

News from Ladbroke

November 1973

The Newsletter of the Ladbroke Association

1. Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Ladbroke Association was held on the 10th July at the Knights of St. Columba Club by kind permission of the Knights. Over 100 people attended the meeting which was followed by a wine and cheese party by candlelight in the Clarendon Road/Lansdowne Road gardens behind the club. We would like to thank the Garden Committee for granting the Association this unique privilege.

a. Election of Officers

Having served as Chairman and Treasurer respectively since the Association was formed, neither Mr. Stirling nor Mr. Bridge were willing to stand for re-election. After four other members of the Committee had retired in accordance with the three year rotation system, the following Committee was elected.

Chairman Professor E. Carus-Wilson
Treasurer H.F.A. Jackson
Secretary Miss J.M. Lloyd

I. Grant (Vice-Chairman)
Mrs. K. Kinmonth
R. Meadows
E.V. Notcutt
Mrs. P. Quirk
Miss S. Raymond

A. Stirling
Mrs. P. Pirie
J.D.C. Carleton
T. Herring
F.C.T. Markham
C. Whitfield

b. Chairman's Speech

The retiring Chairman, Mr. Angus Stirling, took the opportunity of reviewing the progress made in the five years since the founding of the Association. At that time the Borough Council was only just beginning to consider conservation and during the intervening years there had been a very real change in its attitude, including its willingness to cooperate with local conservation societies, particularly when these could be clearly shown to represent the opinion of the majority of the residents in an area. The Chairman felt therefore that the most important function of the societies could be to act as a clearing house for information on conservation matters and as a link between the Borough and individuals. It was important for the latter purpose that the membership of the Association should be increased and that it should be spread more evenly over the Conservation Area. Therefore a membership drive was planned for the autumn and as an intermediate step the Committee had agreed that the area should be divided into 24 areas based where possible on garden squares and each having a street representative. It was thus hoped to involve more people directly in the Association's work.

Positive achievements of the Association included the Traffic Report and the contribution made towards the Borough's adoption of the policy against further infillings in Clarendon Road. A survey of trees in the area was planned and the Committee would be considering in detail the implications of the Tavistock/Colville Study, especially in relation to the plans for control of traffic east of Ladbroke Grove.

c. Vote of Thanks

Mr. Postgate then thanked Mr. Stirling on behalf of the Members for his service to the Association. He had been instrumental in its foundation and had led it successfully through the first five years of its existence. It could be said that the change in the climate of opinion within the Borough was in no small measure due to Mr. Stirling's work as Chairman.

d. Open Discussion

The following points were made during the discussion which took place afterwards:-

Section 8 Notices. A number of residents had received letters informing them that a Section 8 direction had been taken out against their property. Mr. Grant explained that this meant that their house could not be demolished without planning consent. At the moment, although the Ladbroke Estate is a Conservation Area, few of the buildings are listed individually and for the majority, while planning consent is needed for new building, none is necessary for demolition. The Section 8 Notice is an attempt to remedy this anomaly and its use should be welcomed by the Association.

Forecourt Parking. The Association had made known to the Borough its opinion that in general applications for forecourt parking should be refused and in particular those which involved the destruction of trees. This had led to the refusal of permission in at least one instance recently.

Conservation Area Extension. Consideration was being given to the idea of seeking an extension to the boundaries of the Conservation Area. In the meantime careful attention was always given to planning applications in adjacent areas.

2. Planning Applications

Among the numerous cases with which the Association is currently dealing, the following may be of special interest.

a. 2/3 Ladbroke Square

After standing derelict for a long time, work is at last going ahead on this flat conversion. The front wall was declared unsafe as a result of fire damage, but the Council, largely because of pressure from the Association, insisted that the facade be rebuilt exactly as it had been before. For this purpose photographs have been deposited at the Town Hall and the Association is determined that this agreement is scrupulously observed.

b. 12/14 Lansdowne Walk

The Sheppard Trust, which owns these houses, plans to join them together with a four storey block to extend the living accommodation of the eighteen elderly ladies who are housed there. The effect of this would be to block one of the finest views on an estate famous for its views and to create an architecturally incongruous building. It is the Council's stated policy to refuse infilling applications and the Association is keen that it should put its policies into practice in this instance.

c. 1 Lansdowne Road

There are two different sets of plans for adding a side addition to this house. The first set of plans was turned down by the Council and has been sent to the Department of the Environment on appeal. The second set of plans, perhaps more in keeping with the style of the house, has subsequently been submitted to the Council. At the moment there is an inferior two storey addition on the site so permission can hardly be refused for some development. The Association is endeavouring to see that it is the best possible one for the setting.

d. The Gaumont Cinema

Upon the receipt by the Council from the Rank Organisation of the formal application to demolish the cinema, the Association sent another letter to the Council reaffirming its opposition to this proposal. If, as is likely, the Council rejects the application and the Rank Organisation appeals to the Department of the Environment, the Ladbroke Association will support the campaign to save the cinema to the very end. If the Gaumont could be re-con-

verted into the Coronet Theatre and used as such it would be a wonderful gain for Notting Hill, and there is no real reason why this should not happen given the goodwill of the Minister.

