

Village Matters



Autumn-Winter 2012

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Liz Thomson Head of Lettings

What a golden year 2012 has been so far. First the Queen's Jubilee, then the best Olympics ever staged and in spite of the economic gloom we have been busy. We so enjoyed opening our W10 office on St Helen's Gardens earlier in the year and have received such a warm welcome and made many friends. We are introducing you to some more of them this issue. We have loved sponsoring the Portobello Film Festival again and the Kensington & Chelsea Music Society are about to start their new programme of events at Leighton House.



Michael Wilson Head of Sales

As their sponsors we have plenty of free tickets if you would like to come along. Read on and enjoy!

Amazing grace

What better than a one-stop up-the-aisle shop for the blushing bride? The State of Grace offers bespoke designed gowns, shoes, jewellery, hair, make-up and styling. The icing on the wedding cake is that the honeymoon in a newly designed Marrakech hotel – from sister firm, Dar Jaguar – can also be part of the nuptial package.

"We offer bespoke fashion for non-cookie cutter brides. We're the only place in London that delivers the entire top-to-toe experience," explains Lucia Silver. She adds that there is particular emphasis on brides marrying for the second or third time, who don't want "a vestal virgin catastrophe. There's a crying need to create the right outfits for these weddings."

Silver also ensures you won't be seen at a special occasion, be it a wedding, Ascot or an A-list party, in a mass-produced outfit worn by five other women. "Prices are reasonable too, and on par with designer off-the-peg, but everything's created from scratch,"



► adds Silver, who makes a point of using British specialists, from milliners to makers of shoes and beads.

For Village Matters' readers wanting to make a graceful entrance, Silver's offering a third night free if you book a two-night Moroccan break at Dar Jaguar (www.darjaguar.com)

53 St Helen's Gardens, W10 020 7183 2729

www.thestateofgrace.com



The pet shop boys

Keeping local children happy for over 45 years, pet emporium, Animal Fair, is home to budgies, canaries, hamsters, guinea pigs and fish.

"It's a bit like a zoo," admits Colin Thorpe, who is used to youngsters of all ages traipsing through in wonder. He finds it quite emotional when he gets to know a pet owner that comes in for supplies every week for a decade – and then they disappear. "You meet them in the High Street to discover Muffin's died. Pets are part of the family, so we get to know the family too."

Best pets for children and adults? "A hamster's ideal for a young child in a small space, while rabbits are good for adults – they're sociable, although they do require some attention," offers Thorpe.

17 Abingdon Road, W8

020 7937 0011

www.animalfair.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 Bryan 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 (continued on page 2) ►

LILY MAE
RYAN'S DREAM
HOUSE – SEE
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Campden Street, W8 £2,250,000 Freehold

Charming south-facing period townhouse located on the outskirts of the immensely popular Hillgate Village. This peaceful street is to the south of Notting Hill Gate (Central, Circle & District lines). Reception room, kitchen, three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a courtyard garden. **Sole Agents** 020 7937 9976 julia@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Oxford Gardens, W10 £6,850,000 Freehold

Outstanding double-fronted detached period house on one of the best streets in North Kensington. Extensive family accommodation, beautiful landscaped garden and self-contained flat on the lower ground floor. Three reception rooms, kitchen, seven bedrooms, four bathrooms and a garden. **Sole Agents** 020 8960 0181 helen@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Strathmore Gdns, W8 £1,100,000 Share of Freehold

A delightful first floor lateral apartment located in a beautiful building which is a peaceful cul-de-sac located between Notting Hill Gate and Kensington off the prestigious Palace Gardens Terrace and close to Kensington Gardens. Reception room, kitchen, two bedrooms and two bathrooms. **Sole Agents** 020 7221 2277 holly@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Stratford Road, W8 £1,400,000 Share of Freehold

Charming and bright second and third floor maisonette on one of the most popular streets in W8. Well-proportioned rooms, original wooden floors and a terrace with views over Kensington. Reception room, eat-in kitchen, two bedrooms, bathroom, two cloakrooms, study area and terrace. **Sole Agents** 020 7937 9976 chloe@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk

MOUNTGRANGEHERITAGE

► (continued from front cover) 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 7937 9976

thalia@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Wardrobe whizz kid

For fashionistas, storing designer clothing has never been simpler with the attentions of Julia Dee and her staff at Designer Alterations and sister company, Total Wardrobe Care. Two decades ago, Dee, who comes from a tailoring background, started altering customers' clothing. "If your clothes don't fit, we can help," she says.



