at the Church Street junction (see page 7 of Newsletter No. 69 – the island, but not the ban on right turns, was approved in 1986). Others are the speed humps and other things discussed at the public meeting in July, on which there should surely by now have been more progress to report than Elizabeth Betts records on page 8.

There may well be other consequences which require action, but it could be January before a traffic count scheduled for November gives "before and after" figures, and the Council could point to the 12-month interval which was mentioned in the Inspector's report quoted above. Some steps, however, could be taken immediately, in addition to those that ought already to have been taken in Camberwell Grove. We have, for example, told the engineers that the reluctance of drivers to use Denmark Hill southwards from the Green may be due not only to ignorance of the approach via Medlar Street but also to the constrictions caused by illegal parking and by the use of the highway opposite Butterfly Walk as a bus stand as well as a bus stop (which is probably also illegal). This defeats the policy – to which both the Department of Transport and the Council are committed – of putting through traffic on main rather than side roads, and the Council should make urgent representations to the Police and to London Buses.

Government and Parliament must, I believe, accept some day that total freedom for all car users, wherever resident, to use every inner city road at any time is not only incompatible with much that we rightly value but also self-defeating for those who increasingly try to exercise it. Until that day dawns there are only two ways forward. One is to press for better rail services, which other pages of this Newsletter will show we are doing. The other is to work constructively for the least imperfect ways of discouraging the use of streets unsuitable for through traffic by those who do not live or have business there. This is not easy, for things such as speed humps, constrictions, islands, banned turns at all or certain hours, and the creation of culs-de-sac all require acceptance, particularly by car-using residents, that some delay or detour is a necessary price to pay to avoid a worse alternative. And even when there is a consensus on what should be done the problem of Council funding will remain. I hope, however, that the Society will continue to play a constructive role in consultation and in pressing for any further traffic measures that our members can show are likely to be in the general interest of those who live or work in Camberwell.



The analysis of the questionnaires returned after Environment Week (see last Newsletter) has proved an interesting exercise and indicates what residents who obviously care about the local environment think about our problems, needs and conditions. In talking to the people who passed through Butterfly Walk on the three days of our exhibition, we were very aware that many of them who had lived in Camberwell all their lives were concerned about the present and anxious for the future. Perhaps 1988 will see a serious attempt being made to solve some of the difficulties which beset us.

For example, why cannot we tackle the problem of litter? We would all feel so much better with clean roads and pavements. 4% of the people responding to the questionnaire confessed "regrettably" to being litter louts. 94% "proudly" denied it. So where does the litter come from? 34% regularly have a road sweeper, 42% occasionally, 16% never. 61% of house refuse is collected regularly, 24% fairly regularly, 10% is often missed out. So litter may be partially due, but not entirely, to absentee road sweepers or irregular refuse collection. But in residential roads why are there black bags at the foot of trees, cardboard boxes, take-away food cartons, even old mattresses, gas cookers and arm chairs just lying about? Why are bottles and tins and muck chucked into gardens, old blankets and rubbish deposited in the shrubs in front of newly decorated flats? Recently an O.A.P. (Senior Citizen) slipped on a piece of melon peel, broke her hip and has spent two months in hospital. Where do these spilling black bags come from? Could ALL Residents and Tenants Associations embark on a *Keep Camberwell Tidy* campaign? Could the Council initiate a *Clean Up Camberwell* campaign? Could we all support them? Dogs should not be allowed to wander loose (which poses a problem to cat owners – why should cats have free access to neighbours' gardens, destroying treasured plants and polluting the area?). Many people suggest on the spot fines for litter louts. And more litter bins. Large ones, And emptied!

Of the hazards to pedestrians, broken paving stones were regarded as the most serious with traffic lights without a pedestrian phase running a close second. Parked cars were third, motor cycles fourth; cyclists were regarded as a negligible hazard except for those riding on pavements. Recently there have been signs that uneven, broken pavements are being tackled. But surely the causes are limited and could be remedied. (a) A fairly unlikely one is bad workmanship when the pavement is initially laid. (b) More likely is the parking of lorries and cars on the pavements, illegal, and also dangerous in other respects. (c) Various services dig up the pavement and then fail to make it good, presumably also illegal and possibly a really major cause. Another campaign is needed.

To represent results of the questionnaire as percentages is in lots of cases difficult, but 77% were in favour of speed humps, 18% against, and 5% did not

express an opinion. So 1988 – speed humps implemented please.

Most people thought there are the right number of bus lanes. Opinions on bus services varied widely, even the same service was satisfactory for some and unsatisfactory for others. The majority, as would be expected, thought a queue system desirable (various people said it was supposed to operate anyway). Many regarded it as totally impracticable when so many services stop at the same stop. Several said "What is a queue system?" A large number commented on buses parked at bus stops, abandoned by their crews during the change-over. Comments on One Person Operated buses are reported elsewhere.

61% thought they would possibly use a bus/rail interlink on the site of the Walworth bus garage, 26% definitely, and 6% never, leaving 7% uncommitted. Many people thought fares should be low enough to encourage use of buses and trains even though, as tax and rate payers, they would then be subsidizing them.

