

News from Ladbroke

The Newsletter of the Ladbroke Association

Winter 2013-14



The house of Thomas Crookes in Kensington Park Gardens (on the right), the first private house in Britain to have electric light. There is a blue plaque commemorating Crookes's residence there. ©Thomas Erskine

WHEN ELECTRIC LIGHT CAME TO LADBROKE

Light bulbs as we know them were invented in the 1870s. In the early 1880s electric lighting began to be installed in houses instead of gas. To begin with, it was not very popular, as it was more expensive than gas and harsher on the complexion (until the Victorians developed the lampshade). So the first houses that were electrified tended to be those of enthusiasts like the chemist and physicist Sir William Crookes (who discovered the element thallium). He lived at 7 Kensington Park Gardens and claimed that his was the first domestic residence in Britain to have electric light installed, in 1881.

To begin with, private individuals who wanted electricity had to install their own generator and other equipment. According to a

letter that Crookes wrote to the Times in June 1882, the installation of electric light cost him £300, including wiring the house and making the lamps. But there was considerable extra expense because he needed to excavate and build underground rooms for the machinery, and a special flue up to the roof to carry the fumes from the generator away. He installed about 50 lamps (very small ones by our standards). The generator was not powerful enough, however, to light all of them at once; it could only light two rooms perfectly and one partially. The generator was gas-powered and an engineer had to come in once a week to service it at a cost of 2s 6d.

It is not surprising, therefore, that few were convinced that electric light was a great new benefit. But Crookes was nothing if not a missionary for the new light source. He argued that electricity could

IN THIS ISSUE

♦ Planning Matters	2
♦ CAPS - Policy Statements	3
♦ NCS Neighbourhood Plan	3
♦ Article 4 Directions	3
♦ Suspended Parking Bays	4
♦ Holland Park School	4
♦ Ladbroke Crescent	5
♦ Communal Gardens	6
♦ Missing Members	7
♦ The Burgling Tree Surgeon	7
♦ Murder in Clarendon Road	7
♦ New Portobello Book	7
♦ Committee & Membership	8
♦ Association Objectives	8

overall be cheaper than gas and candles and oil lamps, and would be much cheaper still when it could be supplied from a central power station. He also pointed out that with electricity “ceilings do not need to be blackened, the curtains are not soiled with soot and smoke, the decorative paintwork is not destroyed or the gilding tarnished, the bindings of books are not rotted, the air of the room remains cool and fresh and is not vitiated by the hot fumes of burnt or semi-burnt gas, while fire risk is almost annihilated, as no lucifers [matches] are used and the lamps are high out of reach.”

By the end of the 1880s, entrepreneurs were obtaining licences to build local power stations to supply whole neighbourhoods (the Government having passed legislation giving licensed electricity companies the right to dig up the highway to lay cables, initiating the disruptions that still plague us today). One of the first power stations in London was the Notting Hill Electric Lighting Company, of which Sir William Crookes was a director. It was situated in the specially converted basements of a row of houses in a street called Bulmer

Place which then ran between the shops on the north side of Notting Hill Gate and Ladbroke Road.

In June 1891, the new power station was ceremonially opened. 14 miles of copper cable had been laid and it was designed to light 10,000 lamps, although only 5,000 had been ordered. At the opening Crookes, who was something of a humorist, according to the Daily News, introduced "one of the company's engineers", a dog who was carried on to the lecturer's table, to the delight of the audience. The dog's job was to carry the wire cabling through the culverts below street level. When Crookes had finished his speech, Mrs Crookes turned on the current and a pattern of lamps spelled out the initials of the company, "N.H.E.L.C 1891."

Crookes later expressed the hope that the power station would exist for the full forty-two years of its licence. Within 10 years, however, demand was outrunning capacity and the company joined forces with another existing company to build a new and larger power station at Wood Lane. Over the years, the state began to take more control over the electricity supply. In 1947 all the electric power companies were nationalised, and Crookes's Notting Hill Electric Lighting Company was merged into the London Electricity Board (LEB). Then in 1990 came the privatisation of the electricity industry and the LEB became the London Electricity Company plc. It was acquired by the French electricity company EDF (Electricité de France) in 1998. Throughout all these tergiversations, the site behind Ladbroke Road (which is now entered through Victoria Gardens) remained part of the assets of the succeeding concerns, used variously as a storage depot, sub-station and offices. A few years ago, EDF sold part of the site to developers as surplus to requirements, and various attempts have been made since then to build luxury housing. But the southern part of the site still belongs to EDF, who have retained it to have emergency access to cables which are still below ground there.

