

THE THUNDERER

A.K.A. THE INMATES' GAZETTE

August 2008

Number 22 St Pancras Almshouses

RESIDENTS' MEETING AND GARDEN PARTY

Last Wednesday, July 23rd 2008, the meeting was held in ideal weather conditions and the only regret is that almost 30 residents were unable to attend..

The subjects discussed were:- an idea for a temporary access ramp for residents and visitors that could be in place IMMEDIATELY and would cost only £275 (about £25,000 less than the one planned!). a proposal for an Exercise Class in the Hall, a proposed greenhouse for our gardeners and a proposal for residents to start a Public Appeal for funds to pay for an access ramp to the Almshouses, the lack of which is causing some residents and visitors pain and distress.

Michael Horne has agreed to try to find 12 participants for a self funded exercise class.

Michael Akeroyd volunteered to recruit the Media to support a public appeal for funds to build a ramp but has agreed to delay the start of this High Profile Public appeal until the Trustees reach a decision on a temporary ramp.

The Chairman undertook to consult with the Trustees about the Temporary Ramp at the earliest opportunity and ALL the Residents hope, pray and trust that a decision to proceed will be announced within days.

The meeting adjourned at 6pm and the Garden Party commenced under blue skies and with a very jolly ambience. We were greatly honoured by the presence of His Honour, The Mayor of Camden, several Camden Councillors, a delegation from the Hampstead Horticultural Society and many other distinguished and celebrated guests who take a keen interest in the St Pancras Almshouses and the wellbeing of its residents.

While it is undeniable that the balmy weather and sunny skies contributed to the success of the party, it is also undeniable that without the skilful, dedicated and strenuous efforts of our managers, Merrick Howse and Patricia King the party may never have taken place.

The refreshments were varied and plentiful and enjoyed by all and the staff of The Thunderer wish to take this opportunity to thank you both and congratulate you both on our own behalf and also on behalf of the Trustees and the Residents and the invited guests.

We look forward to next year's party.

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GLOBAL RESPONSE TO OUR RAMP

COULD THIS PROVIDE ACCESS TO OUR SKI
RUNS ?

Zuricher Tagblatt

THOUSANDS OF JOBS AT RISK. NATIONWIDE
STRIKE BALLOT PLANNED!
UNION OF BRITISH RAMP BUILDERS

ALMSHOUSE BUST UP. RESIDENTS BUST
OUT.

Charlie Dimmock BBC Gardening

THE 'GREEN SOLUTION' TO AN ANCIENT
ACCESS PROBLEM.

Gardeners World

**“THAT ST PANCRAS RAMP IDEA IS JOLLY GOOD.
I’LL SUGGEST IT TO MUMMY AS HER OLD
CORGIS ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH THE
STAIRS AT BUCK HOUSE”. HRH PRINCE
CHARLES.**

Royal Gazette

“FREEDOM AT LAST!”

Arthritis News

**RUMOUR DENIED. NOBEL PRIZE HAS NOT
BEEN AWARDED TO ALMHOUSE TRUSTEES.**

Svenska Tagbladet

150 YEAR OLD LOG JAM SMASHED! RAMP
SOLUTION FOUND!

Archi tectural Pl asti cs Journal

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**THE EDNA BROWN CINEMA CLUB
PRESENTS (at 7pm in Regnart Hall).**

**JOIN US AT 6.45 pm FOR TEA OR COFFEE
AND A CHAT.**

August 2nd:CHICAGO. 2002

A very lively Musical that is now playing to packed houses on Stage in the West End. Roxy (Renee Zelweger) a small time chorus dancer who murders her lying lover and finds herself behind bars with Velma Kelly(Catherine Zeta-Jones), a sexy vaudeville star who, when she found out that her boyfriend was sleeping with her Sister, shot them both dead.

A hot shot lawyer (Richard Gere) splashed Velma and Roxy’s stories all over the Tabloid Press and brings them both fame and fortune.