1988 – 12 years from 2000 A.D.! Everyone by now probably knows that the hospital complex on Denmark Hill has plans to provide the finest and most modern health service in London, plans which we most sincerely hope will come to fruition. This development will profoundly affect the whole of Camberwell. At the time of the questionnaire we put one question, whether a bridge linking the sites on opposite sides of Denmark Hill should be allowed. A small majority said yes, though often with the proviso – was it really necessary? and why not a tunnel? This bridge, however, is now almost a small issue. The medical administrations involved affirm that, while providing a first class medical service, they will keep in mind the effect upon the environment in which we all have to live.

In Camberwell we have sites awaiting development, shops awaiting retailers. How would we like to see them used in 1988?

Odeon Cinema/Dickie Dirts	
Leisure/Arts Centre	46%
Cinema	38%
Offices/flats/shops	16%
Petrol filling station	2%
St. George's Church, Wells Way	
Enclosed garden	38%
Self-contained flats	22%
Community Hall	22%
Walworth Bus Garage	
Bus/train interlink station	76%
Supermarket	9%
Goods storage depot	0%
Wren Road Church/ScallyWag	
Small craft workshops	57%
Community use	23%
Shops and Offices	9%
Suggestions for shops in Butterfly Walk, out of 100 responses:	
58 wanted a stationer	
56 fishmonger	

- 41 ironmonger
- 33 gift shop
- 28 hairdresser
- 28 records and video

We do not need take-away shops open all night. 8% said they would use them often, 26% hardly at all and 62% never. 77% thought there was no need, 17% that there was a need.

So what shall we see in 1988? A brighter, cleaner more prosperous Camberwell making the most of an inner city environment, with the rehabilitation of its shopping centre, with craft and industry and facilities for leisure and arts developing or still an unacceptable, and unnecessary, level of squalor that causes many people who live in Camberwell to get on a bus or in a car and go to work, shop or relax elsewhere.

*Islay Charman*

#### What Camberwellians had to say

As well as the ticking and crossing of the questionnaire there were many individual answers, remarks and comments:

1. Stop the Post Office from treating us as cattle. Give us proper organization, a quicker service, and privacy at the counters.
2. What about the banning of lorries? It *was* marvellous, now it's terrible.
3. Stop the bus crews from standing about and taking up all the pavement.
4. There's a small open-back truck has a habit of tipping loads of unwanted waste on the pavement. It's done of a night and lighting is bad, so haven't been able to get the number.
5. Often, even when there is a queue, the driver stops at the wrong end of it (especially the OPO buses) so there's a stampede anyway.
6. In many parts of Camberwell there is no justification for yellow lines. Is it just that we are no longer allowed to park *anywhere* without paying for it? I would like to see a declared policy that street parking is paid for.
7. I am a young person at an age where I like buying records .....
8. Bring Camberwell Green back to its former glory — it was once a beautiful park.
9. Do something about car exhausts. Have you ever bent down as low as a child in a buggy?
10. Have an intensive campaign in schools similar to *Keep Britain Tidy* c.1955, which brainwashed me!
11. If dog owners are fined £20 for their dogs if caught "fouling the pavement", why not humans?
12. Trees planted either side of a road can make the narrowest, poorest street look better. Let's have more troughs and window boxes.
13. Make it illegal for people to run car repair businesses all over the road.
14. Bring back noise-abatement.
15. Keep Butterfly Walk quiet, as now.
16. What is going to happen about toilets? It's a busy shopping area so toilets are very essential.
17. People park their cars on double yellow lines to go shopping or over the Snooker Club.
18. I never use this area for shopping.
19. There is often a man about with a broom, but he rarely works.

20. It is still quite difficult for disabled people to get around in Camberwell. Broken pavement stones are a great problem, especially for the blind and those of us in wheel chairs. The ramp between Woolworths and Boots is really too steep and sometimes black bags left outside doors completely block the pavements.
21. You must educate people that litter is a filthy habit.
22. An excellent questionnaire — if only more people were as concerned.
23. Why can't shops and pubs take responsibility for their own pavements?
24. It would be nice to have a haberdasher, a wool shop, and more clothes shops.
25. Above all make Camberwell safer for crossing roads and, in general, pedestrians happy to walk the area.
26. What about those loos?
27. My son is 6 years old. He would like to do things like Gymnastics and KungFu, but I would have to take him to Peckham or Brixton to do this and I find these places undesirable at night so my son misses out.
28. They just get out of the bus and leave it parked at the bus stop — so others come along and pull up well behind their appointed stop or in the middle of the road .....
29. I have always admired the German after dark throw out system.
30. Can't we have a cafe selling English food?

*Extracted from the questionnaires by Mary Rose Seldon*

#### DRIVER ONLY BUSES

*The request in our last issue (page 76.8) for members' views on "OPO" buses produced disappointingly few replies, but those we got were full and reasoned and enabled us to send the following contribution to the current investigation by the statutory body charged with representing the interests of users of London's transport services.*

#### Passenger perceptions of the one person operation of London's Buses Submission by The Camberwell Society, 11 Aug.1987

1. The Camberwell Society welcomes the opportunity given to transport-oriented user groups within the LRT area to submit comments to this major research project of the London Regional Passengers' Committee (LRPC). Through individual and family membership of those living or working in Camberwell our Society represents the concern of over 1000 people in conserving and improving the environment and the quality of life in an area which is heavily dependent on bus services and also traversed by bus services serving other similarly dependent areas of South London.
2. Like other societies affiliated to the Civic Trust the Society made a special effort during Environment Week at the end of April to interest the wider public. Visitors to our stall in a shopping arcade at Camberwell Green took some 800 copies of a questionnaire



we had prepared on current issues, and about 17 per cent were returned completed. Three specific questions about one person operation (OPO) of buses were included in the questionnaire, with the following results:

Do you consider that "one person operated" buses are desirable? Yes: 21 No: 106

— are as safe as with a team of two?

