

ISLINGTON *news*

The Journal of the ISLINGTON SOCIETY incorporating **FOIL** folio

DECIBELS FROM ABOVE

One reason why Londoners are disturbed by aircraft noise every morning from 4am onwards is that aircraft are obliged to leave Sydney and Hong Kong, before 11pm (local time) because the people of those cities have the benefit of a ban on night-time flying. Londoners, it seems, are the second-class citizens whose government cares so little about their quality of life that they are not given similar protection.

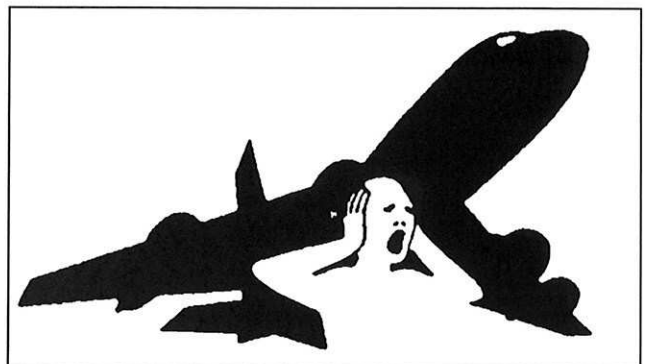
This cavalier attitude of successive British governments towards the people who live under flight paths goes back a long way, and seems to have begun with the Civil Aviation Act of 1920, which at first sight looks an innocent enough piece of legislation. (For example, it made compulsory the tying down of loose objects in the cockpit so that, in the then common event of an aircraft flying upside down, the innocent populace below was not showered with spanners). But, as in so many cases, the sting of the 1920 Act was in its tail. The small print withdrew the citizen's legal right to obtain redress for any nuisance caused by aircraft. And this monstrous citizen's-charter-in-reverse was confirmed by the 1949 Civil Aviation Act: presumably lest anyone should imagine that the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act actually meant what it said about the location of noxious industries. In spite of this, the Government's Wilson Report on Noise published in 1963 pointed out that Heathrow was conceived in the "propeller" age and was unsuitable for jet aircraft, for which the long landing approach involved flying over densely populated areas of London.

The Wilson Report also drew attention to officialdom's very arbitrary approach to noise nuisance, which simply took as its guideline what people were already forced to put up with. This led to the conclusion that an outside noise in excess of 40 decibels (DbA) was intolerable if it were caused by one's neighbour, whereas 50 DbA was the limit tolerated from road traffic; and from "acts of God" like aircraft noise 78 DbA

became the limit. As the decibel scale is logarithmic it was apparently assumed that people could tolerate outside their dwelling a noise level caused by aircraft which was four times what they had to tolerate if it were caused by their neighbour!

On one of the very warm summer evenings of 1997 I was at a garden party in Putney: a place which I do not normally regard as particularly close to Heathrow. But, when the flight path was diverted over the area earlier than expected, the party had to continue indoors with all the windows shut to keep out the noise. It struck us all, as we sweltered in unventilated rooms, how monstrous it was that Londoners should still have to suffer from noise-levels that one normally associates with the nineteenth century industrial age rather than with our more sophisticated electronic era. But worse is to come apparently, and its effects are going to extend over more of London.

It seems that, to reduce noise levels, aircraft join an Instrument Landing System Glide-path at least ten miles from touch-down. This puts them



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on a three-degree descent with minimum thrust and, therefore, less noise. But, with an ever-increasing number of aircraft and with the gap between aircraft recently reduced from three to two-and-half nautical miles, many flights miss their allotted slot. So air-traffic controllers are now permitted to pull-in aircraft out of turn by reverting to "manual control": a procedure which often involves steep banking, variable glide-paths and a lot more noise over London, and which used to be allowed only in emergencies but is now to be allowed at all times except between 4am and 6am. Islington is unlikely to be seriously affected; but if Heathrow's Terminal 5 goes ahead and, if it really is designed to increase passenger capacity rather than to expand the airport's shopping facilities, it could well be followed by an extra runway built north of the A4. Islington would then find itself under the start of Heathrow's northernmost glide-path and our parochial concern about aircraft noise would no longer be confined to low-flying police helicopters.

But large-scale expansion at Heathrow (or anywhere else for that matter) is out of kilter with

government policy on the environment, and is unquestionably contrary to the spirit of the international obligations we entered into at the 1995 Rio Summit.

The present government has endorsed the last government's decision to give up the policy of "predict and provide" for road building, on the grounds that it is not only self-defeating but also environmentally unsustainable and contrary to our commitments at Rio. Air transport causes even more pollution per mile travelled than road transport. But we still try to provide for an unlimited and unsustainable growth in air traffic; we leave aircraft fuel as the only transport fuel untaxed; and we charge nothing for the nuisance caused by aircraft to the millions of people, particularly in London, who live under flight paths.

At the very least, it seems to me, the Islington Society should join London's other Civic Trust amenity societies in supporting the London Forum's opposition to Terminal 5. Sooner or later the air transport industry has to be dragged into the real world from which it has been protected ever since the 1920 Civil Aviation Act.

Harley Sherlock

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7 Barnsbury Square, London N1 1JL

Suggestions of local topics to be covered and articles to be considered for publication in ISLINGTON news may be sent to the Editor at the above address. Local organisations are asked to send notification of activities and events they would like to be listed. Letters to the Editor are welcome.

OUR LIBRARIES

The serious damage to our already much curtailed library service scheduled in the Council's cuts package is still meeting opposition both from councillors and from the public.

The library service's share of the Council's expenditure cuts was put at £1.5m over three years. The scheme put forward was that the main libraries on the north/south axis of the borough - Archway, North, Central, South, Finsbury - would become "beacon" libraries with enhanced services and would retain their present opening hours: the others - Arthur Simpson, John Barnes, Mildmay, West, - would be "community" libraries closed during the week, open for only ten hours on Saturday and part of Sunday, and with minimal service. Lewis Carroll, the children's library would become a community library but would open during the week. It also entailed deleting 60 librarian posts including the children's librarians and other specialists vital to the quality of the service. The two reference collections are to be amalgamated at Central, and the two local history collections at Finsbury.