August 9th: DUCK SOUP. 1933

A Classic. The Marx brothers at their zaniest. Groucho, as the fearless Progressive, Rufus T. Firefly takes over the Government of Freedonia and insults everybody. The story is so crazy that we can not describe it here. If you like the Marx Brothers or if you have never seen them, come to this film.

August 16th: LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL. 1997

An Italian WWII tragi-comedy that won 3 Academy Awards. A very moving story of Fatherly love. Guido and his young Son are rounded up and taken to a Concentration Camp because they are Jewish. Guido goes to elaborate lengths to keep his Son from understanding the truth of the situation. He tells him that they are competing with others to win an Armoured Tank so that everything from food shortages to tattooing Prisoner Numbers on their arms is explained as necessary for participation in the contest. This is an immensely moving and important film.

August 23rd: Mrs MINIVER. 1942

Greer Garson won an Oscar for this film which now seems like a a prettified, idealized view of the Upper Class British Home Front during World War II. Churchill commented that its “propaganda value’ was worth a dozen battleships”.

August 30th: NEVER GIVE A SUCKER AN EVEN BREAK. 1941

This is your chance to see the Great W.C.Fields and hear his raspy voice. This may or may not be his best film but it contains his best quip:-“Yes, she drove me to drink, and I have been grateful to her ever since!”

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Third Letter from Korea

Withdrawal South.

Winter 1950.

As soon as we arrived, we started to leave.* Although the Inchon landing was a brilliant success, allowing UN forces to get up to the Yalu river, the border between North Korea and China, the sheer weight of numbers of the Chinese Army is pushing us back. All that our own and the Turkish brigade can do is to try and steady the South Korean forces and the Americans into an organized withdrawal instead of a full scale rout.

* *Pyongyang*

The cold is slowing us down, mentally and physically. Not only are we experiencing temperatures of between minus 40F and minus 50F degrees but the wind chill factor lowers the temperature even further. Yesterday Philip lost most of the skin of his left hand when climbing on to his tank. The worst

time is 'stand to' at first light. This is about 30 to 45 minutes before dawn. It is in this light that your eyes play tricks on you. Huge shapes appear and change into objects. As the light increases what you could have sworn was an advancing horde of Chinese turns out to be a clump of trees. As we are in a different location each night we have very little idea of what features are around us as usually the light is fading when we lager.**meaning to make and secure camp for the night. An expression from the Boer war.*

Normally we sleep in a bivouac attached to the side of the tank but, in the line, so that we are ready for quick 'get away', we are sleeping on the back of the tanks over the engine compartment. As well as the cold we are having rain. In these temperatures when rain gets into the engine compartment it will freeze the gears and steering controls that are situated on the floor of the compartment, locking them solid. In a surprise attack we would be unable to move. An unhappy position to be in. Sleeping over the engine compartment keeps us a fraction warmer and stops the rain getting in. The bivouac is hung over the gun which is traversed over the back of the tank giving us a degree of protection from the elements.

This morning we stayed in our overnight positions. The rumour is that we are

to hold this position at all costs. I don't like the sound of that one little bit.

Much too adventurous.

Our main job is to support the infantry during the day and they protect us at night. This morning the (*censored*) are sending a patrol forward to recce a hill about 1000yards forward of this position. They want a troop leader to come with them to recce the suitability of the ground for tanks. Guess who drew the short straw? Up until now I believed that riding round with your head sticking out of the turret of a tank was an exposed and therefore dangerous occupation: I have just come back from the recce and have changed my opinion. Never again will I think I am dangerously exposed. Compared with being down on the ground it's a relatively safe place to be.

When we set out on the recce I was put just behind the platoon leader. After about ten minutes there was the unmistakable whistling noise made by an incoming mortar. My survival instincts came into play. I was lying in the shallow, all too shallow ditch, before the mortar bomb exploded. I looked up to see the platoon commander cheerfully striding around giving calm and collected orders to his 'micks.' He showed absolutely no sign of anxiety, fear, or worry. They really are a different breed. So brave and disciplined. I told him how much I admired his stoicism. His only comment was that his worst fear was having to travel on the back of a tank again which, apparently, he had had to do a couple of days before.