Yes: 17 No: 108

— have improved your service? Yes: 9 No: 108

3. When the LRPC request was received members were asked in our July Newsletter for any comments on the subject. We have had fewer replies within the deadline set than we had hoped, knowing that we have members with experience of public transport in other cities. The holiday season may have been responsible. We believe, however, that the views expressed are widely shared by our members.

4. There is repeated emphasis on the dangers which passengers apprehend, and in several cases have actually experienced, at exit doors controlled by a driver who may have his line of sight obscured or may be, or be feared to be, careless. This feeling is common among the elderly, but is shared by those with young children or carrying any article liable to be caught. Of those answering our Environment Week questionnaire 94 per cent thought a team of two safer, but regretably the type of double-decker with doors currently used in London does not encourage a conductor, when carried, to help, or stand ready to help, alighting passengers. The LRPC request apparently accepts that London's traditional open rear platform buses must now be ruled out by safety regulations, but we wonder whether a study of accidents, near accidents and perceived fears, taking fully into account the types of passenger likely to be involved, would in fact validate the change that has been made in the regulations. It would be wrong for the Department of Transport to claim that open platform buses, which are widely felt to be most suitable for London's special conditions, had to be ruled out completely on safety grounds if they were really only unwilling to go to the trouble of making continued provision for designs that presuppose two person operation.

5. Many passengers want to be able to put down luggage, shopping, push chairs, etc (for which many complain there is insufficient room), and if possible find a seat, before having to turn attention to finding money or a pass or ticket. They also feel safer. The 83 per cent of our respondents who found OPO buses less desirable were not asked to say why, but obviously designs and crewing arrangements which fail to recognise factors like these must keep potential passengers away.

6. Less than 8 per cent of our respondents thought that OPO had improved their service. (Some of these may have been influenced by the special efforts apparently made when the 68 service was converted to OPO). The longer journey times due to slower boarding are a frequent cause of complaint, as are the consequential delays to other traffic. Whatever is done about ticketing — see below — we understand that the average boarding time with OPO must at best be some 50 per cent greater than with the

traditional London bus. With a high proportion of tourists and others unfamiliar with routes and coinage even this may be optimistic. It is fallacious to ignore the resulting direct and indirect costs to the community of longer journey times for passengers and delays to other traffic.

7. For these OPO delays to be minimised and predictable, and to that extent accepted, or (to put it another way) for us to accept the argument that OPO is tolerable in other cities, particularly in continental Europe, three main things are needed, which these cities generally have:

- (a) sufficient and adequately enforced bus priority measures (lanes, signals, etc).
- (b) comprehensive pre-boarding ticketing, and
- (c) something which only (a) and (b) can make possible — more frequent and regularly spaced services, even if operated on some routes or at some times with smaller buses.

A blind insistence on OPO before conditions (a) and (b) are met can only discourage potential passengers faced with longer queues (or, regrettably, larger and more disorderly rabbles) as service gaps lengthen due to traffic congestion and boarding delays. Condition (c) will require the kind of attitude to capital and operating costs which we believe is normal in many cities held out as examples of successful OPO.

8. Because of our support for sufficient and adequately enforced bus priority measures, we are glad to see that LRPC, in its response to the review of the Traffic Warden Service, has stressed the urgency of so regulating traffic that reliable bus services become possible. Many of our car-owning members use them in London only with reluctance and because the timing of a single bus journey, let alone one depending on connections in the network, is wildly unpredictable. If reliably frequent services on an integrated network could be assured we believe there would be a fair measure of acceptance, at least by inner city car owners, of their loss of priority, and a substantial shift to bus usage.

9. As for pre-boarding ticketing, two main things are needed if it is to be effective in minimising boarding times. One is transferability between bus and bus and between bus and train. The other is to cater for, and thus attract additional patronage by, those wishing to make three or four journeys in the week (e.g. mothers with babies and shopping). A "carnet" would be economic for such passengers, but not any form of season or period ticket.

10. The present design of buses intended for OPO is criticised not only for the safety reasons mentioned above but because it adds to the stresses of travel and therefore discourages custom. Congestion between boarding and exit doors, and round exit doors, even when seats and gangway towards the rear are under-occupied, causes discomfort and unpleasantness, or worse, as well as delay. Much smoking effectively takes place on the lower deck by smokers boarding or waiting to alight. We suggest a study of European and other arrangements for the movement of passengers from entry to exit, and for using closed circuit TV as well as mirrors to monitor doors, so that points like these may be taken fully into account.

