

Village Matters



New Year 2011

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Liz Thomson Head of Lettings

Happy Newsletter to you all from us all – our resolution is to keep on doing what we do best which is to take care of all your property needs in our own special way. The market promises to remain buoyant and as the days get longer and lighter we anticipate as much energy and activity in our village as ever. We are delighted to introduce you to more of the personalities who make up our community – a cup cake queen, a flower girl and many more; and don't forget to try and support the Kensington & Chelsea Music Society who are back at Leighton House with their 50th Anniversary Season.



Michael Wilson Head of Sales



Picture perfect

Ann Hughes has been running the popular London branch of Pierre Mesguich Mosaik since 1994, after a chance meeting with mosaic specialist Pierre in Paris. "I come from a ceramics background, and Pierre, originally an architect, was looking for someone to open the London shop for him. We've now been working together for 16 years!"

The company has branches in London, Paris and New York, specialising in bespoke, handcrafted mosaics for kitchens, bathrooms and pools. "Our main workshops are in Paris and Barcelona, but we produce free samples in our London shop. Our emphasis is on creating something individual, whether it's a big project or a small one. People bring in images or fabrics that inspire them and we use those as a basis for our creation"

"Ann recently designed a spectacular bathroom mosaic for a client of mine – it is a work of art!" says Liz Thomson from Mountgrange Heritage.

The company produces new designs every year with the 2011 collection featuring inspirations as diverse as nature and Jaipur Indian designs, "and we can create variations on our themes. We sometimes mix materials for effect, such as pairing glass with ceramics, and people can request special elements; for example, we recently used Moroccan-style glass in a Notting Hill bathroom. We have a variety of complementary floor patterns, such as Klimt and Kyoto wood grain". (Continued on back page) ▶



Big ideas for a small space

"It doesn't have to be complicated or expensive to transform your London home with window boxes and other outdoor planters," says Beverley Robb from My Village Window Box.



Two years ago, former estate agent Robb moved over to do what she truly loves – gardening. "I find it far more therapeutic getting my hands dirty and working with cheery flowers than I ever did working at a desk."

My Village Window Box operates on a 'no job's too small' principle. "We'll come and plant up a couple of window boxes which the big boys simply won't do."

Robb says it's important to gather the right components; using resinous fibre containers that can be made to look like stone or lead that help keep plants moist for longer than the plastic or terracotta equivalent. She focuses on plants that are hardy to get through the winter and able to survive the heat of the summer. "Lavender and geraniums are both drought-resistant. You can slosh them with water the day you leave for a two-week holiday and slosh them when you're back and they'll still look good."

Prices are fair, too – £60 for a container and £60 for planting, which makes a box a brilliant gift idea – and if you're prepared to wait for a few months, you can have your wedding anniversary date or address embossed on the container.

Robb knows the streets in the area well – she resides in Hillgate Village and works out of a mews in South Kensington "with two great guys, one of which has a BSc in horticulture". Robb recently helped out a savvy Mountgrange Heritage landlord who wanted to put the finishing touches to a house in Pembroke Square. "The American tenant really liked the window boxes. It's terrific knowing bright blooms can make someone happy."

My Village Window Box 020 7792 4471
www.myvillagewindowbox.co.uk



DON'T MISS KCMS CONCERTS – SEE PAGE 3

What are values doing in the village?

2010 was a remarkable year in the local property market with a surprisingly confident feeling amongst buyers and tenants. We saw rents and sale prices recover to the extraordinary levels of 2007, mostly underpinned by an acute shortage of available property in prime locations.

So what should we expect in 2011? Our sense is that it will be a stable year, perhaps a little less remarkable than those before it. But who knows what surprises our coalition government will pull out of the hat as the year unfolds? We already know that Stamp Duty will (continued on page 2) ▶

MOUNTGRANGE HERITAGE



Falkland House, W8 £1,300,000 Share of Freehold
Stylish and thoughtfully refurbished apartment on the second floor (with lift) of a handsome portered mansion block in the heart of Kensington. Earls Court and Kensington High Street provide an excellent array of shops, restaurants and transportation links. Entrance hall, dining room, kitchen, reception room with fireplace, two double bedrooms and two bathrooms. **Sole Agents**
020 7937 9976 tamara@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Newton Road, W2 £3,700,000 Freehold
A wonderful semi-detached period family house with excellent south-facing garden and the rare benefit of a double garage. Entrance hall, double reception room, conservatory, kitchen, dining room, utility room, garden room, study, four bedrooms and two bathrooms. Newton Road is a sleepy street tucked behind Westbourne Grove with its shops and restaurants. **Sole Agents**
020 7221 2277 alex@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Marloes Road, W8 £950,000 Long Lease
A bright and stylish top floor maisonette finished to a very high standard with abundant storage. Located within a period building with the benefit of the local shops of Stratford Village on the door step. Entrance hall, two bedrooms, en-suite bathroom, further bathroom and large reception/dining room opening to modern fitted kitchen. **Joint Sole Agents**
020 7937 9976 chloe@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk

MOUNTGRANGE HERITAGE

► (continued from front cover) increase in April from 4% to 5% on sales over one million pounds; but we don't anticipate this having a significant impact on transaction levels. What we do expect is that interest rates will remain at their record low for a little while yet which can only be good for buyers. The one thing we can predict with confidence is that Central London will remain the sweetheart of global property, both in terms of investment and as a place to live, so we look forward to another challenging but successful year helping anyone who wishes to get moving! ●

Meet and greet

In this social networking age, receiving a well-designed card with a handwritten message is a particular pleasure. At Portfolio in uber-groovy Golborne Road, you can pick up specially artist-designed cards, along with interesting gifts.