The Council has now decreed that the week-end only opening be put on hold and that a further review* of the whole service be undertaken. There is still time for us to protest about the rape of the library service and its almost complete withdrawal from some of the areas that most need it.

PLEASE BE SURE TO ATTEND THE IMPORTANT
MEETING ANNOUNCED ON THE ENCLOSED FLYER
TUESDAY 30 MARCH at 7.30PM, TOWN HALL

Losing even a less than perfect library service can seriously damage the quality of life of many sections of our community. The much vaunted emphases on lifelong learning, on improving literacy, on raising our shamefully low standard of education, and on the value of reading in this **National Year of Reading** are not served by making libraries inaccessible.

**The review initiated at the instigation of the Citizens' Jury was completed but because it was carried out before the scale of the 1999 cuts was announced it remains on the Borough Librarian's desk and has not been made public.*

LIBRARIES' FRIENDS

Friends of Libraries groups still seem to be a topic of special interest to library authorities; and FOIL maintains its high profile. A research project on the role and value of 'Friends', both community initiated, as FOIL is, and library initiated, has been funded by the British Library and is now in progress. The former secretary of FOIL, now the Islington Society's editor, has been invited to join the small steering group.

LONDON LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

The possible London Library Development Agency is likely soon to be a reality. The report of the research findings was launched by Chris Smith at the British Library in November. The main recommendations were that such a body would be both effective and cost effective and that 1 April 1999 would be a suitable starting date. All the London boroughs are now being invited to subscribe.

Islington has had a special role in this as the steering group is chaired by Liz Roberts, our own Borough Librarian.

NOTE. Sadly Islington Council now expects us to think of Liz Roberts as the Assistant Head of Information and Customer Services. A title which hardly trips off the tongue, and certainly does not convey any connection with libraries. Most people will ignore it. We need a Borough Librarian.

KINGS CROSS AND ST PANCRAS

Gordon Wigglesworth continues the story

Regeneration: The Challenge Bid

During the 1980s into the 1990s there had been "constant debate and disagreement over the Railway Lands and their future. Local communities have become increasingly disillusioned after promises of action never materialised".

A new partnership - the Kings Cross Partnership was formed to prepare a Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund Bid (SRB) to the Government, which aimed to provide the Partnership with funds to improve the area - to be named a New Quarter. The area of the New Quarter is 2 square km as shown in a simplified diagram. It should be noted that railway lands are nearly all in Camden apart from a small patch to the north called the Islington triangle; and so far as the New Quarter as a whole is concerned Camden occupies by far the larger part. The Partnership submitted its SRB Fund bid to the Government in the Autumn of 1995. In its submission the Partnership set out a vision of a 'new gateway' linking Britain and the European continent - a vision that was to be more than just a modernised transport interchange; it was to be seen as an opportunity to enhance the New Quarter extending from Euston to Kings Cross, develop a sense of place by means of private investment in businesses, a major hotel, and the development of cultural, entertainment and tourist facilities. The area had already gained a fine new building - the British Library and its piazza, to add to several distinguished buildings from the past - for instance St Pancras Station and Chambers and St. Pancras church, modelled on the exquisite Erechtheum of the Acropolis at

Athens. The SRB submission emphasised its commitment to raising the quality of urban planning with buildings of architectural merit and in general to regenerate and enhance this long neglected part of north London - hence, a New Quarter. The bid put great emphasis on the importance of a mixed community, where people could continue to live and thrive, with new housing and old housing brought up to modern standards; new opportunities for employment - a place for 'all communities'.

These hopes and intentions were developed to build on and add value to existing national, regional, and local activities in the area. The bid adds to Government plans by accelerating and co-ordinating redevelopments around the building of the CTRL and its terminus at St Pancras.

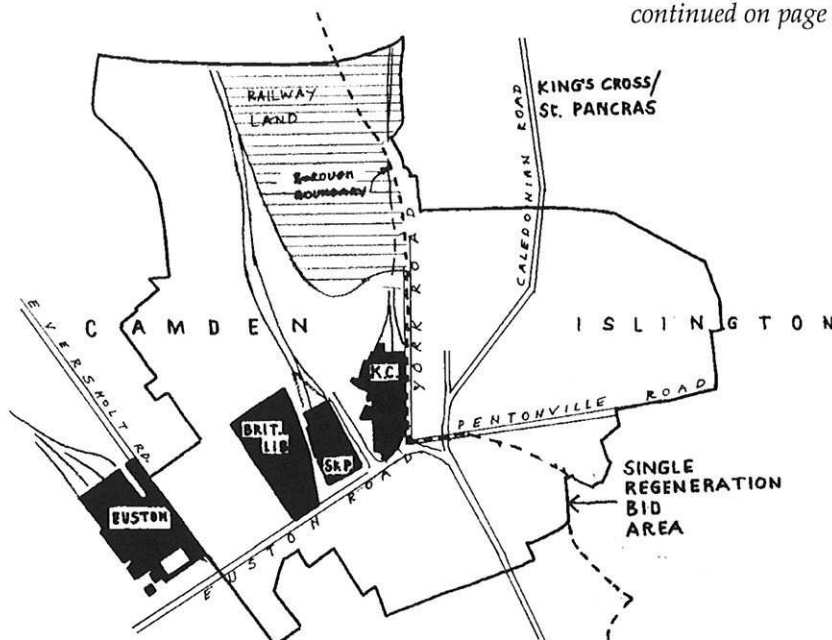
The bid succeeded; Government would provide core funding of £37.5m to which would be added £43.6m from other public funds and £171.4m private investment

(totalling £251m) to implement a comprehensive and coherent programme linking physical, economic, and social initiatives. Financial provision for the CTRL is not included in any of the above figures nor was it included in the bid.

Government core funding of £37.5m is to be spread over a 7 years programme to be agreed annually by the Government Office for London (GoL). Expenditure in Year 1 (1996) and Year 2 (1997) were £536,000 and £2,995,000 respectively. It is important to note that in Year 2 the Partnership obtained £38,093,000 private sector leverage.