3. Traffic Scheme

The Residents' Parking Scheme has now been in operation over the whole area since the end of May, and has met with a mixed reception. It is more popular at the south end where the absence of commuter cars has provided more space for householders than in the more densely populated north where a previous shortage of space has been aggravated by further restrictions. One irritating side effect is that there is no provision for overnight visitors who need to leave their car near where they are staying. They can use neither the residents' spaces nor the parking meters. Perhaps some short term permit could be available for people wanting to stay with a resident.

The one way system which was to be introduced with the Parking Scheme has still not come into operation. The reason for the latest in a long series of delays is a strike of G.E.C. workers who connect the traffic signs to the electricity cables. As this is still continuing, no firm date can be given for completion.

4. Inaugural Meeting of Street Representatives

A meeting was held on the 10th October in the St. Columba Club at which the newly appointed Street Representatives were present to hear talks from Mr. E.A. Sanders, Borough Planning Control Officer, and Mr. Peter Annett, the Borough Tree Officer. We are most grateful to these two gentlemen for giving up their evening to be with us. Among the subjects discussed were the following.

a. Tree Survey

Borough Officers have just completed the first tree survey of the area for twenty years and have recommended that several new trees be placed under Preservation Orders. One of the first jobs of the Representatives is to comment on the Officer's proposals and possibly to suggest some additions of their own. The joint survey will then be sent to the Council for further discussion and eventual confirmation.

b. Tree Preservation Orders

A tree under a Preservation Order may not be cut down or lopped without permission. If it dies or is damaged the owner is under a statutory duty to replace it. A tree owner is expected to know more than the average layman about trees and is legally responsible for them. Under the 1946 Town and Country Planning Act a tree, in order to qualify for a Preservation Order, must be both on private property and in view of the general public. This means that trees on public land e.g. pavements, Government land and Crown land are ineligible and so are trees tucked away from the view of a substantial number of people. It is a matter of concern to the Association that such Trees, which include those in the many avenues on the estate, still cannot be statutorily protected.

c. Tree Maintenance

The Department of the Environment have a pamphlet no. 1/66 dated October 1972 called "Notes on Tree Planting, Maintenance and Sources of Information" which contains useful information. The Borough does not carry out work on private trees nor is it prepared to give advice but it keeps a list of approved private tree consultants, which may be inspected at the Town Hall.

- d. New Tree Planting
The Borough is always glad to receive requests to plant street trees. However most of the suitable streets have now been planted and no new commitments can be made at the moment as no more funds are available. Besides the traditional oak and plane, new species which have been successfully introduced include hornbeam, whitebeam and mountain ash, all of which have interesting leaves and berries.

5. Future Meetings

At least two talks for all members are being arranged for the New Year. Several distinguished people, who have some connection with the area, have been approached. Professor Peter Shephard, the well known landscape architect, has agreed to come after Easter on his return from the United States. He will speak on his subject with especial reference to the Ladbroke Estate. Members will be informed of exact details in due course.

6. Points of View

Please do not hesitate to make your views known to the Secretary about any thing that concerns you in the Conservation Area. It is very important that all news of threats to the area is communicated in good time as it is easier to influence the course of events if the Association can put its case before plans and opinions are hardened.

7. Membership & Subscriptions

New members are always needed and welcome. There are still many people living in the area who could be members and it is hoped that existing members will encourage them to join, as it is in their interests to do so. Subscriptions are equally welcome and it is the Treasurer's ambition that their numbers should match that of the members. Expenses are always increasing and the Association can only function properly if it has sufficient funds. It is generally more advantageous if members can pay by Banker's Order or, even better, by Covenant. Please send donations to the Treasurer.

Secretary
Miss Janet Lloyd
15 Stanley Crescent W.11

Treasurer
H.F.A. Jackson
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Stop Press

We are glad to be able now to report that the Borough Council has refused planning permission for the proposed development between Nos. 12 and 14 Landsdowne Walk