"Portfolio's a little treasure trove where you can get anything from a special card to a wacky pocket IQ test or a beautiful pearl necklace," says owner Jayne Diggory, a trained graphic designer who has injected her creative spirit into the company.

Diggory develops ranges of cards with a group of artists, some of whom live locally. "I couldn't design them all myself anymore, as now we sell to Waitrose, John Lewis, WHSmith and a number of small shops."



Locals know they are lucky to have such a cornucopia of goodies, including diaries, silver jewellery with semi-precious stones and posters right on their doorstep, abolishing the need to flog into the West End. Equally, Diggory appreciates her close association with the area. Mountgrange Heritage recently sold her family home in Campden Hill Square and now she resides in Portobello Road, which she says helps her keep "vibrant and creative".

With some worries about the future of Golborne Road – commercial rents are rising and a new road layout proposal could eradicate some of the road's charm – shops like Portfolio are more important than ever.

Portfolio, 105 Golborne Road, W10 5NL 020 8960 3051
www.portfoliocards.com



The kids are all right

Everyone knows getting a good start in life is crucial. So, what could be better than a friendly, local nursery dedicated to keeping youngsters happy?

The one-year-old Adam & Eve Mews Nursery is the offspring of The Knightsbridge Kindergarten in Eaton Square that has been a solid fixture in the capital for 14 years." A large number of people kept asking me to open a nursery in Kensington closer to where they live. So, I transferred



over some excellent staff, found a lovely venue and went from there," explains owner Beverly Delfgou.

The fledgling concern has certainly been a success, starting with only four children and now proudly numbering 30 on its books. Alongside the

nursery, a toddler group operates on a Monday morning, "making the transition easier", according to Delfgou.

"Flexibility is important for everyone" says Delfgou, so parents can send their children for full days or just for mornings. "We have a massive hall with high ceilings and big shutters that roll up to provide an outside space in the summer. The children love riding their bikes and cars around in it and playing tennis".



Adam & Eve Mews Nursery, 1A Ivorna Gardens, W8 6TP
020 7371 4848 www.kensingtonkindergarten.co.uk

Plush flush

It's hard to escape the puns, but the remarkable John Scott, who has spent many years campaigning to make Notting Hill a better place to live, is having a right hullaba-loo with the Royal Borough over lavatories. Scott, a Westbourne Grove resident and the man behind the award-winning Piers Gough Turquoise Island on Westbourne Grove, is now trying to work his Cillit Bang-magic on two ignored underground Edwardian toilets in Talbot and Tavistock Roads.

Pestering the Council to do the job properly, Scott says, "I'm apprehensive that the renovations will be bog standard and they need to be top quality. I've even offered £25,000 of my own money to upgrade things, like Dyson hot air driers – they're the best and made by an English company." Scott has spoken to James Dyson personally, who has guaranteed he will provide parts if anything breaks down.

Equally, Scott thinks items like taps should be things of beauty. "Doing

everything on the cheap and not maintaining the

loos well would be a big mistake. The Westbourne Grove loos – really a cleverly designed florist kiosk with lavatories attached – upgraded the whole area. My chief aim is to make sure the same happens with these two loos, so they don't get vandalised."

Although the lavatories aren't listed, they're historical. Scott implores the Council to "be more interested in conservation. God, not the devil, is in the detail, and Council officers don't seem to have time to go into the details of how best to spend a penny."

If, like Scott, you are concerned about how the Talbot and Tavistock Road loos will be rejuvenated, please join the campaign by contacting Costas Kaleanthis, Head of the Portobello Road Traders' Association at 144 Portobello Road, W11 2DZ or on 020 7727 3649.



Colville Gardens, W11 £540 per week

This newly decorated light and airy flat on the third floor with hardwood flooring throughout, is in a great location between the vibrant Portobello Road markets and the shops and restaurants of Westbourne Grove and just a short walk from Notting Hill Gate tube station. Two bedrooms, reception room, bathroom and kitchen. Furnished or Unfurnished.

020 7221 2277 louise@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Lexham Gardens, W8 £1,450 per week

An amazing split-level apartment in this popular street a few minutes walk from High Street Kensington. The property offers a huge south-facing terrace overlooking gardens, an additional terrace to master suite, high ceilings, parquet flooring and excellent storage. Two bedrooms, reception room, two bathrooms, kitchen and loft/playroom. Furnished.