In March 1998 Kings Cross Partnership submitted a Delivery Plan for year 3 to the GoL. In this bid (Year 3 tranche) expenditure is expected to be £7,981,000. Some projects this money is funding are - Improvement of the Scala building (music and entertainment centre) and The Place, one of the busiest contemporary dance

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WHAT IS THE ISLINGTON SOCIETY FOR?

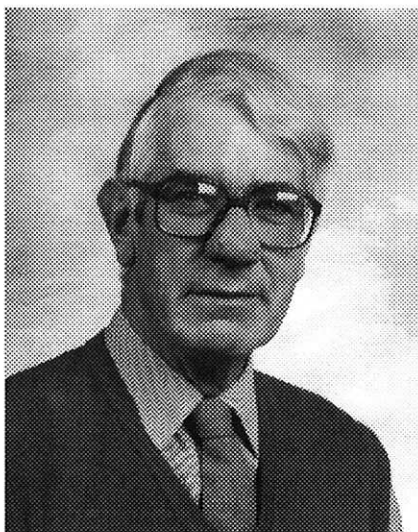
As Harley Sherlock nears the end of his term as chairman, he ponders the question

It is much easier to think up a list of things the Society is against. But lots of other people are against traffic pollution, library closures, the desecration of historic buildings, litter on the street etc; and it has often occurred to me that such issues can just as well be pursued by smaller local societies based on "parishes" (like Tufnell Park, Canonbury, Clerkenwell etc) or by tenants and residents associations based on their estates or streets. They are likely to be much better acquainted with their "patch" than a borough-wide organisation can conceivably be; and, with members within walking-distance of each other, can organise themselves more easily.

This way, however, parts of Islington have often fallen outside the area covered by those campaigning for a better physical environment. Not only has the north of the borough tended to be ignored but, even in the south, focal points like the Angel were at one time surrounded by well-represented residential areas none of which covered the Angel itself. More importantly, pressure needs to be brought to bear on Islington councillors by a group which covers the whole of the area for which the council is responsible (in the same way that the the Greater London Authority will need to be lobbied by the London Forum which covers the whole of the capital); and someone

needs to organise public meetings which help to inform the debate about environmental issues.

But what are we lobbying for? The Society was founded in 1960 around a campaign to save 19th century streets and squares from demolition by the LCC and Islington council, who had run out of bomb-sites and irredeemable slums as a source of housing land. But it was not just that the old streets were potentially beautiful (although most of them were) but because it seemed that their rehabilitation could provide better housing



This is the last issue of ISLINGTON news published during Harley's chairmanship. It is not the last to carry his work: we are glad to say he will continue to be our columnist.

than that offered by the typical 1960s tower blocks, for just as many people. (The fact that most tower-block estates were built to the same number of

rooms per acre as the Georgian streets they replaced is often forgotten). Similarly our current campaign for traffic reduction is not just because we want the roads freed-up for buses and delivery vehicles (although we do) but because we believe that our quality of life would be enormously improved if we were less car-dependent, and our streets became places again, instead of mere thoroughfares to somewhere else.

It seems that most of our campaigns have been driven by dual causes. In the early 1980s we campaigned for Islington's economic revival: not just because we disliked the appearance of acres of bomb-site car parks and derelict commercial buildings, but because such dereliction meant a lack of jobs for Islington's indigenous population as well as a lack of life in our town centres at the Angel, Nag's Head etc. And three years ago we found ourselves fighting the proposed out-of-centre superstore at Lough Road: not just because we didn't want the extra traffic that would have been generated by 400 car-parking spaces, but because we wanted to reverse the trend for our shops to get bigger and fewer and further away. We claimed that half-a-dozen small Sainsbury supermarkets in existing neighbourhood centres would serve Islington much better than one large superstore.

Now we find ourselves fighting for the survival of our libraries: not just because many Islington people are dependent on them but because, without them, Islington's education system will suffer; and a lack of good state schools in urban areas is now recognised as one of the brakes holding back the revival of our cities.

In summary, the purpose of the Islington Society (what it is

for) must be to argue for an improved environment which is not just confined to the trendy corners, but which spreads eventually to the whole borough. We must keep the best of our traditional three-and-four-storey streets and squares, and find a modern equivalent when we build anew. And we must make the most of city-living by seeing to it that our streets can again become places where

people meet and children play.

Above all we need to ensure that our communities stay sufficiently compact for the necessities and pleasures of life - like good food-shops, libraries, primary schools, pubs etc - to be within walking distance of our homes, and to ensure that we can get around on foot, by bike, or by reliable public transport services.

BUSES NOW AND TRAMS THEN

We welcome the restoration of buses to the former horse-drawn tram route in Bridport place, last traversed in November 1912. Until that date, the route of what is now the 141 omnibus left New North Road at Mintern Street, and via the full length of Bridport Place returned to its present route at the foot of Southgate Road. From April this year buses terminating their journeys at Hoxton do so via Poole Street and Bridport Place. The great advantage of this change, apart from the historical, is that it has removed buses from the narrow and residential Baring Street.

To-day Bridport Place is severed in two, although Mintern Street retains a place in London Transport vocabulary as a fare zone boundary. The restored route is thus confined to a short section at the northern end, used by short workings of the 141 and another route which can be traced back to its tramway equivalent, the 271.

BARING STREET

One wonders why Baring Street was ever used at all. Until 1899 borough boundaries were based on church parishes and often ran

between gardens. The whole of Baring Street was then in Hackney, with Wilton Square the south-eastern extremity of Islington. However, the street in the sense of carriageway consisted only of the dog-leg of to-day's Baring Street. The terrace of houses along the south-east side extended to the canal. Hence when the boundary was moved to the carriageway, it was to the dog-leg, leaving a small number of Hackney properties isolated by the Regent's Canal.

This anomaly was corrected only in 1994, but the "new" Baring Street, parallel with the canal, was completed just before the war to facilitate the introduction of electric trams, and remove public transport vehicles from Bridport Place for more than 85 years. Five houses, three of which appear to have been part of the fine terrace that otherwise survives to-day, were swept away to save perhaps 150 yards of track.