PLANNING MATTERS

Involving people in planning

The Council has just issued a booklet called "Involving People in Planning" which sets out how people can seek to influence planning applications. It is a wordy document, but includes all the essentials. It also includes a section on how to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan. It is accessible online at:

www.rbk.gov.uk/planningandconservation/planningpolicy/involvingpeopleinplanning.aspx.

One new rule set out in the booklet about which we are extremely unhappy concerns objectors who wish to speak at planning Committee meetings. Until recently, objectors were given five minutes' speaking time (although this had to be shared between all the objectors to the relevant planning application). The rule has been changed, however, and now only three minutes are allowed. The change was made to allow the committee to get through its business quicker – and it is true that some meetings were very drawn out. But we think that this is much too short, especially if two objectors wishing to make different points have to share the slot. The amount of time saved by lopping off two minutes is negligible, and greatly outweighed by the frustration that it causes. So we will be making representations to the Council to review this policy.

Basement developments

Last year, the Council put out to consultation their proposed new and tougher policy on basements (e.g. banning double basements), prior to submitting it to a government inspector. They received a huge dossier of material from the basement construction companies, who argued strongly that the policy was unjustified and picked holes in the engineering evidence that the Council had put forward, both for banning double basements and for restricting basements to no more than 50% of the garden. The Council felt that, before sending the new policy to the inspector, it must assemble more evidence to support its case, and it is now about to consult on a revised version. We still do not know when the policy is likely to go to the inspector for approval.

The Council has also been having another look at the planning status of basements built entirely "under the footprint of the house". The Council has hitherto taken the view that these had to be allowed without planning permission as "permitted development" under the rules set out in the "General Permitted Development Order" (GPDO). They have been reconsidering this interpretation of the GPDO (which as a document is far from crystal clear), and are now asking people to apply for planning permission for all basements under the house if they are less than seven metres from the rear boundary of the property.

In the meantime, applications for



34 & 35 Ladbroke Gardens - see next page. ©Thomas Erskine

basement developments in the Ladbroke area continue to flood into the Planning Department.

Two (or rather four) recent ones are particularly worrying because they concern applications put in at the same time for basement excavations under adjoining houses – at 84 and 86 Lansdowne Road and 34 and 35 Ladbroke Gardens (See photo on previous page). This is likely to be more than usually horrific for neighbours, and we have urged the Council to insist on joint traffic management plans if the developments go ahead, so that at least there is coordination of vehicle movements.

Planning permission was given in September for a massive double storey basement under Nos. 23-25 Lansdowne Road – so huge that the Council was able to insist on a Section 106 agreement.

This is a system whereby the Council can require developers of large commercial sites, as a condition of planning approval, to offset the adverse impacts of their development by providing or financing facilities to benefit the local community.

The developer in this case (the houses are owned by the same person) has been required to provide a contribution of £825,000 towards affordable housing for borough residents.

CONSERVATION AREA PROPOSALS STATEMENTS (CAPS)

This is the document that the Council has drawn up for each conservation area, setting out its policy for that area – e.g. what it particularly wants to protect.

The one for the Ladbroke area dates back to 1976 and has not been amended since 1988.

The Council is now looking to revise all the old CAPS (now to be called Conservation Area Appraisals), and we are encouraging them to make a priority of the Ladbroke one.

There will be consultation on the new document, so everybody will have a chance to express their views.

NORLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Our sister association, the Norland Conservation Society (whose area covers Norland Square, St James's Gardens, Royal Crescent and the streets around), has over the last few years been developing a "Neighbourhood Plan" for its area, and this has now been adopted by a local referendum of residents of the Norland area which was organised by the Council. 74% voted in favour on a 26% turnout. The turnout sounds low, but to put it in context, it is not much lower than that for local Council elections. Norland is the first neighbourhood in London to have such a plan adopted.