*Norman Hutchison*

## LEGEND

➤ TWO WAY

➤ ONE WAY

(R) NO RIGHT TURN

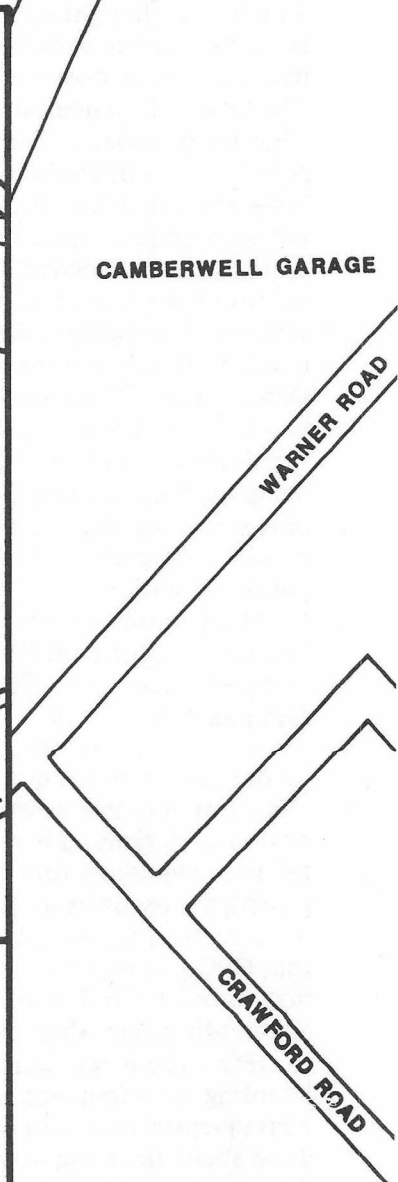
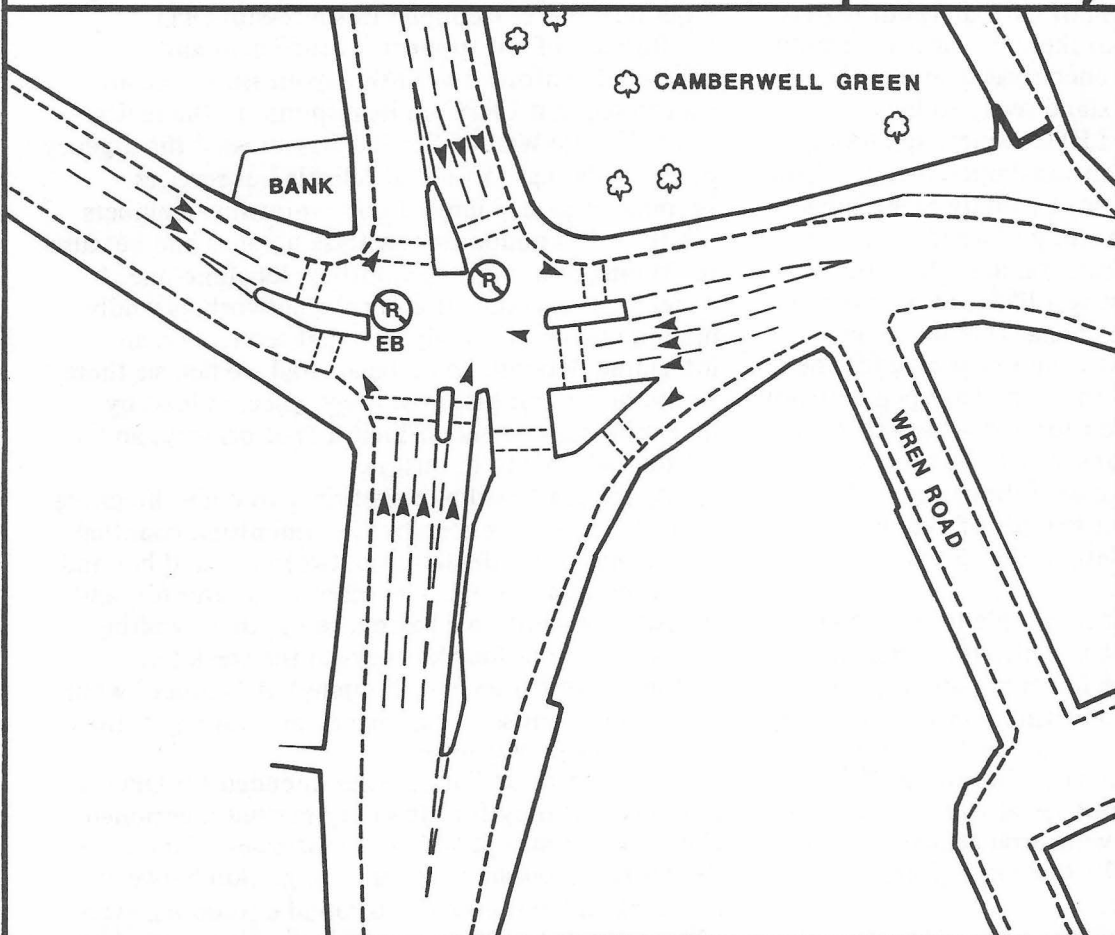
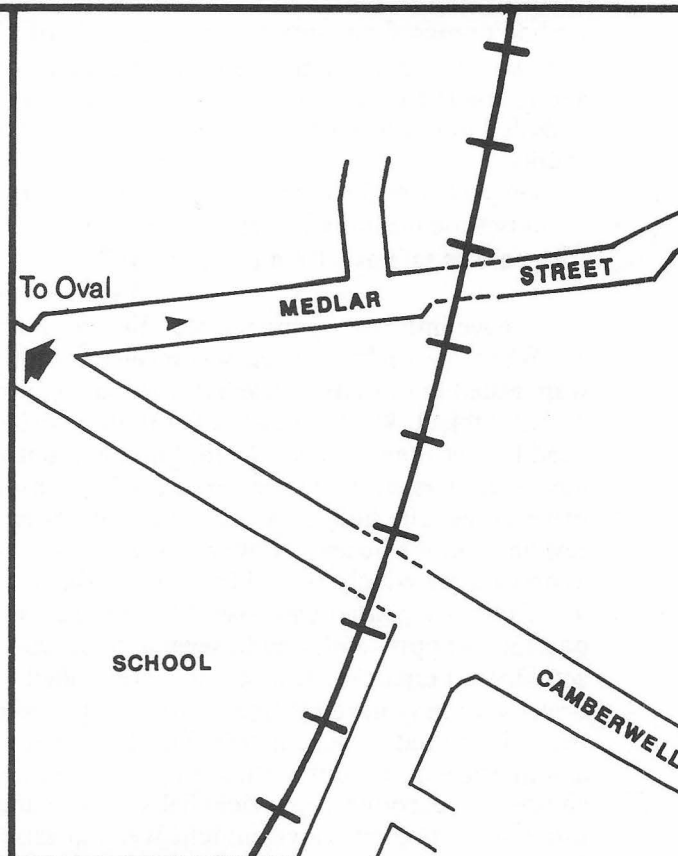
(R)  
EB NO RIGHT TURN EXCEPT BUSES