SOUTHGATE ROAD

Nor was this the only compulsory purchase brought about by electrification. It was about this time that Dorset Street, which was renamed Dove Road

in honour of the splendid Dove Brothers building now occupied by Marshall's, was extended east of Wall Street. Coincidentally the six houses (219-229 Southgate Road) demolished for this enterprise had been partly in Hackney until 1899. They backed directly on to Wall Street: further south the gardens of properties in Wall Street and Southgate Road met at the boundary. In this case, however, the benefit to tramway operation was in one direction only. This practice survived until 1992, when Dove Road was all but abandoned by London Transport (Buses). Like Poole Street/Bridport Place, Dove Road is now limited to use by 'buses turning short of their more familiar destinations. For the sake of residents in Baring Street it is to be hoped that the infrequent use of Bridport Place does not lead to the same problems of obstruction experienced these days in Dove Road.

Andrew Bosi

Members who have accurate knowledge of the changes over years to a small area are invited to submit similar articles.

ISLINGTON'S CRIME

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires local authorities and the police to work together to devise an effective community safety strategy. Islington Council and the Metropolitan Police have mapped crime in Islington and have drawn up some draft priorities for crime reduction in the next three years. This work described as an 'audit' shows where crime and disorder occur and which groups of people suffer most from the effects of crime.

Publication of the report of the audit is imminent, and it will be put out for a short period of public consultation. The views of a large number of local organisations are being sought,

and copies of a summary of the audit will be in every library, council office, and police station in the borough. People who would like to comment may obtain a copy of the summary from Michael Pollak, the Council's Principal Community Safety Officer, at the Town Hall on 477 3135, or if you have access to E-mail by requesting an E-mail copy from islingtonpolice@audit.freeseerve.co.uk.

The results of the consultation will be crucial as they will determine the three-year Islington Community Safety Strategy.

Inquiries may be made to Chief Inspector Simon Pountain at Islington Police Station on 421 0139 or to Michael Pollak.

HEALTH IN THE BOROUGH

OLDER PEOPLE

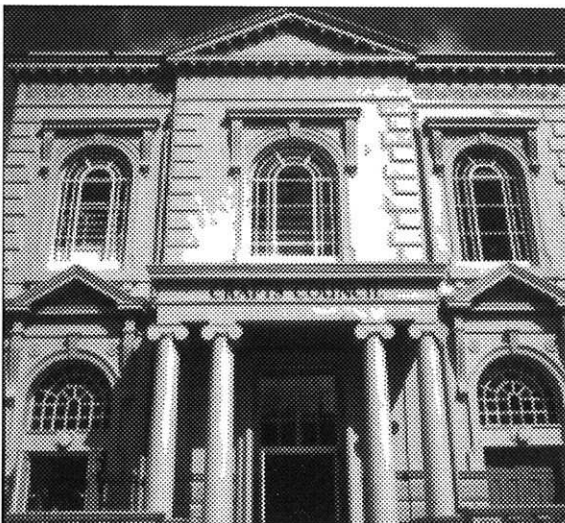
Islington Community Health Council is the "watchdog" for the whole range of services provided by the NHS. One of its present concerns is an investigation into the effectiveness and accessibility of health care for older people. A new structure being developed by the health authority puts emphasis on improved integration between different elements of the health service and with social services.

Anyone who has views to contribute is invited to get in touch with the CHC. A document for general consultation is to be available in March.

CHC meetings, open to the public, take place every second Monday in alternate months at 7pm at its offices at 164 Holloway Road, N7 8DD, 609 6096. The next meeting is on Monday 8 March. The CHC's chief officer is Martin Loughna.

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companies in Europe; the installation of 35 CCTV cameras around the station area; SRB area-wide environmental improvements including Regent's Canal; the establishment of a new Health Centre and the Primary Health Care Scheme; and a wide range of sports development schemes for people of all ages.

THE CRAFTS COUNCIL



The Council came here in 1991 to be one of Islington's most distinguished artistic assets. Since then the attractive galleries, shop, and cafe in the former Claremont Chapel have become part of our lives. The latest news is that

Following the proposal to amalgamate the Crafts Council with the Arts Council of England, discussions on its future are still continuing.

the structure of the Crafts Council will change but it will probably go on living in Pentonville Road. Keep your fingers crossed.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

RECENT PLANNING PERMISSIONS

The Parkfield Development, which covers the derelict land at the Angel between Liverpool Road and the Upper Street high pavement, has at last got planning permission for new shops, cinemas, restaurants (!) town square etc. The Society welcomes the opportunity to end years of dereliction, but some people feel that two or three of the surviving small shops in Liverpool Road could have been saved. Their fate will be decided shortly at the inquiry into the compulsory purchase orders served on the owners by the council.

Another planning permission that should bring to an end a period of unsightly dereliction is that for the Allied Brewery site at 156-176 St John Street. The new scheme is for a mixed development including a medium-sized Sainsbury supermarket, some hundred or more dwellings, light industry, and office space. It is a great improvement on a previous permission for offices but still dominates the small houses in Compton Street.

A third permission falling into the same category is that for mainly residential development (with the usual health club) on the Goswell Road frontage of the Owens School site, between Owens

Row and the City Road junction. Further down Goswell Road outline permission has been given for a new home for the City and Islington College: a most welcome return of education to this famous site.

The last of the most recent spate of permissions for large developments is that for the derelict commercial buildings on the north side of St John's Square that used to be Smiths, the metal workers. This is a mixed-use development which, though essentially modern in character, pays respect to the scale of the square.

The usual problems have arisen from small planning applications where it is difficult to resolve differences between the council, the applicant, and local residents. But much the most significant of these have been applications to extend the licensing hours of pubs in residential areas: thus attempting to turn them into the sort of activity that is not suitable for such areas. The Islington Society strongly opposes these applications as a matter of principle. It is interesting to note that the one application for a late-night licence that was as remote from residential properties as is possible in the borough, was turned down by the council: implying the end of making Islington part of the "all-night city," except

where it has happened already. (The site was that of the one-time main line Holloway Station adjacent to the Holloway Road railway bridge).

PLANNING BRIEFS

A recent idea (supported by the Islington Society) is for more sites to be the subject of a planning brief for developers, drawn up by council officers. An example of a planning brief in action is the resolution of the planning problems of Empire Yard (off Holloway Road just north of the Nag's Head), through the recent permission for a car-free residential development involving the conversion of existing buildings.

