

THE THUNDERER

A.K.A. THE INMATES' GAZETTE

December 2008

Number 25

St Pancras Almshouses

It is with some regret that I report that after the production of 24 monthly Gazettes, David Landman has retired as Editor in Chief. This was entirely his own wish and I think you will all agree that the enthusiasm and work and indeed time he has spent on editing the Newsletter is a lesson to us all at the Almshouses. He has asked me (as Deputy Editor) to take over, but I will say that 'he is a hard act to follow' in this context. I will need all the support you can give and if any resident would like to become Deputy Editor, now is their opportunity. It has been a privilege to be associated with David in this matter and we wish him well.

David is the person who conceived the idea of a monthly newsletter and the weekly showing of films in the Hall which has an increasing following, both from outside and inside the Almshouses. We are, of course, indebted to the generosity of the late Edna Brown, who left a legacy for the use of residents. We are also indebted to her sister Mavis who has always fully supported our plans.

So join with me please in **thanking David** for all he has done and continues to do for the good of the residents here.

Julia Smith.

Brief report on the meeting held in the Regnart Hall on 29 September 2008, to discuss and receive more detailed plans of the restoration and refurbishment of St Pancras Almshouses. Richard (Chairman of Trustees) will no doubt be keeping residents up to date with progress formally. Suffice it to say that after Merrick was able to explain the plans for the ground floor and first floor flats, by using the existing large screen in the Hall, many more residents were aware of the scale of the renovations. A number of residents voiced their opinions in a calm but resolute atmosphere and Merrick, Richard and John Malpas (Treasurer), answered as many questions as they could at that time. The meeting, which was scheduled to last one hour, in fact continued for almost two hours, such was the concern in some quarters. There were 30+ residents present.

To get on to more immediate subjects, we hear that Fred is settling down in Henderson Court and is happy to see visitors once he comes out of hospital, where he is receiving

further treatment for his feet. The date of his discharge is not yet known.

Remembering Fred's love of literature, here is a poem by Lord Byron. Well come on, it adds a bit of class folks!

She Walks in Beauty

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

An Intimacy

Not to put too fine a point on it, public lavatories for women were not to be found until the 1880s, it simply wasn't done for a lady to 'go' publicly. She would instead knock on the door of a private residence and explain her predicament.

It was reported to the St Pancras Vestry in 1874 that the lack of lavatories for women often resulted in fatal consequences.

In 1875 a public company proposed to erect and supervise 'retiring rooms' for women and free conveniences for poor women, but nothing happened.

However, in 1878 the Ladies Sanitary Association (LSA) urged action and in 1880 a Mr Alfred Watkyns applied to the vestry to construct public conveniences for both sexes. These were styled 'chalets de toilette e de necessite'. They would be 20 ft. long,

12 ft. wide, 10 ft. high (space for a ball I shouldn't wonder).

There would be a female janitor in attendance and a shoeblack but it goes without saying that he would be trading outside.

The idea was not popular, inhabitants protested that if the chalet were a success it would 'have a tendency to diminish that innate sense of modesty so much admired in our countrywomen.'

It was not until 1883 that Watkyns was able to erect a chalet at the junction of High Street and Parkway, the site of the present day ladies' convenience.

The campaign for women's lavatories was championed by George Bernard Shaw who was a St Pancras vestryman and a borough councillor. Do 'pay a visit' to Fitzroy Square, W1 where you can see his plaque at No. 29, his residence during those intimate deliberations with the LSA.

Christopher, 12a.

21st Century.....

We are becoming lesser by the day

Our communication	-	Wireless
Our dress	-	Topless
Our telephone	-	Cordless
Our cooking	-	Fireless
Our youth	-	Jobless
Our food	-	Fatless
Our labour	-	Effortless
Our conduct	-	Worthless
Our relation	-	Loveless
Our attitude	-	Careless
Our feelings	-	Heartless
Our politics	-	Shameless
Our education	-	Valueless
Our follies	-	Countless
Our arguments	-	Baseless
Our Job	-	Thankless
Our boss	-	Brainless
Our income	-	Very less
Our emails	-	useless

SOME INTERESTING GEOGRAPHY

(I like the very last paragraph the BEST)

Alaska

More than half of the coastline of the entire United States is in Alaska.

Amazon

The Amazon rainforest produces more than 20% of the world's oxygen supply. The Amazon River pushes so much water into the Atlantic Ocean that more than one hundred miles at sea, off the mouth of the river, one can dip fresh water out of the ocean. The volume of water in the Amazon river is greater than the next eight largest rivers in the world combined and three times the flow of all rivers in the United States.