The plan sets out in great detail how the Norland area would like its neighbourhood to be developed (and what it wants conserved), almost street by street. Now that the plan has been adopted, it automatically becomes part of the Council's planning policies and must be taken into account in planning decisions. It can be found on the Norland Conservation Society's website www.norlandconservationsociety.co.uk.

We have considered whether we should try to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for the Ladbroke area. Undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan is immensely time-consuming and needs a lot of volunteer effort. We concluded that it was not feasible for us to take this on in our much bigger and more complex area, especially as we doubted whether we could recruit the necessary army of volunteers. However, we are following the Norland Society in doing a survey of streets to make recommendations on whether any extra Article 4 directives should be imposed to preserve important aspects of the architecture of the Ladbroke area.

ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

In parallel to the Neighbourhood Plan, the Norland Conservation Society asked the Council to make new Article 4 directions on properties in its area – these mean that, for those properties, specified types of alterations normally allowed without planning permission under "permitted development" rules will in future need planning permission (this does not mean that permission will necessarily be refused; but the Council will at least have a chance to consider the suitability of the works).

There are already a number of Article 4 directions in the Ladbroke area, but – in order to preserve our heritage – we think that they ought to go further, although probably not quite as far as in the Norland area.

Norland now has seven new types of Article 4 direction, covering:

- External painting of brickwork. Your committee feels strongly that this should be brought under control in our area as well, although it need not apply everywhere – some streets may benefit from painting over their brickwork, like Codrington Mews – see photo below.



It does matter, however, where one house in a terrace or pair of villas is painted and not the others – see for instance the photo below of a semi-detached pair in Ladbroke Road, one in its original state and one with its brickwork under a layer of paint.



Non-matching semi-detached houses in Ladbroke Road.

- The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse – "in order to protect or restore original architectural details such as cornices, windows, door design, door furniture, railings, and balconies, and so maintain the architectural integrity of front and rear elevations and the character of the conservation area." Most of the buildings in the Ladbroke area already have Article 4 directions covering alterations to front doors and windows, but we think there may be a case for a similar wider approach in many cases, particularly to protect cornices and string courses.

- The provision of garden buildings - "many private gardens contribute to the landscape, open spaces and charm of the area by virtue of their mature trees and shrubs and it is considered important to preserve these by preventing obtrusive garden buildings." We would be interested to know whether our members feel that we should also be worrying about buildings in private gardens in the Ladbroke area.

- The creation of hard standings in front gardens and forecourts. Quite a few buildings in the Ladbroke area are already subject to Article 4 directions on hard standing.

- The removal or alteration of gates, fences or walls. Again, Article 4 directions dealing with this are already widespread in the Ladbroke area.

- Uniform paint colour of stucco facades of significant terraces "so that individual properties do not detract from the unity of the architectural effect." So far, in the Ladbroke area, paint colour is controlled on only one short part of one terrace in Kensington Park Road. We are well aware that this is a controversial matter, as the discussion at the last AGM indicated. But we will be considering whether it would be justified on any more of our terraces.

- The painting in a lighter colour of architectural details, "such as cornices, architraves, door surrounds, which were designed to stand out against the background colour of stucco or brick elevations." This is the traditional approach and we think there is a good case for encouraging it in our area.

We are going through our area street by street and will put our proposals for each street on the website so that people can look at them and comment. We will also consult directly our members living in those streets.

If any members would like to help us with this exercise, please do get in touch with Editor@LadbrokeAssociation.org.uk

SUSPENDED PARKING BAYS

The Council has extended the period of notice that must be given if people want a parking bay suspended, e.g. to accommodate a removal lorry.

The suspension must be applied for 10 working days in advance, rather than seven, and notices warning residents will be put up by the parking bay seven calendar days beforehand.

There is of course always the possibility of last minute suspensions if some emergency work has to be done, for instance on a water-main. The Council are quite good at warning people by telephone when this happens. When the Council issues parking permits, it usually asks for a mobile number, which some people are reluctant to give. However, it is well worth making sure that they have it so that they can contact the car owner in an emergency.

The most irritating suspensions are of course those long-term ones for major works, like dreaded basement developments. A little while back, the Council did sharply increase the price of suspensions. Moreover, it becomes more expensive the longer the suspension lasts – so it costs £45 per space per day for the first five days; then £72 up to 42 days; and £96 per day thereafter. But when someone is building a basement costing perhaps three-quarters of a million, this is still peanuts.

HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

The Associate Head of Holland Park School has issued a general invitation to the School's Community Open Evening on Tuesday 25th February 2014, in case any members are interested.

The evening will begin at 6:30pm and finish at 8pm. The evening provides an opportunity for all local resident groups and community groups to visit and get a sense of the school and its new facilities.

For any further information please get in touch either by emailing:

academy@hollandparkschool.co.uk

or by telephone on:

020 7908 1008.

FOCUS ON A STREET: LADBROKE CRESCENT

This is planned as the first of a series of articles on the lesser known streets of our area. Not many people even know where Ladbroke Crescent is, although it is a surprisingly attractive street. It is right on the edge of our area, a turning off the west side of Ladbroke Grove just before Westway.

Ladbroke Crescent is one of the most architecturally uniform and best preserved streets on the Ladbroke estate, with handsome full-stucco houses. Its preservation is all the more remarkable as it has only been part of the conservation area since 2002, and is in the 'rough' northern part of the estate that suffered dreadfully from poverty, bad landlords and general neglect in the middle part of the 20th century, resulting in dilapidated and damaged houses in most streets. Miraculously, the houses in Ladbroke Crescent have retained almost all their stucco detailing, and – apart from the loss of houses to bomb damage at the far end of the south side – looks very like it must have done when it was built.

Ladbroke Crescent belongs to the third and final great period of building on the Ladbroke estate and the houses were constructed in the 1860s. Development of this area had suddenly become more attractive with the opening in 1864 of the Hammersmith and City line of the Metropolitan Railway with a station on Ladbroke Grove (the station was originally called 'Notting Hill').

The land on which Ladbroke Crescent lies was by that time in the hands of the speculator and ex-Calcutta merchant Charles Blake, who had already developed successfully several other parts of the Ladbroke estate.

He leased the land to builders. The normal pattern was no doubt followed, according to which the builder had to build houses meeting certain standards; he was then given a 99-year lease of the properties which he would sub-let, thus recovering his costs, while paying an annual ground rent to the landowner (typically £10 per house in



Old postcard, early 20th century.



Ladbroke Crescent today.

Ladbroke Crescent). In early 1865, the builders began advertising their new houses:

NOTTING-HILL. Genteel superior residences to be LET, in Ladbroke-crescent, 10 and 13 rooms, bath-room, plate glass, gas and every convenience. Rent 50 guineas and £75. Apply to G. and T. Goodwin, 4 Ladbroke-crescent, Ladbroke-road, close to Notting Hill Railway Station.

It is not clear how successful the builders were in attracting the sort of purchaser they had in mind. Some middle class families moved in, usually employing at least one servant. In 1900, for instance, the

occupant of No. 4 was advertising for a "parlour maid, experienced, trustworthy, middle-aged, in a gentleman's family. Good references." But the census indicates that most of the houses were soon in multi-occupation, or occupied by people letting rooms. In 1866, for instance, "furnished apartments, with or without board, for a lady and gentleman or two gentlemen" were being advertised at No. 6: "every home comfort, with perfect cleanliness, may be relied on. An extra bedroom if required."

It is not surprising that letting was not always easy as the street was close to the roughest parts of

Notting Dale. The following is an article that appeared in the Times of 2 January 1909:

"Yesterday afternoon some lads found in a dustbin in the basement of a house in Ladbroke-crescent, Notting-hill, the dead body of a woman. The house is let in flats and the lower flat is unoccupied. The lads informed a postman of the discovery, and a policeman and two doctors were called. When found, the body, which, except for a pair of socks, was naked, was in a cramped position, huddled up, and the right arm, which was hanging limp, appeared to have been broken at the shoulder. The back appeared to be covered with bruises or sores. The woman had black curly hair, which was drawn back from the forehead. Near the dustbin was a quantity of female clothing, including a hat, a cape, skirt and a pair of boots. The dustbin stood under the area steps. It is in the form of a wooden box about 4 ft. long and 3 ft. wide, with a hinged top and a small sliding door at the bottom. When first discovered the body showed some signs of warmth, and it is believed that the woman had only been dead a few hours when the body was found. It was removed to the Kensington Mortuary. The age of the woman is variously given as about 25 and 40. Although the body had not been identified up to 8 o'clock last night, the woman is said to be known to the police, and to belong to Notting-dale. The police state that there were no marks of violence, but that the woman probably died of starvation and rivation, the body being very emaciated."