COUNCIL CUTS

One of the few good pieces of news to emerge from the cut-backs in council expenditure, was that the four conservation officer posts under threat have been rerieved (two thirds of the salaries involved are paid by English Heritage).

PLANNING CONTROL USER PANEL

Representatives of developers, residents, and environmentalists are to form this consultative panel set up by council planning officers. The Islington Society has been invited to put the environmentalist point of view, and Peter Powell and Roger Mears have agreed to represent us. HS

ISLINGTON SOCIETY DINNER

The Society's second annual dinner will be on Wednesday 24 March.

This year the dining sub-committee's choice of restaurant is: The Old Dairy, 1 Crouch Hill, N4.

The cost per person is £22.50 for three courses, wine, and coffee, inclusive of service. Vegetarian dishes will be among choices on the menu. Please arrive about 7.30pm so that dinner may be served promptly at 8pm. Diners will be asked to move between courses to give an opportunity for conversation with as many other members as possible.

We are specially pleased to be dining at the Old Dairy as the building was the winner of the Society's 1998

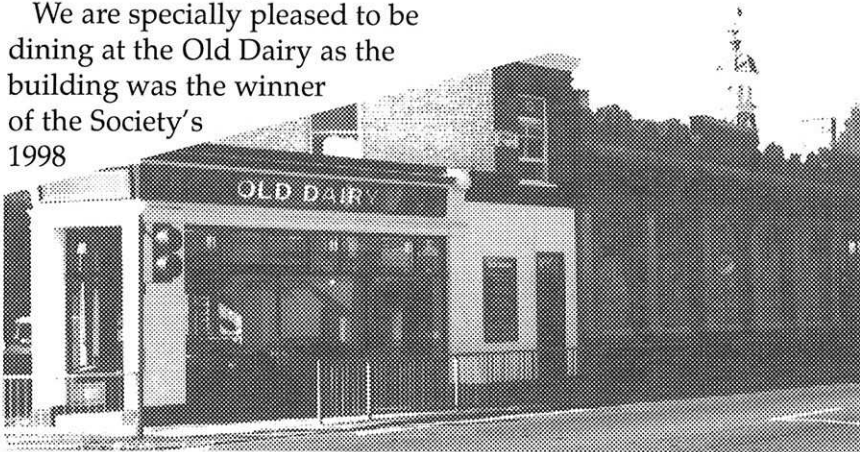
Gribble Award for the best recently completed new or restored building in the borough. Built in the late 19th century, the Friern Manor Dairy traded until the 1930s. Since then the listed building was deteriorating until its recent rescue: its best known features are the coloured mural panels illustrating the dairy trade. It is on the corner of Crouch Hill and Hanley Road: buses W3, W7, and 210 run close by.

Application for tickets may be made to the Secretary on the form below.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Representatives of one or two Islington churches met others from all over London and of several denominations at the first London Churches Conference on the Environment at Southwark Cathedral in November. The Bishop of London, Richard Chartres, opened the event and participated for the whole day. Other speakers were Professor David Bellamy, Bishop Hugh Montefiore, and Dr Graham Ashworth. We welcome the churches' positive step in highlighting our responsibility for a sustainable future and hope that more Islington churches will support the further activities.

Information may be obtained from Revd Chris Brice, CARIS, 36 Causton Street SW1P 4AU, 932 1100.



ISLINGTON SOCIETY 1999 ANNUAL DINNER

24 March at The Old Dairy, Crouch Hill

Members may bring one guest if they so wish

Please send meticket[s] at £22.50 each. I enclose cheque for payable to the Islington Society.

NAMES [as they should appear on place cards], *block letters please*

Member[s].....Partner/guest [if any].....

Address of member[s].....

Telephone Signature.....Date

To: Donald Mitchell, 63 Cloudesley Road, London N1 0EL

PAST DELIGHTS

A-BUS-A-MINUTE IN HOLLOWAY ROAD

This was the scene portrayed in John Huntley's film show to an audience of a hundred at the Society's meeting in the council chamber on September 30th. Unfortunately the film was shot in 1898 (not 1998), and the buses and trams were horse-drawn. But their average speed (even allowing for some speeding-up of the

film) looked faster than today's equivalent. And the pollution, extensive though it was, could at least be scraped off the road and put to good use!

Other films of Islington from the John Huntley Film Archive included the making of the first British sound film at the "Gainsborough" studio (which is still there in Poole Street), and a truly horrific documentary which showed close-ups of rats and

cockroaches helping Rachman-like landlords to get rid of unwanted tenants only thirty years ago. John concluded his show with a journey, in 1924, by horse-barge on the Regent's Canal, from Limehouse Basin to Paddington via the Islington tunnel: with marvellous shots of street along the route, full of trams, open-top buses, market stalls and cloth caps galore.

NEW BUILDING IN HISTORIC SETTING

There can be no one in this country better qualified than Richard MacCormac to illustrate this theme with slides of his own buildings. His two-screen show held spellbound another audience of almost a hundred people gathered for the Society's ninth James Ogilvy-Webb Memorial Lecture. MacCormac's architecture is unashamedly modern; but the doubters among us were quickly

disarmed by the juxtaposition of pitched roofs and water at Worcester College Oxford, the floating roofs of the Cable and Wireless College, and the modern gothic intricacies of the timber roof trusses for Tonbridge College Chapel: the latter doomed never to be built by one vote in a planning committee!

I found the scale of the Ruskin Library at Lancaster difficult to follow (although it was clearly the architect's favourite building); but to me, all the other buildings spoke

for themselves. Nevertheless I was fascinated by the story of the relationship between the towers of the Bowra Building at Wadham and those of Hardwick Hall which had inspired them.

One sad note about the lecture, exactly ten years after James Ogilvy-Webb's death, is that it was the first one not attended by his widow Marjorie, a former major of Islington, who had died within two months of the lecture by Michael Palin last February.