020 7937 9976 amanda@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Oakwood Court, W14 £2,250 per week

A truly magnificent flat in this popular mansion development just two minutes from the gates to Holland Park. The property has been beautifully restored and offers superb entertaining space plus generous family living accommodation with five bedrooms, two reception rooms, three bathrooms, kitchen and a lift. Unfurnished.

020 7221 2277 louise@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk

LATEST KCMS CONCERT

7.30 Wednesday 16 February 2011

DANIEL DE BORAH piano

Plays pieces by Brahms and Schumann

We are delighted to sponsor the Kensington & Chelsea Music Society concerts at Leighton House for the fifth year running. For full details of all the concerts you can pick up a programme at either of our offices or you can visit www.kcmusic.org.uk





Spot the wall competition

Did you look long enough to recall where this wall is? If so, email us now and you could score a hamper from our friends at Piccolo Dely in Stratford Road, Kensington. Answers before 28th February 2011.

win@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk

Refurbishment made easy...

Building projects can be daunting and knowing where to find contractors you can trust is an onerous task. Handing the job over to our specialist team will take the stress out of any project. We aim to deliver a project on time and within budget to ensure you achieve maximum return from the day it is ready. With one of our directors in charge of Property Refurbishment we are able to guarantee our clients a first-class service. Thalia is one of the best known faces in the local market having worked in Kensington and Chelsea for nearly 25 years. Since she set up Mountgrange Heritage over 10 years ago

Thalia has built a solid reputation on the personal and professional service she offers our clients. Dedicated teams of reliable contractors help her to manage projects of any size; whether it is a small redecoration project or the re-design of a whole house, Thalia has the resource and experience to help clients every step of the way. Mountgrange Heritage, 13b Stratford Road, W8 6RF 020 7243 7880 thalia@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



► (Continued from page 1) Pierre Mesguich Mosaik's prices average at £1,000-£1,300 per square metre, "but we do try to match people's budgets wherever possible," says Ann. "Our main priority is creating something unique and beautiful that our clients will love living with."

Open from 9am-6.30pm Monday to Friday and 12pm-6pm Saturday
Pierre Mesguich Mosaik, 10 Kensington Square, W8 5EP
020 7795 6253 www.mesguichmosaik.co.uk

Passion for retro fashion

Turning a rundown business into a thriving, profit-making vintage clothing company takes a great deal of know-how and chutzpah, but Sophie Bulley has taken our desire for channelling the old into the present. "I've always wanted a vintage shop, so six years ago I took a risk and bought a vintage theatre shop. After selling off its stock, I started marketing vintage clothing."

Since then, Orsini has become the place for groovy and graceful one-off items, frequented by the likes of Victoria Beckham and Trinny Woodall hunting for anything from a really glamorous cocktail dress to a smart evening dress. Designers, such as Chanel, Dior and Yves St Laurent are only some of the vintage labels found in the shop, where candles flicker and music plays.

Bulley plans to sell online, with a new website about to launch. She's also launching the Orsini Collection that will be updated twice or three times a year. "The Collection has beautiful evening gowns and cocktail dresses. And after a trial run, I'm marketing clothes made to measure by my two terrific seamstresses from new, interesting fabrics to the original vintage patterns." ►



► A fashion show will be held next month (February) at Maunsel House in Somerset to launch the Orsini Collection. For your free personal invitation, contact Orsini: 76 Earls Court Road, W8 6EB 020 7937 2903 www.orsinivintage.co.uk

The icing on the cupcake

Those with a sweet tooth are salivating over The Cupcake Company, a dainty treat of a store on Kensington Church Street. The high demand for the homemade goodies has surprised owner and hands-on manager Megan Williams, who opened the shop in September 2009: "It's far surpassed my expectations."

Megan, who lives locally in Bedford Gardens, takes great pride in creating produce daily with her team ensuring each cake is fresh, decorated by hand and up to standard, "which is where big chains let people down by mass producing".

Some of the company's best sellers include red velvet cupcakes, chocolate-chip cookies and banana

cupcakes, the latter being part of the winter range.

The company also creates bespoke cakes, with recent examples including racing cars, Barbie and ballet, and cater for parties.

"We made chocolate goodies for a Charlie and the Chocolate Factory party – they went down very well," recalls Megan.

The Cupcake Company delivers anywhere in London so pop in early to avoid missing out on your tasty treats!

Open from 9am-6pm Tuesday to Friday and 9am-4pm Saturday
The Cupcake Company, 132 Kensington Church Street W8 4BH
020 7985 0088 www.thecupcakecompany.co.uk



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Feature photography **Christina Smith** Printed in London by **Portobello Press**

MOUNTGRANGEHERITAGE

Estate Agents Sales, Lettings & Management

Kensington Office
13b Stratford Road,
London W8 6RF
020 7937 9976

Notting Hill Office
153 Notting Hill Gate,
London W11 3LF
020 7221 2277

mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



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