Antarctica

Antarctica is the only land on our planet that is not owned by any country. 90% of the world's ice covers Antarctica. This ice also represents 70% of all the fresh water in the world. As strange as it sounds, however, Antarctica is essentially a desert. The average yearly total precipitation is about two inches. Although covered with ice (all but 0.4% of it, i.e.), Antarctica is the driest place on the planet, with an absolute humidity lower than the Gobi desert.

Brazil

Brazil got its name from the nut, not the other way around.

Canada

Canada has more lakes than the rest of the world combined. Canada is an Indian word meaning 'Big Village.'

Chicago

Next to Warsaw, Chicago has the largest Polish population in the world.

Detroit

Woodward Avenue in Detroit, Michigan carries the designation M-1, so named because it was the first paved road anywhere.

Damascus, Syria

Damascus, Syria, was flourishing a couple of thousand years before Rome was founded in 753BC, making it the oldest continuously inhabited city in existence.

Istanbul, Turkey

Istanbul (AKA Constantinople), Turkey, is the only city in the world located on two continents.

Los Angeles

Los Angeles' full name is El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles de Porciuncula - and can be abbreviated to 3.63% of its size: L.A.

New York City

The term 'The Big Apple' was coined by touring jazz musicians of the 1930s who used the slang expression 'apple' for any town or city. Therefore, to play New York City is to play the big time - The Big Apple.

There are more Irish in New York City than in Dublin, Ireland; more Italians in New York City than in Rome, Italy; and more Jews in New York City than in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Ohio

There are no natural lakes in the state of Ohio, every one is man made.

Pitcairn Island

The smallest island with country status is Pitcairn in Polynesia, at just 1.75 square miles.

Rome

The first city to reach a population of 1 million people was Rome, Italy in 133 BC. There is a city called Rome on every continent.

Siberia

Siberia contains more than 25% of the world's forests.

S.M.O.M.

The actual smallest sovereign entity in the world is the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. It is located in the city of Rome, Italy, has an area of two tennis courts, and as of the year 2001, has a population of 80, 20 less people than the Vatican. It is a sovereign entity under international law, just as the Vatican is.

Sahara Desert

In the Sahara Desert, there is a town named Tidikelt, which did not receive a drop of rain for ten years. Technically though, the driest place on Earth is in the valleys of the Antarctic near Ross Island. There has been no rainfall there for two million years.

Spain

Spain literally means 'the land of rabbits.'

St. Paul, Minnesota

St. Paul, Minnesota was originally called Pig's Eye after a man named Pierre 'Pig's Eye' Parrant, who set up the first business there.

Roads

Chances that a road is unpaved in the U.S.A. = 1%.

Chances that a road is unpaved in Canada = 75%.

Texas

The deepest hole ever made in the world is in Texas. It is as deep as 20 empire state buildings but only 3 inches wide.

United States

The Interstate System requires that one mile in every five must be straight. These straight sections are usable as airstrips in times of war or other emergencies.

Waterfalls

The water of Angel Falls (the world's highest) in Venezuela drops 3,212 feet. It is 15 times higher than Niagara Falls.

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It has been said that one should learn something new every day. Unfortunately, many of us are at that age where what we learn today, we forget tomorrow. But give it a shot anyway!

David. 4a.

FILMS - NOVEMBER

8th – Fried Green Tomatoes

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13th – Chicken Run

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16th - The Dam Busters22nd - All That Jazz

29th – Ladies in Lavender

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The Queen - A Life in Film

3 p.m. Sunday afternoons, in Hall for six weeks.

2 nd November	Part 4	'A lifelong Romance'
9 th November	Part 5	'Politics of Change'
16 th November	Part 6	'Head of the Commonwealth'
23 rd November	Part 7	'Queen and Country'
30 th November	Part 8	'Golden Celebration'
7 th December	Part 9	'A Family Album'

The Good Old Days

We met and we married a long time ago,
We worked for long hours when wages were low,

No T.V., no wireless, no bath, times were hard,
Just a cold water tap and a walk in the yard,
No holiday abroad, no carpets on floors,
We had coal on the fire and we didn't lock doors,
Our children arrived, no pill in those days,
And we brought them up without any state aid,
They were safe going out to play in the park,
Any old folks could go for a walk in the dark,
No Valium, no drugs and no L.S.D.,
We cured most of our ills with a good cup of tea.
No vandals, no muggings, there was nothing to rob,
We felt we were rich with a couple of bob,
People were happy in those far off days,
Kinder and caring in so many ways,
Milkman and paper boy would whistle and sing,
A night at the pictures was our one made fling.
We all got our share of troubles and strife,
We just had to face it - that's the pattern of life,
Now I'm alone and look back through the years,
I don't think of the bad times, trouble and tears,
I remember the blessings, our home and our love,
And that we shared them together, I thank God above.

Doreen 9c.