During the first half of the 20th century, the area went steadily downhill, becoming more slummy and probably reaching its nadir in the 1950s, at the time of the Notting Hill Race Riots, when a 21-year old inhabitant of the Crescent was convicted of carrying offensive weapons, to whit a spanner and file, in Lancaster Road during the riots.

Since then, however, the area has been steadily improving. Some of the houses (which are almost all still in multi-occupation) are still a bit scruffy, but their façades have generally been well looked after.

COMMUNAL GARDENS

The sixteen communal gardens of the Ladbroke estate are a defining characteristic of the area and are Grade II listed on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. They are only accessible to the immediately adjoining households, but that means a lot of people (although there is an impression that only the very rich live on communal gardens, in fact many of the houses bordering the gardens are divided into flats, including some occupied by housing association tenants). And we can all enjoy the glimpses of greenery where a communal garden meets a street.

We see their protection and enhancement as an important part of the conservation of the Ladbroke estate, and this should be a priority area for the new CAPS. We are particularly concerned that more attention should be paid to the backs of the houses and also to the private gardens that give onto the communal gardens. The houses, private gardens and communal gardens were designed as a single ensemble, and what happens to one inevitably affects the character of the others.

In some cases, the backs of the houses on communal gardens are stuccoed like the fronts, with just as much ornamental detail – indeed, in Stanley Gardens, the houses are

more ornate behind than in front. In these cases, the backs are usually protected by Article 4 Directions – although that has not entirely prevented some pretty unsightly extensions from being built over the years. But where the backs are simply brickwork, there is no protection and, as a result all sorts of unsuitable works have taken place at the backs of some houses, inevitably affecting the view from the communal garden.

The private gardens were designed to be seen from the communal garden, with shrubs and flowers, and railings or balustrades rather than solid walls, so that they appear almost to be an extension of the communal garden. But again over the years some gardens have been impermeably paved over or dug out, and more recently some have been acquiring glass roof-lights over basement extensions or large glass conservatories. Solid walls or fences have also been built around some of the gardens, cutting them off from the communal garden. All of this risks affecting the character of the garden. The private gardens differ from communal garden to communal garden, and what is unsuitable for those in one communal garden may be quite acceptable in another. So there is no one size fits all. We hope to consult the garden committees and those of our members lucky enough to live on a communal garden on what might be



Winter in a communal garden. © G.Child.

appropriate for their garden.

The Planning Applications Committee recently turned down an application for retrospective approval for three small glass roof-lights set in some impermeable and rather visually jarring paving behind a house in Lansdowne Road, after having looked at a photograph of what had been done. In fact, in this case, as the Ladbroke Association made clear in its comments, the roof-lights themselves were relatively discreet, but we were worried about the precedent and the possible cumulative effect – already there are three new applications for basements in Lansdowne Road, involving more obtrusive effects in the rear gardens. This is illustrative of the need for a clearer policy.

MISSING MEMBERS

Our membership list was showing an increasing number of members who were still paying their annual subscription but who had moved away from the address which we had for them, or who had ceased paying their subscriptions but had not notified us that they no longer wished to be members. The Treasurer therefore recently tried to contact as many as possible of such people, and as a result has been able to prune the list of quite a few people who have left the Association. However, we still have a number of people still paying by standing order whom we have been unable to contact. If you do leave the area and want to resign as a member, please do remember to cancel your standing order, and also to tell the Treasurer at treasurer@ladbrokeassociation.org.

THE BURGLING TREE SURGEON

The Police have warned us that a burglar masquerading as a tree surgeon has been active in the Holland Park area. In January he came several times to the door of an elderly resident offering his services as a tree surgeon and on the last occasion pushed past the resident, into the house, going from room to room stealing a number of items. He is white with short light brown hair, aged 30-40, 5' 10" tall and muscular.