↶ LEFT TURN ONLY

A ACCESS TO LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY

— ROAD BLOCKED

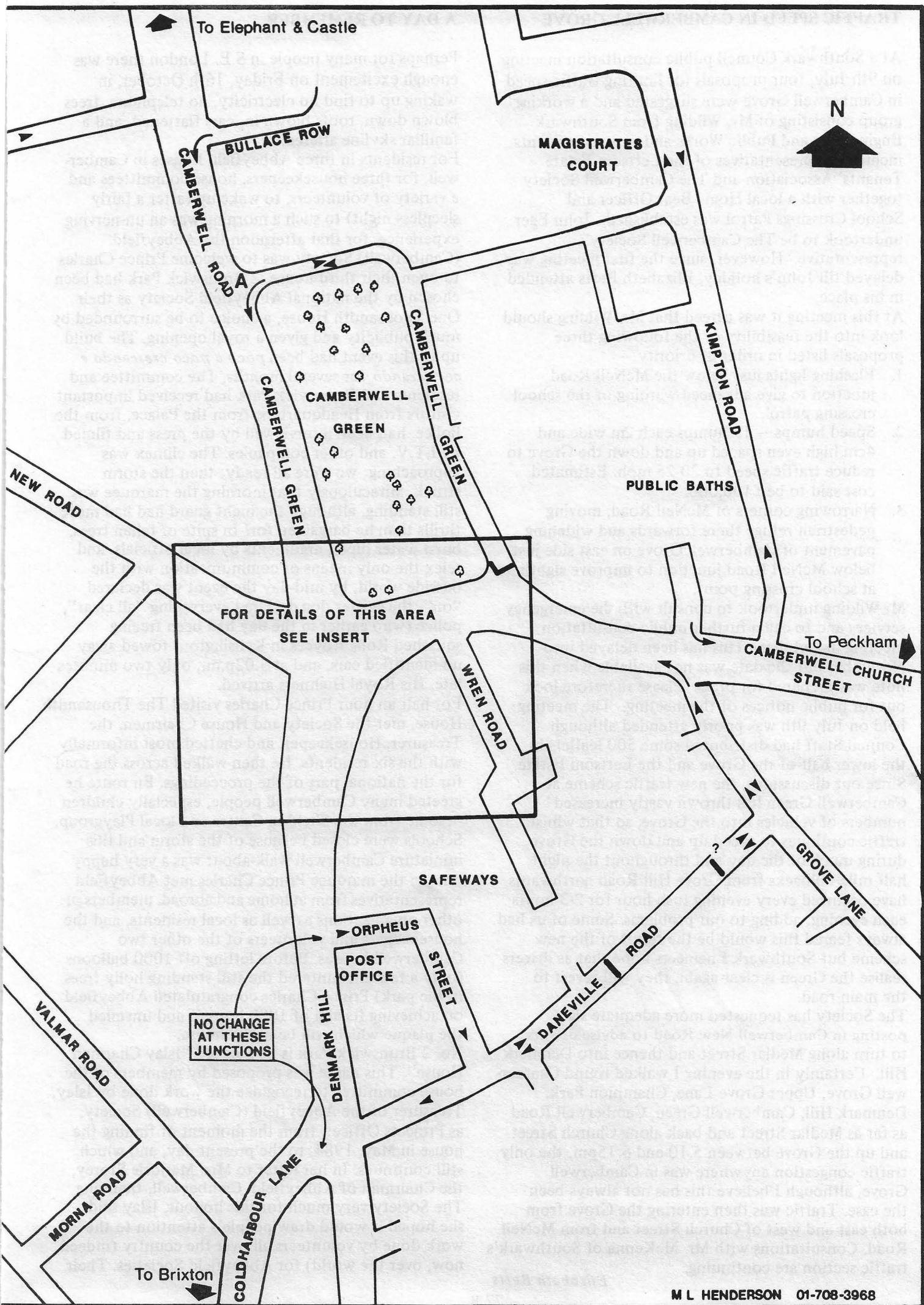
FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES ONLY DO NOT SCALE



# CAMBERWELL

## TRAFFIC LAYOUT OCTOBER 1987





## TRAFFIC SPEED IN CAMBERWELL GROVE

At a Southwark Council public consultation meeting on 9th July, four proposals for limiting traffic speed in Camberwell Grove were suggested and a working group consisting of Mr. Wilding from Southwark Engineering and Public Works and various residents including representatives of the Lettsom Estate Tenants' Association and The Camberwell Society together with a local Home Beat Officer and School Crossings Patrol was established. John Eger undertook to be The Camberwell Society's representative. However, since the first meeting was delayed till John's holiday, Elizabeth Betts attended in his place.

