

Your

Westbourne Neighbourhood Association

Newsletter 3

Crime Time

We have been hearing too many reports recently of handbag snatches and housebreaking incidents. Without adopting the semi-hysterical siege mentality of most big-city dwellers in America, there are certainly some simple things we can all do to ensure that we don't end up as another dismal statistic in the local police station's record book.

DON'T carry large amounts of cash with you. Cheque books and credit cards seem almost universally used today so there is no reason to carry around thick rolls of banknotes.

If for some reason you must carry a lot of cash - say you've just been to the bank or just been paid at the office or factory - don't advertise the fact by displaying a bulging wallet or purse in local shops. It's advisable to carry only a minimum in your handbag, and put the rest in a much safer place. (A friend advises that women's bras fulfil the same safe cash-carrying function as a man's inner breast pocket, but how you're going to get away with that in a crowded bank I don't know.)

Remember that thieves know most people have extra cash around their homes and their persons at weekends, so take extra care from Friday nights onward.

No matter what day of the week it is lock all doors and windows. Amazingly, people often think that only their basement and ground floor are vulnerable to burglars. Not true. Because of the terrace design of our houses a burglar can gain access to just one house in the terrace and then literally jump from one balcony to another, all the way down the terrace, until he finds one forgetful householder who has obligingly left a first-floor window unlocked.

Check your locks. The least cunning of thieves knows how to slip a Yale lock. Install Chubb locks on all exterior doors. Yes, it costs you some money, but it can save you from a much larger financial loss through theft, and can often pay for itself within a few years by reduced insurance premiums. Remember that insurance companies have no legal need to recompense you for

theft if it can be proven that you yourself have been negligent in safeguarding your own property.

Report all suspicious incidents, no matter how trivial they may appear to you, to the police. They won't think you're being a time-wasting neurotic; they'll be grateful to you for helping them in one of their most important jobs... that of crime prevention. The phone number of the Harrow Road Police Station is 725 4191. Keep it handy!

Finally, if you're really concerned about the entire subject, make sure you come along to the next Westbourne Neighbourhood Association meeting when our local Crime Prevention Officer will be present to answer all your questions and chat about the role we as neighbours can play to help stop crimes in our area.

Chairman's Report

Those of you who attended our first annual general meeting in November will remember that the Committee asked to appoint officers among themselves. A list of these committee members and their responsibilities appears on the back page of this Newsletter so that you can quickly refer to it.

We have recently been invited to send representatives to a number of outside organisations and it looks as though the opinions of local people are more and more being canvassed about problems which face London.

When a few of us met together just over a year ago to try to form a neighbourhood association none of us then knew how many of you could and would join us and offer your help and support. We can all congratulate each other that because of our efforts the ILEA is now considering Westminster City Council's proposal that the St Mary's school be rebuilt on the site which Westminster originally acquired for the extension of Great Western Road.

One of the original committee members, Fr. Fullerton, who has lived in Paddington all his life, is moving now to Pottery Lane. We shall miss his advice and concern for the whole community. We thank him for all his help and wish him well in his new job.

The first year of the WNA has shown all of us how much we need each other to help strengthen and preserve our community. Only by getting to know each other and alerting each other can we be aware of dangers which face us individually and in common.

By the time you read this I hope many more of you will have had the opportunity to meet each other and members of the committee in house meetings. The first of these local Association meetings was held in Artesian Road because of the concern of residents there over a threat of redevelopment, anxiety about burglaries, discontent about empty houses and a plague of mice! Inspector Hay from Harrow Road Police Station came along with P. C. Laing to tell the 27 people present of the difficulties the police have had in trying to check crime in this area. Because of the local crime problem (particularly burglaries and car thefts).

In May we hope to hold a meeting for members (again at Baptist Hall) for a discussion of the various points and problems that have been brought up at the local house meetings.

In the last 6 months many tenancies have been saved by the purchase of houses, by the Paddington Churches Housing Associa-

IMPORTANT MEETING
OPEN TO ALL RESIDENTS

AT THE
BAPTIST CHURCH HALL
(CORNER WESTBOURNE GROVE
AND LEDBURY ROAD)

TUESDAY
APRIL 2 AT 8.00PM.
PLEASE BE PROMPT

A TALK BY THE
CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER,
HARROW ROAD POLICE STATION

BE THERE!
IT CONCERNS YOU AND YOUR
NEIGHBOURHOOD!

tion, in Talbot Road and Moorhouse Road. As the PCHA have become landlords to many of you, we are keeping in touch with them to find out about their policies.