MURDER IN CLARENDON ROAD

In 1919, No. 13 Clarendon Road was the scene of a dramatic crime. The owner and occupier of the house was Sir Malcolm Seton, a senior official in the India Office. A cousin of Sir Malcolm's, Major Miles Seton of the Australian Army Medical Corps, was staying there at the time with Sir Malcolm and his wife. Shortly after 10 p.m. on 13 January, an Army officer rang the front door bell and asked to see Major Seton. The housemaid showed him into the dining-room and summoned Major Seton. Nobody knows what exactly passed between the two, but it ended with the officer shooting Major Seton.

Sir Malcolm Seton, who was upstairs in his "smoking-room" with his wife, came running down when he heard shots and found his cousin dead or dying and 'a strange officer' standing there. As he recalled at the inquest, the man was 'in a curiously calm state, as if his whole mind had been concentrated on something that was over, and did not care what happened after that.... I called out "Did you do this?" and he answered "yes" very quietly.' Sir Malcolm told the inquest that he left his wife tending to his cousin while he went to fetch a doctor from a neighbouring house and a police officer from the Police Station in Ladbroke Grove.

During his absence, Lady Seton seems to have behaved with considerable aplomb. She knelt on the floor and took the head of the dying man in her lap. She persuaded the officer (who turned out to be a Major Norman Rutherford) to put his revolver down on the table and to promise not to touch it again. She then felt it best not to leave the revolver on the table and asked Rutherford to hand it to her, which he did and she put it on the floor hidden under her skirt. He then proffered her a letter in an envelope and asked her to burn it for him. She said that she could not leave the dying man and told him to go and burn it in the smoking-room, where there was a fire. When the doorbell rang, she sent Rutherford to answer it – the caller was a neighbour from No. 15 who had

heard a noise; and later Rutherford answered the door again to admit the doctor, while she continued to nurse the victim. By the time the doctor got to him, however, Seton was dead. A police officer then arrived from the Police Station and took Rutherford away.

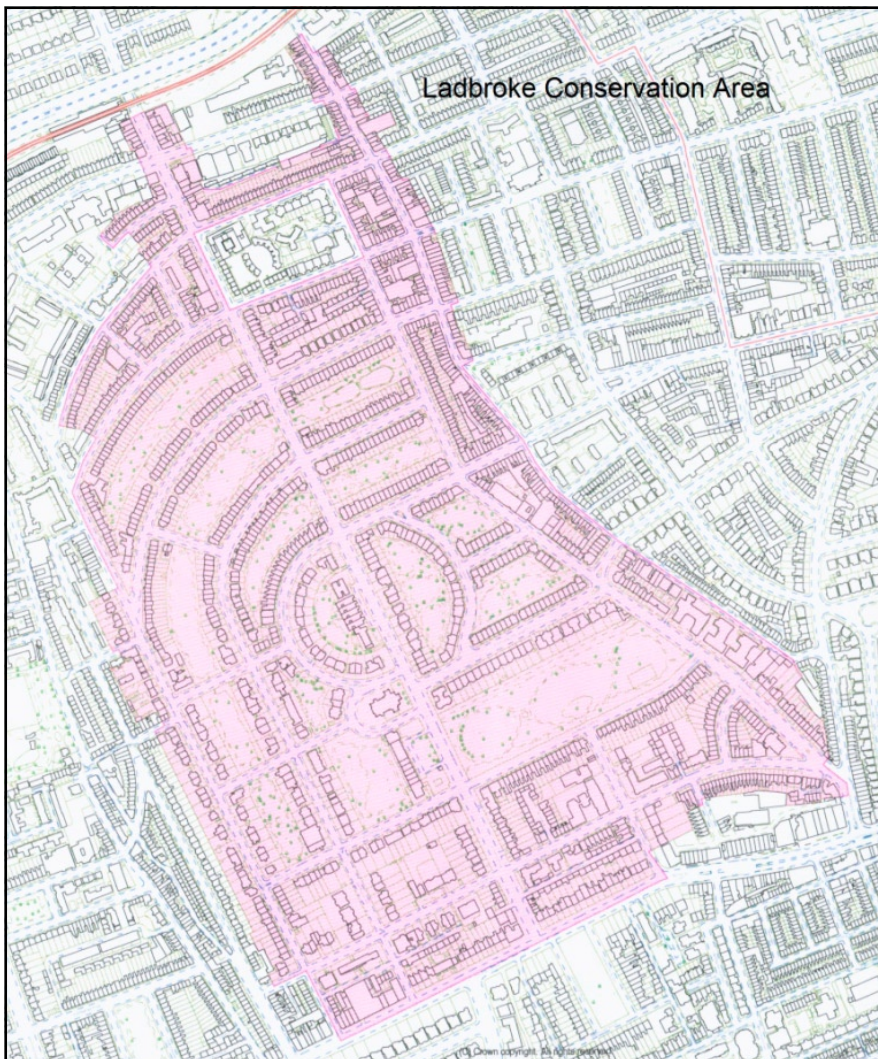
It transpired that Major Seton had been unduly friendly with Rutherford's wife and children – Seton used to visit the family home while Rutherford was away. The police found a bundle of letters from Mrs Rutherford to her husband in which she asked for a divorce, and this seems to have precipitated the murder. However, Rutherford never really explained why he had killed Seton; he professed to believe in his wife's innocence of any adultery and merely said that he regarded Seton as an evil influence on his children. At Rutherford's trial a number of witnesses, both brother officers who had served with him in France during the First World War and medical professionals, described Rutherford as having mental abnormalities – he apparently suffered bad eczema and was prone to insomnia, sudden irrational outbursts of temper and depression. He was found guilty but insane.



