

THE FLASK WALKER NW.3.

The Flask Walker is the newsletter of the Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association, representing the interests of residents of Back Lane, Boades Mews, Flask Walk, Gardner Road, Lakis Close, Lutton Terrace, Mansfield Place, Murray Terrace, New Court and Streatley Place.

Issue No. 35: October 2010

New End School: development proposals

At a recent meeting at New End Primary School, we were advised of their proposals to develop the school in the following ways:

1. Restructuring the interior for better usage and to comply with regulations and best practice
2. Providing an assembly hall below the level of the upper playground.



The architects involved in this project have experience with working on similar projects involving listed buildings. According to an audit they conducted, New End School is lacking about 20% of necessary space for a two-form entry school. Some of this is required in order to meet new regulations, e.g. providing internal lifts for disabled access. In addition to providing better facilities for the pupils, the school would like space to be

available to the wider community, e.g. to hire out the new hall.

Provision of an assembly hall would be achieved by lowering part of the upper playground (on the Streatley Place level) to the same level as that of the adjoining lower playground (on the Murray Terrace level) and putting a flat roof at the same height as the original ground level which would continue to be used as a playground. There will not be any basement structure below the existing lower playground level. The school's architect assures us that, subject to hydrological survey and assessment, the proposed earth removal would not appear to involve the same problems that have been created by basement excavations at other sites in the neighbourhood.

The main access entrance would be moved from Streatley Place to the door in Boades Mews.

In addition to the usual and unavoidable inconvenience associated with any large development, a concern is with how the earth will be removed and materials and supplies for building and fitting out brought in. The architects would prefer not to do this via Murray Terrace and Flask Walk but instead via New End.

This proposal is at an early stage. The school needs to identify a source of funding, as none will be forthcoming from Camden. And before they can apply for planning permission, the architects have to fully investigate any technical issues involved with the building work. This would involve full neighbourhood consultation.

The FWNA committee will update members with any further information but in the meantime we would welcome your comments. Please contact any of the committee members; post your comments to the Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association, PO Box 59217, London NW3 9FD; or use the Contact Us page of our website.

Intruders

There have been a few recent incidents of attempted break-in to local properties. It probably doesn't amount to a pattern, but it does emphasise that there is a continuing need for vigilance, including keeping our eyes and ears open on behalf of neighbours and checking our own security arrangements.

Other night-time intruders include the foxes and cats that tear open rubbish bags left out overnight. This makes a mess that can't reasonably be cleared up by the dustmen, but from which we all suffer. We do note that Camden asks for bags to be put out before 7am on the day of collections, and that leaving bags out the previous night constitutes, technically, fly tipping. If 7am is too early for you, do, please, dispose of foods that might attract our local wildlife in the cat-proof brown food-waste bins, not in black bags.

AGM and Membership

The next Annual General Meeting of the Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association will be held in Burgh House in the evening of Friday, 18 February 2011. There will be more details about the meeting published closer to the time; but please keep this date free.

The Association needs at least one more member. At the time of writing, our membership numbers equal the record high. To make it an all-time record year, please either join up if you haven't yet done so, or persuade a neighbour to do so. For £5 (more if you can afford it) you get the benefits of representation on planning and development issues that affect us all, a couple of parties a year to meet the neighbours, quarterly issues of the Flask Walker, e-mail updates, safer and cleaner streets and paths, attention to trees and street lighting, and a direct channel of communication to our councillors. What more could you ask? Please help the Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association by completing the form at the bottom of the last page.

Hanka, passionate exile

This new travel memoir, a collection of published articles and personal letters by former Flask Walk resident Hanka Kawecka Lee, was published on 17 September. It has received wide-spread praise. The book, priced at £12.99, can be bought from local bookshops, on Amazon, or direct from the publisher at 37 Flask Walk (020 7794 9659).



The journal of the Foreign and Commonwealth Diplomatic Office Families Association writes,

“Medicines disappearing from a hospital in Uganda; a tea dance at Bangkok’s Shangri La hotel; a xenophobic priest in rural Poland; a guide scratching at prehistoric paintings in an Ethiopian cave; Daphne Sheldrick and George Adamson in Kenya; gold miners in West Papua. These are among the 40 or so true stories brought to life in Hanka’s book; evocative tales of everyday life observed as the wife of a British urban economist, Michael. While he worked in US missions and with USAID in Africa, Asia and central Europe, Hanka’s passion lay in exploring and writing about the lives of street people, CEOs of multinational corporations and diplomats – in slums and embassies, jungles and cities throughout her world.