GEORGE PEABODY AND THE PEABODY TRUST

Our joint meeting with the Islington Archaeological and History Society was another well-attended occasion. Christine Wagg of the Peabody Trust informed and entertained us with a fascinating account not only of the early work of the Trust, but also of the life of George

Peabody: the millionaire financier / philanthropist, who refused a knighthood because he didn't want to give up his American citizenship, but who was held in such high regard at his death that his body lay in Westminster Abbey for a month before being returned to his native land, where his hometown, Danvers, was re-named Peabody.

Christine Wagg's talk was of

particular local interest because two of the earliest estates were built in Islington: the Greenman Street Estate (off Essex Road) in 1870, and the Clerkenwell Estate (off Farringdon Road) in 1884. Dwellings in the early estates were approached by long dark interior corridors, and were built as "associated plans", with communal baths and laundries.

OUR PROGRAMME

Our February event is the Islington Society/High and I debate.

COMPACT URBANE CITIES OR GARDEN CITIES?

Sustainable ways of living for the 21st century

24 February at 7pm, Islington Town Hall

The case for compact urbane cities will be put by Dr Nicholas Falk, director of the Urban and Economic Development Group (Urbed), and his opponent will be Dr Mervyn Miller, architect, planner, and author of Letchworth: the First Garden City. The editor of the High bury and Islington Express, Roger Blitz, will be the chairman.

Please note this meeting is half an hour earlier than usual.

THE ISLINGTON SOCIETY'S SECOND ANNUAL DINNER is on Wednesday 24 March at 7.30pm [See page 9]

At our 1999 annual general meeting Jeremy Corbyn MP has agreed to be the main speaker, and the Mayor of Islington, Councillor Meg Hillier, will present the Sam Morris Civic Pride Shopfront Awards. For the first time these awards, financed by the Morris Family Trust, are available to the whole borough, rather than just the Angel area.

ISLINGTON SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

28 April at 7.30pm, Islington Town Hall

The GEOFFFREY GRIBBLE AWARD will be presented for the winning building on Wednesday 26 May.

The Islington Archaeology and History Society joins with us in presenting our June meeting which will be one of the rare occasions when we think about sport.

THE HISTORY OF CRICKET IN ISLINGTON

16 June at 7.30pm, Islington Town Hall

Once again Andrew Bosi will lead us on our annual slightly alcoholic walk talk: this year we explore the delights around the City Road.

BILL MANLEY MEMORIAL PUB CRAWL
from the Artillery Arms, Bunhill Row

We are grateful to have been invited to hold our July meeting in the impressive Middlesex Sessions House on Clerkenwell Green, designed by Thomas Rogers in 1779. Date - Wednesday 14 July at 7.30pm. Details - next issue.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Our Treasurer's records show that a number of members are behind with their subscriptions and that many have not updated their standing order at bank or building society since the Islington Society decided to increase its subscription rates at the 1997 annual general meeting.

The subscriptions are: -

£20 for a corporate or business member

£10 for a couple or family

£8 for an individual

[Concessions are available]

Members concerned are asked to alter their standing orders and to send any balance owing to the Treasurer, or to send the full subscription to the Treasurer, Adam Bower, 12 Cloudesley Square, London N1 0HT. Inquiries may be made on 278 7663 during office hours.

CYCLING ON THE PAVEMENT

Hazel Hartland urges the Society to mount a campaign against those annoying cyclists who ride on the pavement. David Gibson offers a personal view of why he supports such a campaign.

I support the campaign against cyclists using pavements, not per se but as a step towards a wider campaign.

I am a veteran cyclist with 30 years unbroken experience of cycling in London. I ride on footpaths.

Some of my routes to work take me through housing estates, (between Camden Road and Caledonian Road and between Caledonian Road and Mackenzie Road), and I follow the footpath routes. That way I can avoid teeming traffic. But I ride slowly and I give walkers a wide berth or, if there are children, or prams, or elderly people, I stop until they have passed; the pedestrians have right-of-way and I make sure that they know that I know that they have.

My children are 13 and 10. I have taught them to ride bikes and now I'm teaching them to cope with London traffic. While they are inexperienced and while I am with them to guide them, I get them to ride on the pavement in particularly dangerous stretches, where motor vehicles are travelling fast as the road narrows (for instance, southbound at the railway bridge on Caledonian Road, at the junction with Stock Orchard Street and North Road, or St Paul's Road, east of the Highbury Grove traffic lights). They know that pedestrians have right-of-way

and brake and put their feet down if they meet them.

The real campaign is against irresponsible cyclists. Stand at Highbury corner and see them cut across the traffic to get into the South corner of Highbury Fields, or at any traffic lights (the Angel or Camden Road/Holloway Road are good) and see them ignore the red lights, or try to see cyclists in dark clothes riding at night with no lights, or see how many meander about the road amongst heavy traffic without helmets.

The real campaign is to encourage responsible cycling. But that is a massive task. Hazel's plea to stop riding on pavements is, however, an achievable, focused campaign that could raise awareness of the difference between responsible and irresponsible cycling, and I support it. When I am walking along the pavement I, too, get annoyed by the occasional cyclist zooming willy-nilly through the pedestrians. I will continue, however, to get my kids to ride on the pavement while they are learning to cope with the dangers of cycling in traffic, because I do not want them to be killed, and I will continue to cut through the bye-ways to give me a safer, cleaner cycle route. But we will let the pedestrians go first.

The problem is that the roads are not safe for cyclists. It is not just that motorists have difficulty with the slowness of cyclists (I am a motorist myself, so I can sympathise); the road system is simply not designed

for bikes, as any experienced cyclist will tell you, and cyclists have to watch out for themselves. I will continue to move forward from the traffic light white line at the pedestrian phase of the Holloway Road lights when I am turning right from Parkhurst Road. It is not best Highway Code practice, but if I don't get that head start on the cars and vans, I am likely to be killed by something on four wheels turning right, fast, beside me.

We will be turfing the cyclists off the pavement where they are likely to collide with pedestrians onto the roads where, until the roads are better designed for them, they are just as likely to collide with tons of fast-moving metal. And they are not yet obliged by law to wear helmets to protect their heads from damage.

I support the campaign. Let us use it to raise awareness of how irresponsible a lot of cyclists are and why it is that so few people cycle in London.