Redevelopment threats are easier to deal with now that Westminster City Council have extended the proposed conservation area up to the boundary with Kensington, which we pressed them to do last year. Fortunately residents alerted each other and the committee about further developments in Needham Road behind Artesian Road.

Of course things will change: the future of the Odeon site is still not decided. Flats are proposed for the upper floors but the usage for the ground floor is still under discussion. Together with redevelopment proposals for the old Wimpy Bar corner site at Hereford Road and Westbourne Grove these constitute major changes for Westbourne Grove. Let us hope we can prevent it from becoming another Baker Street - a street of showrooms and offices - rather than a useful and lively amenity for local residents.

Your views on the future of your neighbourhood really do matter, so I look forward very much to hearing your ideas and opinions concerning the problems facing us now.

Sue Compton, Chairman

Once Upon A Time

Our thanks to the author, Mr Fred Avery (now living in Somerset), and to Mrs M. Harrold for the following reminiscences:

Sutherland Place, at the turn of the century, was mainly private houses or just a suite of rooms let and serviced. All houses had at least one living-in maid as well as a 'char'. The maids lived in the basement, coping with a large coal range, and everything had to be carried up several flights of stairs as there were fires in most rooms. The old scullery at no. 18a (now no. 58) where I lived with my aunt at the time, had a copper for hot water and baths - the water, like the coal, having to be carried up to all the bedrooms, or to the bathroom. The coal was lugged up in big scuttles to the drawing-room on the balcony floor. Candlesticks, with a different colour for each room (whereby one always knew who had gone to bed) were provided for each bedroom. No one had a street doorkey. There was only one key - the door always being opened by a maid. And the key I remember was quite 7 to 8 inches long, of heavy iron.

To cater for the carriage horses (as guests always arrived in evening dress in their carriages) there was a farrier and blacksmith named Albert in Shrewsbury Mews. He also repaired any



58 Sutherland Place, drawn by Penelope Whiting

iron articles. I remember taking the cooking range ash-bin to him once!

Nos. 17a, 18a, and 19a Sutherland Place (now renumbered) were built some time after the rest of the street owing to a stubborn farmer refusing to budge. The first owner of these houses was a William Lang, who was very elderly when he married my aunt.

I remember collecting the rents of the houses when we lived in Hereford Road before we ourselves moved to Sutherland Place. The rent was £1 for each house. The street, incidentally, may take its name from Lucy Ann Sinclair Sutherland, owner of Great Bandilands, one of the fields on the Westbourne Farm which adjoined.

Whiteleys was entirely in Westbourne Grove, where Lawrence's is now. Westbourne Grove in those days was by far the most fashionable in the West End area for specialised things like shoes, gloves, and china. The last remaining old firm is Elliotts, famous then as now for high-quality footwear. All London went there, as they did to Harries for gloves. Bradleys (now a Government building) on the corner of the Grove and Chepstow Place was considered the best in London. A queue of carriages often stretched from its entrance to right around Pembridge Square!

The Bradley girls lived in, mostly in St Stephen's Square (now Gardens), as did the Whiteley girls in Hatherley Grove and Westbourne Grove. Conditions were very strict. All assistants then wore long black silk dresses, and the 'Madams' or shop-walkers had two or three-foot-long trains on their dresses and a wide purple sash round their waists!

People were so careful about the neighbourhood that when the Roxy Cinema (later the International Cinema, now Grove House) was built the local residents tried to stop such an 'unheard of happening' with petitions. They said it would be 'the end of Bayswater', building a cinema like that!

(If you have interesting information about the 'old days' in this area that you would like to share with Newsletter readers, please write to the WNA chairman, Sue Compton, 5 Moorhouse Road W2.)

Planning

Bob Beattie, our representative in contact with other local associations, recently attended two important meetings and has sent us the following reports:

The Ad Hoc Group, of Paddington Tenants and Residents Associations held a meeting at Beauchamp Lodge on 13 March of many representatives of the associations, and several councillors from Westminster City Council and the Greater London Council. Briefly, the discussion concerned 1) the lack of play spaces in the area, 2) repairs to Council properties, 3) rents, 4) the lack of social halls and facilities, 5) empty properties, 6) hotel development, and 7) accommodation for the elderly.