“Hanka was feisty and colourful, always ready to question attitudes or approaches. She left her native Poland in her twenties, with an abhorrence of communism and an equally strong joie de vivre. She was an environmentalist and her concern for wildlife sparkles from these pages, as does her love of humanity. Her writing has a sense of quiet humour, but she does not shy away from criticising people or organisations which do not match her own sense of fair play, for example wildlife traders in Thailand.

“Her adventurous spirit shows through in every page of this book. It is a powerful and compelling kaleidoscope bringing together articles published in magazines around the globe and in letters written to friends, collected and edited posthumously following her untimely death from MS. It is a book to dip into, again and again, ever fresh and thought provoking. Beautifully produced and lavishly illustrated, it is a great read and would make a good Christmas present for anyone who loves travel.”

Flask Walk for sale, again

We are delighted to announce that a very few new copies of the book, *Flask Walk N.W.3* have emerged and are available for sale. (They are, in fact, a donation by Ellen Emerson, former Chair of the FWNA and the book's publisher.) Although the cover price is £10, we are selling these seven copies to the highest bidder; the income will benefit the FWNA. This is how it will work. We are setting a minimum bid of £15 per book. Bids can be posted on the Contact Us page of our website, or put through the door of 37 Flask Walk before midnight on 30 November 2010. The books will be sold to the highest bidder and allocated in the first week of December.



FLASK WALK N.W.3.

For newcomers: the book was published in December 2006. Reviewers were enthusiastic:

“The book of the month is undoubtedly *Flask Walk N.W.3.*, the definitive guide to the history of the leafy Hampstead street...” *Northwest Magazine*

“Of all the nostalgia-scented streets, Hampstead’s Flask Walk takes the prize... The whole street has what it always had, vitality – a buzz that emanates from the people who live there, and from the variety of people who have lived there in the past. It is on their stories that three current residents – Michael Lee, Marianne Colloms and Ellen Emerson – have based their book, *Flask Walk N.W.3*. It is a piece of social history that will revive memories for the old, intrigue the young, and delight everyone...” *Ruth Gorb*, writing in the *Camden New Journal*

“The entire book is very handsome.” *Penny Haworth, Manchester Art Gallery*

A “most handsome, well written, interesting book. I didn't think there would be anything new to say about Flask Walk and its environs, but the merry band has done extraordinarily well.” *Peter Woodford, Camden History Society*

The book sold out within a few weeks, and will not be re-printed. This is a unique opportunity to own a piece of our history.

Artists in Hampstead

For centuries artists have been attracted to Hampstead, preferring its Arcadian tranquility to the noisy city. As early as 1653, Wenceslaus Hollar (1607-1677) engraved the *Hollow Elm of Hampstead*. A century later, the French artist Jean Baptiste Chatelain (1710-c.1758) engraved a number of views of Hampstead, including *The South View of the Spaniards near Hampstead* (1750) and *A View of Hampstead from the Footway next to the Great Road Pond Street* (1752). William Hogarth (1697-1764) is believed to have eloped to an old farm-house at North End in 1729 with his newly-wed wife Jane, daughter of Sir James Thornhill (1675-1734). Some even suggest that Hogarth laid out the garden of the farm-house, which later became the Bull and Bush Tavern.

The 19th century saw an influx of artists to Hampstead and there was a growing demand for studios. In 1872, Thomas Batterbury built the Mall Studios and Steele’s Studios and Sir James Linton (1840-1916) and Robert Walker MacBeth (1848-1910) were among the first artists to occupy these studios. Later occupants included Dame Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975), Ben Nicholson (1894-1982) and Henry Moore (1898-1986). Thomas Batterbury built the Wychcombe Studios in 1879-80 that attracted artists like Edgar Barclay (1842-1913) and William Stott of Oldham (1857-1900). Built in 1880, T.K. Green’s Park Road Studios also had a number of well-known occupants including Francis Barraud (1856-1924) of *His Master’s Voice* fame (*Nipper the Dog*) and Fred Roe (1864-1947).

Persecution and political upheaval brought many foreign artists to England. In the 18th century, groups of Huguenots left France for England in search of a more tolerant society. A century later, members of the Paris Commune arrived for the same reason and in the 20th century, artists and intellectuals fled the horrors of the Nazi dominated countries and settled here.