THE LONDON FORUM

TWO forthcoming meetings of the London Forum are of particular interest to members of the Society. **Sustainable Development** in relation to Unitary Development Plans on Wednesday 3 March, and **Town Centre Regeneration** on Tuesday 23 March. Both at the Gallery, 77 Cowcross Street at 6pm. Inquiries to Fred Trollope on 0181-699 8197

SONDRA BEECROFT

Running an organisation like the Islington Society is, in one peculiar way, a bit like throwing a party. Your colourful speakers and outspoken campaigners fulfil the role of those life-and-soul-of-the-party types who keep the show on the road by entertaining, provoking or downright annoying everyone else. But, just as an apparently spontaneous party only happens because someone behind the scenes has done some careful preparation, so a successful meeting or campaign is dependent on the person who books the hall and keeps the minutes.

For nearly three years, as Secretary of the Islington Society, Sondra Beecroft has done our booking and minuting, as well as distributing newsletters and doing all the other odd jobs that get thrown at the secretary of any organisation. Above all she has given what any chairman needs: the knowledge that at least one part of the Society is looking after itself!

Thanks Sondra for all your help without which goodness only knows! And welcome to Donald Mitchell who is taking over from Sondra. He is a newcomer to Islington but an active member of CPRE and no stranger to campaigning on environmental issues.

THE GEOFFREY GRIBBLE AWARD

This annual award is given for the best recent building in Islington. The building should have been completed within the last two years; it should be of high architectural quality, with good details and well-built (a Good Building, in other words)

it can be a large scheme or a small improvement

it should make a positive contribution to Islington

it should fit well into its surroundings

it can be a new building or an adaptation of an existing building or a restoration of an old building.

Past winners have been;

1990 : Sebastian House, Northampton Square

1991 : Grimaldi Park House, Pentonville Road

1992 : London Canal Museum, New Wharfe Road

1994 : Islington Ecology Centre, Gillespie Park
and The North Stand, Arsenal Stadium

1995 : Isledon Village, Isledon Road Holloway Road

1997 : St.Luke's Churchyard, Old Street

1998 : The Old Dairy (formerly Friern Manor Dairy), Crouch Hill

Bronze plaques commemorating the award have been fixed to all the buildings.

The award honours the memory of Geoffrey Gribble, who was Islington's Conservation Officer for many years until his death in 1988. He was passionate about the quality of buildings in the Borough, very knowledgeable about local history and tireless in promoting conservation.

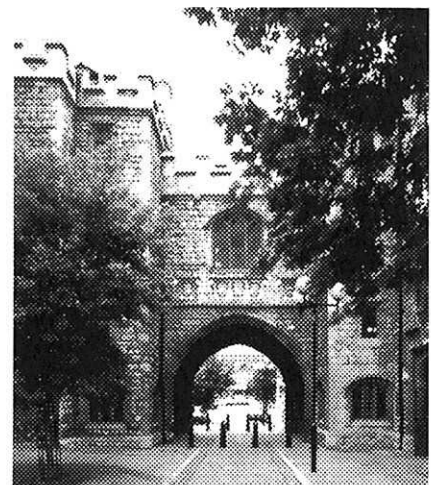
Nominations should be sent by the end of March to:

David Gibson, 131 Upper Street, London N1 1QP, 226 2207, fax.: 226 6920, e-m : DGibArch@aol.com

MUSEUM OF THE ORDER OF ST JOHN

An exciting new gallery is to open at St John's Gate in May. It will show the history of the St John Ambulance from its beginnings in Clerkenwell in the last century to its present day activities. It now operates in over 40 countries.

Film, oral history, photographs, and archive material are presented in three multi-media exhibits, in addition to the collection of objects.



ISLINGTON EVENTS

All telephone numbers for inquiries 0171-

FEBRUARY

until Sun 28 COUNTRY OF THE HEART: photographs of Palestinian camps in Lebanon. Islington Museum Foyer Gallery. Wed-Sat 11am-5pm, Sun 2-4pm. 354 9442

until 14 March DECADENCE: from the Edge of the Century. Crafts Council Gallery. 278 7700

until 28 March LONDON'S WATERWAYS: a catalyst for regeneration. London Canal Museum. 713 0386

Sat 01-06 TALKING HEADS by Alan Bennett: two programmes in repertory. Tower Theatre 7.30pm + Sat 06 at 3pm. 226 3633

Thu 11 LONDON WATERWAYS: regeneration update. Mark Bensted, London Regional Manager, British Waterways. London Canal Museum at 7.30pm. 713 0386

Sat 13+16-20 RELATIVE VALUES by No 1 Coward. Tower Theatre 7.30pm + Sun 14 at 3pm. 226 3633

Wed 17 THE POTTERY INDUSTRY OF SOUTH LONDON. Brian Bloice of Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society. Islington Town Hall at 8pm. 226 4500

Sat 27 MUSIC IN THE GALLERY. Harpsichord recital. Crafts Council Gallery at 12 noon. 806 2528

Sat 27 MR AND MRS NOBODY by Keith Waterhouse. Tower Theatre at 7.30pm + Sun 28 at 3pm 226 3633

MARCH

Tue 02-06 MR AND MRS NOBODY. Tower Theatre at 7.30pm. 226 3633

Thu 11 RAILWAY AND CANAL INTERCHANGE IN LONDON. Malcolm Tucker, GLIAS and

Museum Trustee. London Canal Museum at 7.30pm. 713 0836

Fri 12 MUSIC IN THE GALLERY. Harpsichord recital. Crafts Council Gallery at 12 noon. 806 2528

Sat 13 ASPIRE: a sponsored walk around the church spires of the City of London in aid of the renovation of the spire of St Stephen's, Canonbury. From Tower Hill ⊕ 10am. 359 0612

Sat 13+16-20 TEN TIMES TABLE by Alan Ayckbourn. Tower Theatre at 7.30pm + Sun 14 at 3pm. 226 3633

Sun 14 FROGSPAWN AND SPRING FLOWERS. walk. Islington Ecology Centre at 2pm. 354 5162

Wed 17 Talk by J G Archibald, Director of Geographers' A-Z Company. Islington Archaeology and History Society. Town Hall at 8pm. 226 0045