The murder took place in the house on the left of this pair of villas.

NEW BOOK ABOUT PORTOBELLO MARKET

"Portobello Voices W11" by Blanche Girouard (published by the History Press) is a new book about the people of Portobello Road, containing interviews with costermongers, antique dealers, collectors and also Jerome, the tin-pan player. Available at Daunts and Waterstones.



THE OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION

Officers:

President: Thomas Pakenham

Chairman: Graham Child

ViceChairman: Peter Chapman

Hon Treasurer: Paul Bastick

Hon Secretary: Anne Chorley

Committee Members:

Kay Broadbent

David Campion,

Catherine Faulks

Maurice Fraser,

Sandra Kamen,

David Marshall,

Peter Mishcon,

Malcolm Pawley,

Peggy Post.

Newsletter: Sophia Lambert

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION

The Association is a charitable non-political organisation. Its constitution requires it to promote and encourage the following objectives by charitable means but not otherwise:

- ♦ To encourage and promote high standards of architecture and town planning within the Ladbrooke Estate Conservation Area
- ♦ To stimulate and promote public interest in, and care for the beauty, history, and character of the neighbourhood
- ♦ To encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest.

The complete constitution of the Ladbrooke Association is on its website at:

www.ladbrokeassociation.org.uk

and the website also includes much historical information about the conservation area.

This edition of the newsletter was edited by Sophia Lambert; the layout was composed by David Campion with the Adobe InDesign software and the printing was done by The London Printing Company.com in Notting Hill Gate.

MEMBERSHIP

The Ladbrooke Association was founded in 1969, in the same year as the designation of the Ladbrooke Conservation area. The original impetus for the setting up of the Association was a proposal by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to cut down and replace the plane trees along the southern end of Ladbrooke Grove. Led by the well-known architect and town-planner Robert Meadows and other local residents, the Association was successful in opposing the proposals, and the trees remain.

The Association is registered as a charity (Charity No. 260627) and is therefore subject to the strict rules governing charities.

We are also concerned that we should reflect the views of the broad community who live in the area. Everyone who is a resident of the Ladbrooke Conservation Area should be a member of the Association so that their views may be heard in the debate on continuing issues in the area.

The Association receives notices of planning applications and inspects, discusses and comments on those which affect the Ladbrooke area in any significant way. In addition, the Association has been involved in (and sometimes initiates) discussion with the planning authorities on wider questions of conservation policy.

The more members we have, the more influential we can be. At present we have under 400, as many people have moved away. If you have new neighbours, please do encourage them to join. Membership for a person or family costs only £15 a year, which is we reckon a bargain in this day and age.

Would-be members can download a membership form from our website:

www.ladbrokeassociation.org.uk

or apply to the Hon Treasurer:

Paul Bastick, at 75A Ladbrooke Grove, W11 2PD