The arrival of refugee artists brought new ideas to Britain and as many of these artists found their way

to Hampstead, several art movements worked side-by-side and turned Hampstead into an international art centre.

World War II brought considerable damage to Hampstead and many local artists took refuge in the English countryside, leaving behind damaged or destroyed studios. When Henry Moore's studio at 11a Parkhill Road was bombed in 1940, he briefly took over the nearby 7 Mall Studio from Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson, who had left for Cornwall. Another casualty in 1940, was 60 Parkhill Road, the studio of Piet Mondrian (1872-1944), who left for the United States. The Australian artist Carl Hampel (1887-1940) was killed with his family in Adelaide Road during the London Blitz in 1940.

After the war Hampstead again attracted artists, writers and musicians and to this day Hampstead maintains a thriving artistic community.

'A nest of gentle artists'

My association with Hampstead began in 1976, when my partner was offered a London basing by the Australian airline Qantas. Friends suggested that we should look for a flat in Hampstead and we found a palatial flat in Compayne Gardens for the grand rent of £45 a week! Our year in London brought us many rich artistic experiences and memories. When I retired some years ago, I decided to compile a dictionary of the artists who lived and worked in Hampstead as a thank you to the people of Hampstead.

Years of research has yielded important new information on many artists. Rate books, street directories, Census returns, library and art gallery archives, exhibition catalogues, the *Who's Who* and obituaries are just some of the sources I consulted. Valuable information was also obtained through extensive correspondence with artists and their families.

Although some Hampstead artists gained fame and fortune, others have remained virtually unknown. The aim of my dictionary is to shed new light on these artists. Each artist's entry will include a potted biography followed by their Hampstead address/addresses and the duration of their occupancy.

To date, I have located more than 2,100 artists. The earliest resident artist I have found is Mary de Villebrune (fl. 1771-82), a little-known portrait painter, who lived in Church Row in 1775. Another early resident artist was the engraver Jacob Bonneau (1741-1786), who lived in what is now Hampstead Square from 1777-78 and George Romney (1734-1802), who also came to Hampstead early. The artist we associate most with Hampstead is John Constable (1776-1837), who lived at six known addresses in Hampstead.

Flask Walk also had some well-known resident artists. William Purser Jnr (c.1789-1852) lived at No. 1 in 1830; the Australian artist Arthur Boyd (1920-1999) lived at No. 43 from 1962-65 and at No. 51 in 1965; Patricia Angadi (1914-2001) lived at No. 48 from 1969-80 and Athalie Grosvenor (b. 1917), who has lived at No. 35 since 1971. Although Charles Ginner (1878-1952) didn't live in Flask Walk, he is closely associated with the street through many of his paintings including *Flask Walk, Hampstead* (1922), *Flask Walk Under Snow* (c.1930) and *Coronation Day, Flask Walk* (1937).

My friend and mentor, the British historian Dr A.L. Rowse (1903-1997) often said that you need strong legs and comfortable shoes if you want to get to know an area properly. Only by walking along the streets and narrow lanes did I discover the character of Hampstead. On many return visits to Hampstead, I came across a plaque on a house informing me of its history and its famous former resident. There are many such plaques in Hampstead but through my dictionary I hope that many more will be added and that more people will become familiar with Hampstead's artistic heritage, which Herbert Read (1893-1968) so aptly called *A Nest of Gentle Artists*.

© John Walde

John Walde is a free-lance researcher living in Sydney, Australia. Several art historians and many people have shown great interest in the dictionary he is working on and it is hoped that a publisher will be found soon. He can be contacted at jwalde@hotmail.com or at 244 St John's Road, Glebe, NSW 2037, Australia.

***The Flask Walker is the newsletter of the
Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association
PO Box 59217, London NW3 9FD
www.flaskwalk.org.uk***

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Yes, I would like to be a paid-up member of my local neighbourhood association – the Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association (FWNA).

I/We enclose a cheque/cash for £_____ (minimum £5 / household) as my/our subscription, payable to the "Flask Walk Association", for 2010. Please return this form with your payment to Simon Marshall, FWNA Treasurer, 73 Flask Walk. Thank you for your support. *By giving us your email address, you indicate your willingness to receive periodic email updates on neighbourhood issues; we will not share your details with any other organisation.*

Name and contact details (address, email, phone)