Wed 17 to 30 May ABOUT THE HOUSE: Georgian and Regency Architecture in Islington*, featuring displays from the Brooking Collection. Wed-Sat 11am-5pm, Sun 2-4pm. 354 9442

Sat 20 BUTTERFLY GARDENING. Barnsbury Wood at 2pm. 354 5162

Sun 21 SPRING SOLSTICE WALK. Parkland Walk at 2pm. 354 5162

Tue 23 COMMUNITY ART EXHIBITION launch at 6pm. Islington Ecology Centre at 6pm. 354 5162

APRIL

Thu 01 -06 June (UN)LIMITED Crafts Council Gallery. 278 7700

Thu 01 to 31 July TURNER AND WHISTLER: images of the Thames. London Canal Museum. 713 0836

Sun 04 BUD, BARK, AND LEAF: tree identification walk. Islington Ecology Centre at 3pm. 354 5162

Thu 08 MEASHAM POTTERY (canal bargeware). Mike Beech, Curator, Foxton Museum. London Canal Museum at 7.30pm. 713 0836
 Sat 10+13-17+20-24 COMPANY by Stephen Sondheim. Tower Theatre 7.30pm + Suns 11, 18+Sat 24 at 3pm. 226 3633

Wed 21 Talk by Christopher Date, Archivist, British Museum. Islington Archaeology and History Society. Islington Town Hall at 8pm. 226 4500

Wed 21 NATURE QUIZ NIGHT. Islington Ecology Centre at 7pm. 354 5162

Sat 24 FROM HAWS TO HAZELNUTS: walk on the new tree trail. Parkland Walk at 2.30pm. 354 5162

Sat 28 SAVING THE CITY SONGSTERS [thrushes]: talk and walk. Islington Ecology Centre at 6.30pm. 354 5162

MAY

Sat 01 THE DARLING BUDS OF MAY: walk. Barnsbury Wood at 2pm. 354 5162

Sun 09 DAWN CHORUS WALK. Parkland Walk at 4am. 354 5162

Thu 13 WORDS AND SONGS: an anthology of the River Thames. Chris Ellmers, Director, Museum in Docklands. London Canal Museum at 7.30pm. 713 0836

Sat 15 DAWN CHORUS WALK. Islington Ecology Centre at 4am. 354 5162

Wed 19 Islington Archaeology and History Society. Islington Town Hall at 8pm.

*A REQUEST. As we go to press a change of arrangements had brought Charles Brooking himself to speak about his noted collection of architectural details. This talk heralded ABOUT THE HOUSE. Owners of Georgian or Regency houses in the borough who have items they would be willing to lend for the exhibition are asked to get in touch with the Gallery on 354 9442. Offers will be most welcome.

Thu 27 WEEDS OR WILD FLOWERS? Urban 'wasteland' walk. Meet Highbury and Islington Ⓟ at 6.30pm. 354 5162

Sun 30 PAPER MAKING WORKSHOP. Islington Ecology Centre. 354 5162

JUNE

Sun 06 A HERBAL WALK. Islington Ecology Centre at 3pm. 354 5162

Wed 09 FOOTSTEPS IN THE SKY: trekking in the Himalayas. Talk. Islington Ecology Centre at 7.30pm. 354 5162

Thu 10 THE REGENT'S CANAL. Alan Faulkner. London Canal Museum at 7.30pm. 713 0836

Sat 12-Sat 26 ISLINGTON INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Sat 12-Sat 26 EXHIBITION OF COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECTS. Islington Museum Gallery

Sun 13 NEW RIVER ADVENTURE TRAIL: family event. Meet at South Library at 2.30pm. 354 5162

Thu 17-15 August CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL BASKETMAKING. Crafts Council gallery.

Fri 18 A BAT WALK. Parkland Walk at 9.30pm. 354 5162

Sat 19 MUSICAL MIDSUMMER WITH THE ANGEL BAND. Barnsbury Wood at 6pm. 354 5162

Wed 30 HEALING HEDGEROWS: a herbal walk. Islington Ecology Centre at 6.30pm. 354 5162

ROY VINJEVOLD

Members will be sad to hear of the recent death of Roy Vinjevold, a long-standing member of the Society and of our planning, conservation, and transport committee. For a number of years he was chairman of the Islington Archaeology and History Society.

THE ISLINGTON SOCIETY CALENDAR

At Islington Town Hall unless otherwise stated

Wednesday 24 February at 7pm
URBAN CITIES OR GARDEN CITIES?
Islington Society/High and I Debate on sustainable
living in the 21st century.

Wednesday 24 March at 7.30pm
ISLINGTON SOCIETY MEMBERS' DINNER
at The Old Dairy, Crouch Hill

Wednesday 28 April at 7.30pm
ISLINGTON SOCIETY Annual General Meeting
Jeremy Corbyn MP

Wednesday 26 May
THE GRIBBLE AWARD
Venue to be announced

Wednesday 16 June at 7.30pm
THE HISTORY OF CRICKET IN ISLINGTON
Joint meeting with the Islington Archaeology
and History Society

Friday 9 July at 6pm
BILL MANLEY MEMORIAL PUB CRAWL
Led by Andrew Bosi
Meet at the Artillery Arms, Bunhill Row, EC1

Wednesday 14 July at 7.30pm
at MIDDLESEX SESSIONS HOUSE, Clerkenwell Green



CONGRATULATIONS to Marion Harvey, the Society's vibrant and hardworking chairman from 1986 to 1996, and committee member for ten years before that. She was also an Islington Councillor from 1967 to 1973. Marion was awarded the MBE in the New Year Honours List. Under her leadership the Society introduced the Geoffrey Gribble Awards; instituted a scheme for children to design improvements to their own school playgrounds; and ran an Energy Fair and week of activities to focus Islington's attention on LA 21 issues. Marion pledged the Society's positive and practical support for the work of the Friends of the New River; and lobbied for the Society to nominate advisory members to some of the Council committees.

In 1988 Marion became the first chairman of the newly formed London Forum, an office she still holds, and in which she is just as effective as she has been in the Islington Society. She thoroughly deserves her award. Our thoughts will go with her as she goes to the Palace in early March to receive her honour.

THE
ISLINGTON SOCIETY