The new Paddington MP, Arthur Latham, put forward a case for neighbourhood councils.

The WCC representatives agreed to reply in writing to the proposals and to have a further joint meeting in September or October.

Representatives of other community associations concerned at the direction of London 'planning' and recognising the common problems and aims of groups and associations (like our own) organised a meeting at St Martin-in-the-Fields on 16 March to discuss a 'Central London Charter'.

The principal part of the draft Charter is 'to defend, improve and strengthen the residential and working local communities of central London'. The final draft of the Charter, it is suggested, 'could be used, if groups so wish, as a proving stone for candidates at the local elections in early May...'

Copies of the complete draft Charter are held by your WNA committee members if you wish to read it in full.

Progress?

PROGRESS (?) ON THE ST STEPHEN'S GARDENS BUILDING SITE....According to the report of the Residential Property Committee (of Westminster City Council) of 10.12.73, the building programme for dwellings on this site is scheduled as follows:

1974/5	301 units started
1976/7	50 completed
1977/8	100 completed
1978/9	151 completed

Judging by the still-uncompleted Brunel Estate we should add a few years to the above dates. By the way, isn't a year rather a long time to take to just demolish a small area?

Because of the slow progress on the site, and because of the great lack of play areas in our neighbourhood, the WNA has asked Westminster City Council to make available part of the demolished area as a play space for the summer. And Councillor John Whatmore has suggested a summer play scheme there to the Westminster Play Association. We hope to be able to bring you good news at the meeting of WNA members in May.

Balconettes

If you can get a back-copy or reprint of *The Connoisseur* of March 1972 you will find a fascinating article on the history of 'balconettes' by Miss Felicity Ashbee of Courtnell Street. Balconettes are the small guard rails or window-box protectors on the window-sills of most Victorian houses. Your eyes will be opened to the many beautiful designs of these minor works of art that appear on almost all our local houses. We reproduce a



drawing from the article; the 26 photos by Miss Ashbee include balconettes in Ledbury, Artesian and Talbot Road, and Courtnell Street.

Free Bus Travel

Holders of free and concessionary bus permits for London Transport red and country buses should renew their permits by 31 March. Existing permits will not be valid after that date. Permits can be renewed at Porchester Hall or 313 Harrow Road (hours for both places: 10am-1pm/2pm-4pm). If you require more information phone the Director of Social Services (Bus Permits) at City Hall (828 8070).

Noted

NEIGHBOUR(LY) NOTES...Our thanks to Miss S.M. Turtle of Westbourne Grove for initiating a petition to the Director of Architecture & Town Planning concerning the removal of the trees in front of 140-52 Westbourne Grove. The builders have promised the trees would be reinstated at the completion of the work there. We will be watching...If anyone needs a home for a kitten or finds a stray cat whose owner cannot be traced by the police or the RSPCA, please take it to Miss Melville at 51a St

Stephen's Gardens where a good home will be provided or found for it...Christmas carollers of Northumberland Place collected over £10 for Christian Aid...

...Our thanks to the Old People's Welfare Association at 313 Harrow Road for providing the WNA copies of their 'guide to services'. Many copies have been distributed with the Newsletter. If you have not received a copy of this handy leaflet (Guide to Services for Old People in Paddington District), and would like one, phone 828 8070, extension 3074.

Survey of Disabled

Westminster City Council's Social Services Department is undertaking a survey by postal questionnaire and house-to-house visits to find out how many people are chronically sick or disabled in Westminster.

Anyone found to have some kind of disability will receive a personal interview to assess their needs more fully.

Help is available to the chronically sick and disabled but they can be helped only if they are on the list. Do you know of anyone who should be on the list but isn't? Advice can be obtained practically around the corner at the Westminster Social Services Department, 71 Queensway (phone 727 6464).

Waste Wanted Not

Many of our local residents have expressed concern at the waste involved in throwing away old newspapers and magazines. Westminster isn't interested so your WNA committee is now contacting local Boy Scouts and charities who would be willing to make regular collections. We hope to have further news for you in our next Newsletter. But already our chemists do want all empty medicine bottles, and Wineways will take back all wine bottles.

