

The 10th Annual General Meeting of the Association was held at the Knights of St. Columba Club, 11 Lansdowne Road on June 29th 1978. After the meeting members took advantage of the bar facilities, but bad weather unfortunately prevented the use of the adjoining gardens, kindly made available by the Gardens Committee.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillor M. Cocks, Mrs. Papillon and Mme. Pilsudski.

MINUTES OF THE LAST A.G.M. were approved and signed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES nil.

HON TREASURER'S REPORT

The Association had a balance of £ 719 at the end of March, a fall of £ 28 as compared with March 1977. Expenditure for the year totalled £ 431, against income of £ 403. The increase in expenditure compared with the previous year's total of £ 290 was due mainly to the Association's gift of a tree to each of the Gardens within the Ladbroke area in celebration of the Queen's Silver Jubilee, in addition a donation of £ 50 was made in support of a scheme to save the Silchester Baths.

As members will be aware, the due date for subscriptions is 1st April, and it would considerably reduce clerical work if this date were kept in mind. Perhaps those who do not already pay by Banker's Order would be kind enough to consider doing so as from next April.

About one in every four members makes covenanted payments. Last year £ 58 was reclaimed from the Income Tax authorities, and it is a pity that more members do not use this simple method of adding to their subscriptions. Forms for the purpose can always be obtained from the Treasurer or Secretary.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary were all re-elected.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Three members of the committee were due to retire, and of these Mr. B. Thompson-McCausland did not wish to stand again. Miss Santa Raymond and Mr. R. Meadows were re-elected and Mr. Martin Evans, who was proposed by Mr. Angus Stirling, was elected.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Ian Grant said that looking through his last report, a year ago, he saw that many of the matters which were referred to had progressed but little. The photographic survey of the original mouldings and details for the Ladbroke Area is still proceeding, with the invaluable help of the G.L.C. Photographic Department; the sub-committee is still in contact with the Borough Engineer on the matter of more appropriate replacement street lamps; St. John's Church still has no railings (though the appeal fund was making progress). He could however report one major triumph, albeit slightly tangential to the actual area, and this was the scrapping of the proposals for the new Russian Embassy.

A packed meeting at the Kensington Town Hall, called by the Kensington Society in April that year, had voted unanimously against the building of the Embassy, either on the Barracks site in Church Street or on the site at the top end of Kensington Palace Gardens, on the Bayswater Road. The Foreign Secretary informed the Russians shortly afterwards that

"There was no way in which the proposals could be made acceptable. The Foreign Office therefore proposes to offer an alternative site...and it would help if the Soviet Authorities would consider a site outside Kensington." The continuing proliferation of "Embassies" in Kensington has caused grave concern on many levels over many years, and they are now even beginning to appear in North Kensington and the Ladbroke area.

Diplomatic use had many disadvantages and burdens for established residents - the sterilisation of residential property into semi-office use, the artificial inflation of rents and values, the indiscriminate parking of cars claiming diplomatic immunity, and even the danger of violence related to political unrest. It was most strongly to be hoped that the top level decision over the Russians would help to reverse the trend that had been steadily increasing over the last twenty years, and that it would encourage foreign governments to seek properties in areas of London which might actually benefit from their presence.

He would now like to quote some statistics which had given him food for thought. There were, he understood, 6000 people living in the Ladbroke Conservation Area, and these formed roughly 3000 households, one member of which was a ratepayer. The Ladbroke Association which tries to protect the Ladbroke Area, and to preserve its unique character, has 220 members.

He thought that it was generally agreed by those who live in it, as well as those who view it enviously from outside, that this area was one of the pleasantest urban places in London in which to live, if not in the whole of Britain; why then was the membership so small? Was it that most people did not care where they lived? He did not believe it. Was it that most people did not know about the Ladbroke Association? Then publicity must be improved. Were the locals too mean to pay the £1.00 annual subscription? Even if it was allowed that the middle classes are "impoverished", this hardly seemed likely. Perhaps most people did not like the Ladbroke Area, and were secretly longing to move out to Basildon, Brightlingsea, Esher, or Egham?

Personally he had no satisfactory answer to any of these questions but he knew that in order to perform its function properly, a large, concerned, and enthusiastic membership was needed, and that this should be achieved before any crisis took place. He would like to ask each member to try to enrol another member before Christmas.

The recent departure of the Rev. Douglas Richardson from St Peter's Church to another living must be mentioned. He was Chairman of the Pembridge Association for many years, and he wanted to express his gratitude for the close and successful relationship that the Ladbroke Association had enjoyed with Pembridge under his cheerful guidance.

Finally, Peter Chapman was now editing the Newsletter, and he would like to express on behalf of the Association most grateful thanks to Mme. Pilsudski for so nobly performing this task for so long.

A.C.D.

Councillor David Campion advised members to complain to the Council about inadequate or inappropriate paving. A leaflet was to be sent to all householders pointing out that they lived in a Conservation area.

Discussion followed on traffic in Ladbroke Grove, and on the Notting Hill Carnival.

and the Ctee were asked to re-examine the report of 1972.

Jan Grant
(Chairman) 25 June 1979.