Two days later:

Do you remember me mentioning 'Doom' our attached 'jam snatcher'* who I met on the ship? Well this morning he turned up with his ration lorries especially to find me and drop of some extra food and goodies. So glad I was pleasant to him on the voyage. He is leaving the line and driving down to Pusan

and will post this letter for me. **irreverent slang for Royal Army Service corps responsible for supplying ammunition and rations etc.*

I will write again as soon as I can.

Love to all at home.

Michael 12C

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EXERCISE FOR PEOPLE OVER 50:

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side. With a 5-lb potato sack in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax. Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato sacks. Then try 50-lb potato sacks and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato sack in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute.
(I'm at this level.)

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each of the sacks.

Submitted by Elisheva, Vermont

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Four Worms and a lesson

A minister decided that a visual demonstration would add emphasis to his Sunday sermon??? Four worms were placed into four separate jars.

The first worm was put into a container of alcohol.

The second worm was put into a container of cigarette smoke.

The third worm was put into a container of chocolate syrup.

The fourth worm was put into a container of good clean soil.

At the conclusion of the sermon, the Minister reported the following results:

The first worm in alcohol - Dead.

The second worm in cigarette smoke - Dead

Third worm in chocolate syrup - Dead

Fourth worm in good clean soil - Alive.

So the Minister asked the congregation -

What can you learn from this demonstration?

Maxine was setting in the back, quickly raised her hand and said,

"As long as you drink, smoke and eat chocolate, you won't have worms!"

That pretty much ended the service –

Submitted by Ofra, Andalusia

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THE AIR WAR OF SOUTHAMPTON ROAD

This morning (Monday July 14) when I was down in the garden, the gulls above were making the most tremendous noise and flying back and forth across the garden and the road frantically. I know we are all used to their noise at times, but this was really deafening. When Barbara (Flat 12B) came in from shopping round the corner, she said that as she crossed to come into the Almshouses, she also wondered what in the world was wrong with the gull population. She saw at this end of Grafton Terrace, what appeared to be a very junior gull, no doubt just learning to fly, and though she felt she should go to its help, the gulls above her were so menacing, she decided not to do so. They

were certainly protecting the chick, probably from Magpies, who are notorious for attacking other small birds, as you will know. Eventually the Barbara, Pat and I went to the gate, but as the gulls had dispersed and the youngster was no-where to be seen (certainly not squashed on the road, as might be feared) it must have followed its elders into safety at last.

Julia 8C

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London Times Obituary of the late Mr. Common Sense

'Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
why the early bird gets the worm;
Life isn't always fair;
and maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an Aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents,
Truth and Trust;
His wife, Discretion;
His daughter, Responsibility;
And his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 4 stepbrothers;
I Know My Rights,
I Want It Now,
Someone Else Is To Blame,
and I'm A Victim.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.'

Submitted by Hilton, Johannesburg

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The Peace of a Garden!

A squirrel is eating the peanuts,

A field-mouse is 'scoffing' the seed.

I would put up a notice 'BIRDS ONLY',

If only the wildlife could read.

The deer have beheaded the dahlias,

The rabbits have eaten the veg,

A rat has decided to join in the fun

While a horse made a meal of the hedge.

The borders should be full of colour

But slugs have demolished each bed,

And a mole is creating the Alps on the lawn

While pigeons are 'stippling' the shed.

The bulbs which I carefully planted

Have given the badgers a feast,

While a dog cocked his leg on the roses

(I feel I could strangle the beast!)

With snails making lace of the foliage

And 'messages' left by the foxes

I think I'll just move to a second-floor flat

And plant out some nice window boxes!

By Barbara Charles, submitted by Julia 8C