At this meeting it was agreed that Mr. Wilding should look into the feasibility of the following three proposals listed in order of priority:—

1. Flashing lights just below the McNeil Road junction to give advanced warning of the school crossing patrol.
2. Speed humps — 13 humps each 2m wide and 4cm high even spaced up and down the Grove to reduce traffic speed to 20-25 mph. Estimated cost said to be £100,000.
3. Narrowing corners of McNeil Road, moving pedestrian refuge there forwards and widening pavement of Camberwell Grove on east side just below McNeil Road junction to improve sightlines at school crossing point.

Mr. Wilding undertook to consult with the emergency services and to call a further public consultation meeting in October. This has been delayed into November but the date was not available when this note was prepared for press. Please therefore look out for public notices of the meeting. The meeting held on July 9th was poorly attended although Council Staff had distributed some 500 leaflets in the lower half of the Grove and the Lettsom Estate. Since our discussions, the new traffic scheme at Camberwell Green has thrown vastly increased numbers of vehicles into the Grove, so that whilst traffic continues to speed up and down the Grove during much of the day and throughout the night, half mile tailbacks from Grove Hill Road northwards have occurred every evening rush-hour for 2-3 hours each evening, adding to our problems. Some of us had always feared this would be the result of the new scheme but Southwark Engineers hope that as drivers realise the Green is clear again, they will revert to the main road.

The Society has requested more adequate sign-posting in Camberwell New Road to advise drivers to turn along Medlar Street and thence into Denmark Hill. Certainly in the evening I walked round Camberwell Grove, Upper Grove Lane, Champion Park, Denmark Hill, Camberwell Green, Camberwell Road as far as Medlar Street and back along Church Street and up the Grove between 5.10 and 6.15pm, the only traffic congestion anywhere was in Camberwell Grove, although I believe this has not always been the case. Traffic was then entering the Grove from both east and west of Church Street and from McNeil Road. Consultations with Mr. McKenna of Southwark's traffic section are continuing.

Elizabeth Betts

## A DAY TO REMEMBER

Perhaps for many people in S.E. London there was enough excitement on Friday, 16th October, in waking up to find no electricity, no telephone, trees blown down, roofs blown in, cars flattened, and a familiar skyline altered.

For residents in three Abbeyfield houses in Camberwell, for three housekeepers, house committees and a variety of volunteers, to wake up (after a fairly sleepless night) to such a morning was an un-nerving experience, for that afternoon the Abbeyfield (Camberwell) Society was to welcome Prince Charles to open their third house. 2 Brunswick Park had been chosen by the national Abbeyfield Society as their One Thousandth House, a choice to be surrounded by much publicity and given a royal opening. The build up to this event had been *poco a poco crescendo e accelerando* for several months. The committee and residents at 2 Brunswick Park had received important visitors from Headquarters, from the Palace, from the Police, had been interviewed by the press and filmed by I.T.V. and other companies. The climax was approaching: we were all ready: then the storm struck. Miraculously that morning the marquee was still standing, although the night guard had had more thrills than he bargained for! In spite of fallen trees, burst water pipes, arguments by local officials, and telex the only means of communication with the outside world, by mid-day the event was declared "on", the sniffer dog declared everything "all clear", police (who earlier in the day had been freeing squashed Rolls Royces in Kensington) towed away un-identified cars, and at 3.02p.m., only two minutes late, His Royal Highness arrived.

For half an hour Prince Charles visited The Thousandth House, met the Society and House Chairmen, the Treasurer, Housekeeper, and chatted most informally with the six residents. He then walked across the road for the national part of the proceedings. En route he greeted many Camberwell people, especially children — some from the Sheldon Centre and local Playgroup. Schools were closed because of the storm and this miniature Camberwell walk-about was a very happy one. In the marquee Prince Charles met Abbeyfield representatives from at home and abroad, members of other organizations as well as local residents, and the housekeepers and volunteers of the other two Camberwell houses. Before letting off 1000 balloons (only a few encountered the still standing holly trees in the park) Prince Charles congratulated Abbeyfield on achieving its aim of 1000 houses, and unveiled the plaque which will be in the house.

No. 2 Brunswick Park is now called "Islay Charman House". This name was proposed by members of the house committee to recognize the work done by Islay, Treasurer of the Abbeyfield (Camberwell) Society, as Projects Officer, from the moment of finding the house in May, 1984, to the present day, and which still continues. In her letter to Mrs. Marjorie Storey, the Chairman of Abbeyfield Camberwell, thanking The Society very much for this honour, Islay said she hoped it would draw people's attention to the work done by volunteers all over the country (indeed, now, over the world) for Abbeyfield Societies. Their



family sized houses for elderly people, who feel they can no longer manage on their own, are run by local societies, each Society quite autonomous, the national Society headquarters being at Potters Bar. There is a salaried housekeeper but all other details of day to day running, of finance, of welfare, are looked after by volunteers. Many members of *The Camberwell Society* give their time to our three houses in this capacity. More are always welcome!