Volunteers



Your WNA committee is in the early stages of considering the recreational facilities available to the over-60s in the area. As proven by the very successful house meetings, residents welcome the opportunity to meet their neighbours. We think this is particularly important for our elderly residents. Your ideas will be welcome now and at the big WNA meeting in May. Phone Gerald Cinamon (727 8278 evenings) if you are willing to help in any way.

ANY VOLUNTEERS? The WNA needs a typist (who has an IBM typewriter available) who could help on the Newsletter for about 3 hours every 3 months. Please phone Gerald Cinamon at 727 8278 (evenings) or contact any committee member.

Could it be you?



WNA Committee

Sue Compton (Chairman)
5 Moorhouse Road
Max Taylor (Vice-chairman)
44 Northumberland Place
Howard Aplin (Treasurer)
41 Talbot Road
HRF Keating (Secretary)
35 Northumberland Place
Barbara Anderson (Membership Secretary)
8a Moorhouse Road
Penelope Whiting (monitors planning applications)
21 Sutherland Place
Nick White (Newsletter and circular distribution)
19 Sutherland Place
Louis Lawrence (Minutes Secretary)
4 Artesian Road
Phillip Knightley 4 Northumberland Place
Stephan Colback (co-opted member, road and traffic adviser)
58 Sutherland Place
Gerald Cinamon (Newsletter)
35 Courtnell Street
Robert Beattie (liaison with other neighbourhood associations)
21 Northumberland Place
Peter Adams 22 Artesian Road
Elaine Grand (co-opted as press adviser)
48 Sutherland Place

Send your news and views on matters of local interest to:
The Secretary
Westbourne Neighbourhood Association
35 Northumberland Place W2

WNA Membership

Your Association now has over 400 members, but we would like many more. It is numbers that will make your Association effective and it is in the interests of everyone to join.

The main role of the Association is to know about all developments in the Westbourne district and to communicate and to consult with the people living and working here.

If you are already a member, please persuade others to join. We ask for no more than 1p fee, but larger contributions are welcome.

Please cut and give to the WNA Membership Secretary,
8a Moorhouse Road, W2.

I wish to become a member of the Westbourne
Neighbourhood Association.

My contribution is _____

Signed _____

Address _____

(Cheques to be made out to
'Westbourne Neighbourhood Association')

Useful Addresses

HARROW ROAD POLICE STATION: 725 4191

Your MP: Arthur Latham, House of Commons

Emergency phone numbers concerning gas problems:
Gas 828 9878 (day or night)
Natural gas 568 9211 (day); 828 9878 (night)
Natural gas service and conversion problems 568 9211

For trouble with housing, law, family, or job, your
nearest Advice Bureau is -

Paddington Neighbourhood Advice Bureau and Law Centre
465 Harrow Road, W10 (phone: 969 9425)

For advice on harassment, implementation
of the Housing Acts, etc.:

City Solicitor
Solicitor's Department
Westminster City Hall
Victoria Street, SW1

For advice on social services:

Westminster Social Services Department
Area 4
71 Queensway, W2 (phone: 727 6464)

Old Peoples Welfare Association
313 Harrow Road, W2 (phone: 828 8070)

Councillors' Advice Bureaux:

First Friday in the month,
6.30-7.30 p.m. at:
Beauchamp Lodge
Warwick Crescent, W2

Third Friday in the month,
6.30-7.30 p.m. at:
St Stephen's Church Vestry
St Stephen's Crescent, W2

In addition,
all Paddington's Labour Councillors
take it in turns to be at:
39 Chippenham Road, W9
every Tuesday from 7.00-8.00 p.m.

Home addresses
of Councillors for Westbourne Ward:

Alfred Dubs, 56 Westbourne Park Villas, W2
Colin Brown, 12a Westbourne Terrace Road, W2
Serge Lourie, 1 Joanne House, Queensborough Mews, W2

Other Councillors living in our area:

John Whatmore, 6 Northumberland Place, W2
Simon Ashton, 27 Newton Road, W2
Max Taylor, 44 Northumberland Place, W2

Printed and published by the Westbourne Neighbourhood Association
March 1974 Designed by Gerald Cinamon