It is known that residents of Abbeyfield houses live longer than their contemporaries who struggle on alone. It is unusual, therefore, for houses to have vacancies but at the moment there is a vacancy in each of our houses. Residents keep their independence but lose the worries of living alone. Visitors would be welcomed at 119 Camberwell Grove, 76 Nunhead Grove and 2 Brunswick Park. Because of the storm much of the national publicity was lost. Please tell people about Abbeyfield, there are many other local societies. More volunteers would be welcome: at the moment we can also welcome three more residents.

*Mary Rose Seldon*  
Secretary of Abbeyfield, Camberwell  
House Chairman of 2 Brunswick Park

*H.R.H. Prince Charles clearly enjoyed his visit to Camberwell for the opening of Abbeyfield's One Thousandth House.*



*The Housekeeper of 2 Brunswick Park, with four of the residents during the Royal walkabout.*

## RAIL PROSPECTS IN INNER SOUTH LONDON

The evening of 15th October was memorable for the worst weather but the best attended meeting of the Society for many years, a remarkable demonstration of the demand for new and improved rail travel which is gathering force in Camberwell and the wide area of South London from which some of our audience had been attracted.

Colin McKenna, Passenger Transport Liaison Officer for the Borough of Southwark, set the scene. Rail was the only practicable way to give disadvantaged South London adequate transport which would be rapid and reliable. The Council was urging BR to make better use of the existing rail system, specifically through three new stations (near Camberwell Green, in Walworth, and in Union Street, Southwark) with access to the forthcoming ThamesLink services, and through improved orbital services on the South London Line (SLL), possibly extending from Dartford to Clapham Junction. From LRT it wanted southward extension of both the Bakerloo and East London Lines. The Council had powers, but limited resources, to contribute capital or to support revenue. It was, however, active in advocacy, and the Department of Transport (DTp) had agreed to consider the case for a Camberwell Green station on the basis of a joint BR/LBS submission which was nearly ready. Mr. McKenna acknowledged the contribution the Camberwell Society had made, and which he hoped would continue, by our advocacy to DTp and through MPs to its Ministers.

Nick Illsley, London Projects Officer for Network SouthEast, gave an optimistic report of progress since NSE was launched in 1986 as a "brand name" for marketing the London commuter services on which the deficit in revenue from fares is made up by Government grant. That grant is falling, as Government insists, but so are costs, partly through new investment — now at twice its level in the 70's. Commuter numbers are up. So is revenue. With renewed trains and stations we should by the mid 90's see a modern system like those in other European cities. BR, we were assured, did care for the inner as well as the outer suburbs. There would be investment in the inner city too.

Turning to our immediate concerns he said the case for a new station at Camberwell Green was the strongest of the three advocated by the Council. Estimated annual revenue of £170,000 would cover running costs. Capital cost would be greater at the Walworth Garage site (over £1m.) than at the pre-1916 site in Station Road, but it would be more attractive, give greater potential for bus interchange, and have engineering advantages since it would use the outer two of the four tracks instead of the inner pair to which an island platform at the old location would be limited. If a Camberwell Station were so sited as to force stopping trains to use the inner tracks the desired stops at Walworth and Union Street would become impossible. A minimum of four ThamesLink trains an hour in each direction, off-peak, and up to six at peak hours, would stop at Camberwell. There would be some non-stop trains on the inner tracks, but if demand grew the number of

stopping trains could be increased. Through trains would have various destinations in the NW, beyond the main interchanges at Blackfriars, Farringdon and King's Cross, but some peak-hour services would continue to branch into and terminate at Holborn Viaduct. Purley, Orpington or Sevenoaks would be the normal southern destination.

Mr. Illsley seemed hopeful that a DTp grant would overcome the obstacle of capital cost. He endorsed what Mr. McKenna had said about the value of pressure from bodies such as our Society. It would take about a year from approval to build a Camberwell Station. ThamesLink services would assuredly start in May 1988. So a new ThamesLink station would be by far the quickest way to get a rail service to Camberwell Green.

About the shortcomings of the SLL — "a very sad case" he called it — Mr. Illsley was disarmingly frank. The best hope lay in BR's willingness to run an all-day Dartford-Victoria service, maybe from May 1989, if the Boroughs of Greenwich, Lewisham, Southwark and Lambeth would jointly underwrite the estimated revenue shortfall of £250,000 a year, or if DTp would give limited support grant. All such trains would stop at Denmark Hill, and new stops were possible at Brockley (interchange with London Bridge—East Croydon line) and Brixton (interchange with Underground, and already in Lambeth Council's bid for inner city money). Such a service would run initially to Victoria (not, a questioner was assured, Battersea Park!), for engineering and driver operating reasons. Developing a Clapham Junction service as well would take a further 18 months. Introduction of a Dartford—Victoria service would not entail withdrawal of the existing peak-hour service to London Bridge on which, it was gratifying to learn, demand is considered satisfactory.

After this account of what BR are eager to provide — if the financial circle can be squared — a more disappointing note was struck by Richard Meads, Marketing and Services Development Manager for London Underground. Despite having more passengers than they can cope with on some existing lines, and approvals for investment in trains, stations and much else, they still have difficulty in getting any major extension in South London to meet DTp criteria. Extension of the Bakerloo Line southwards is still one of the two basic possibilities under examination, but the calculations apparently show the other — extension via the Bricklayer's Arms to New Cross Gate — as giving more "social benefit". So Mr. Meads agreed with Mr. Illsley in urging us to seek our service through ThamesLink. A large volume of transfers at its interchanges with the Underground would strengthen the case for more Underground investment in South London.

There are possibilities of extending the East London Line, perhaps to Peckham and perhaps converted to light rail to be integrated with the Docklands Line. A "modest extension" of the Northern Line from Kensington "into South London" was a more distant possibility: they want to increase the capacity of this line. But a questioner was told it was impossible to



increase the capacity of the Victoria Line, so ruling out its extension.

A rush of questions underlined deficiencies in services, particularly on the SLL, and inept failure to market even those we have. BR lines appear on the Underground map — on which travellers so heavily rely — only where there is “fare interchangeability”. That of course led to the question why BR stations could not be fully integrated into the zonal fare structure. The unconvincing reply was that it had not been recommended by the recent Monopolies Commission report on Network SouthEast. Other questions probed the way traffic was forecast and costs spread when the DTp’s investment criteria are applied, and whether there was any movement in

DTp’s hitherto unyielding attitude. It is evidently going to be useful for our Society to exchange views on such matters with the rail planners as well as with the Council when we make our representations to DTp and its Ministers.

Norman Hutchison expressed our thanks to the speakers for the questions they had answered and their frankness on those they were not yet in a position to answer. He noted — and the speakers acknowledged — that they were aware of other concerns made known by members and which he had passed on. He was sure they recognised the volume of applause would convey not only thanks for their informative talks but the strength of demand for the new and improved services that at last seemed possible.



*In the last Newsletter, we reproduced an old postcard of this avenue to St. Giles Church. This photograph was taken in the Spring, 1987. The lovely trees in the Churchyard were among those badly hit in all London parks. This path will not look the same again in our lifetime.*

*Islay Charman and Brian Allsworth view the storm damage in Brunswick Park on the morning of Friday, 16th October.*



## ENFORCEMENT NOTICE, 15 GROVE LANE

The appeal against the enforcement notice to close the minicab business operating at 14 Grove Lane was heard on 8th September. The formal decision of the Inspector holding the local inquiry was to uphold the notice although the period for compliance was changed from 28 days (the date of the notice was 9th October) to 4 months.

## HAY'S GALLERIA

Hay's Galleria, the office, shopping and entertainment mall created by renovation of the derelict Hay's Wharf buildings, is now open to the public and makes a handsome addition to *London Bridge City*, a mixture of old and new buildings facing the Thames just east of London Bridge. The good proportions and fine brickwork of the old Hay's Wharf warehouses are retained and are complemented by new buildings of similar scale and design on the forward part of the site and by fine detailing of railings and other fittings along the riverside walk which passes in front of both the extended old buildings and the modern glazed buildings.

Derelict warehouses farther east, towards Tower Bridge, are now being demolished. Plans submitted for the area include a massive neo-gothic structure which threatens to overwhelm the original scale of development along the Thames.

*Elizabeth Betts*

Two suggested slogans for 1988:

*KEEP CAMBERWELL CLEAN PLEASE*

and

*YOU ARE ENTERING A LITTER FREE ZONE*

## THE NEW GLOBE THEATRE

The building of the new Globe Theatre close to the site of Shakespeare's original Globe in Southwark, moved a step closer with a Ground Breaking Ceremony on 16th July.

Twenty-six structural timber posts for the reconstruction of the theatre have been donated by countries all over the world. These form the circular shape of the theatre, amongst them an oak from Windsor Great Park was contributed by the Patron, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh.

On a typical English summer day an invited audience sat under umbrellas and listened to short speeches from Sir David Orr, Chairman of the Shakespeare Globe Trust, the Rt. Hon. Richard Luce, MP, Minister for the Arts, Robert Dunn, MP, Under-Secretary of State for Education, Gordon Getty, Chairman of the International Council and finally a witty contribution from HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, who, underterred by a steady downpour of gentle summer's rain, then proceeded to supervise the lowering into position of the oak post.

The ceremony took place during International Shakespeare Week on the Globe site, an event which is intended to be held annually.

It is hoped to build the Globe complex by 1992. In order to achieve this it is necessary to raise £16m. This sum will be raised from various sources, including support from outside the United Kingdom. The aim is to raise at least £4m in this country. To raise this money the Globe Theatre Trust is adopting an Elizabethan idea. When the original Globe needed financing the builders first invited its players (including Shakespeare) to become *Sharers*. Today's supporters can become Sharers. For details of the scheme, contact Christopher Field or Judith Digney at the International Shakespeare Globe Centre, Bear Gardens, Bankside, SE1 9EB, tel: 01-620 0202. An account of Sam Wanamaker's campaign for the new Globe Theatre appeared in Newsletter No. 68, July 1985.

*Jim Tanner*

### DECEMBER MEETING

(Paid up Members only !)

## **CHRISTMAS PARTY**

THURSDAY, 10th DECEMBER 7.00 – 10.30 p.m.

S.C.F. DATCHELOR HOUSE (Entrance Grove Lane)

*Light Buffet Supper with Wine and Soft Drinks*

### SURPRISE ENTERTAINMENT

A donation towards Society funds will be appreciated.