However, after visiting people in their homes over the years, Dee realised many of her clients had a problem with their wardrobes. "I've seen it all, from the chic Notting Hillbilly who gets rid of all her clothes at the end of the season, through to the Miss Havisham of the vintage world.

A girl's best friend is five metres of wardrobe space and a collapsible running rail that costs about £40 for when she's doing a season swap.

But even better is engaging Dee to do the big cull and organizational blitz for you.

Remarkably helpful services she offers include: valeting repairs and cleaning, moth protection, photo cataloguing, as well as collection and storage until you want certain pieces delivered to you.



Dee says, "People underestimate the worth of their wardrobes. They'll spend £20,000 on a new kitchen, while insurers estimate it can cost around £30,000 to replace a woman's wardrobe, so why not look after it properly?"

020 8780 0857 www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk

Blazing saddles

Aficionados of Olympic champions Bradley Wiggins and Sir Chris Hoy can now get pedalling to learn golden secrets from Kensington's very own cycling master, Spencer Wilson. Already the ultimate motivator for workout zealots in The Personal Fitness Studio, he has managed to knock through next-door to create an exciting new bikefit space.

"We provide bespoke training packages and will give advice to help set up a new bike and accessories," explains Wilson. He will also take the owner of a new bike on a one-to-one outing to Richmond Park to help them enjoy cycling and get more out of the sport. Easy riders can gather at the studio at 9 o'clock on Sunday mornings for free training rides, as well as attend ►



► training camps, do fitness training and benefit from bikebuilder: the sensible way to construct a new bike from frame to saddle and tyres.

"We've had loads of enquiries since Wiggins won his time trial. Cycling's a whole community thing and it's all about freedom," Wilson adds.

12 Lexham Mews, London W8 07976 609692

www.thepersonalfitnessstudio.com

The interior tailors

Annoyed by the lack of originality in soft furnishing design, interior designer Nicky Mudie launched her own company, Violet & George, three years ago. Offering interior design services, Mudie and her team come up with practical solutions for seemingly insolvable problems.

"I find by the time people have done all the hard work of refurbishing their houses, they lose enthusiasm when it comes to the finishing touches.

This is when I like to enliven them to discover new and interesting textiles, curtains and lampshades," she says.



Mudie likes people to "touch and see" materials, so has launched a new showroom where they can examine everything closely. "They can buy things off the shelf or go for a completely bespoke service."

57 St Helen's Gardens, W10

020 8969 0654

www.violetandgeorge.com



Portobello Film Festival

The Portobello Film Festival ran from 30 August to 16 September 2012 showing a wide range of films – new, experimental and some for kids – at venues in and around Portobello Road. Added to this, entry to all these films was FREE! We love supporting this pioneering festival of film and were proud to be sponsors for the 5th year running. To find out more about this festival visit www.portobellofilmfestival.com



Values in the village...

What a summer we've had. The grey skies overhead during May, June and July extended to the local property market which seemed to suffer and falter, mostly due to over-ambitious pricing and the nervousness in the global economy about the future of the eurozone.

Then it all changed; the sun came out and the Olympics rolled into town, flame held aloft for the world to see. The energy and optimism that we've witnessed at the venues and on the streets of London has also been reflected in the local market; August has been extraordinarily busy which has been a pleasant surprise in what is considered by many to be a quiet time. The focus and commitment of those out looking to buy or rent was excellent.

We are now in the throes of the traditionally busy autumn market and this period will probably be telling in what has so far been a very up and down year.

There is still a large proportion of sales transacting "off market" which not only makes it difficult for buyers to gauge pricing and availability but also makes it very difficult for statisticians and forecasters to report accurately on this year's trends. There is much more activity in the market than one might think. Our advice is clear, keep in touch with your agent; otherwise your perfect property may be snapped up before you've heard about it.

Our own gold medal winner for 2012 is without doubt our new office in North Kensington which is starting to gather momentum and has underpinned our success elsewhere in the borough.

...values that you'll love



Linden Gardens, W2 £1,000 per week

Superb maisonette which has beautiful wood flooring throughout and has been lovingly refurbished in a contemporary style with consideration to maximising storage and living space. Reception room, kitchen, three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a roof terrace. Furnished. **Sole Agents**

020 7221 2277 rosie@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



St Luke's Mews, W11 £550 per week

Stunning architecturally designed house in this wonderful cobbled mews very close to Portobello Road and a short walk from Westbourne Grove. Facing south and benefiting from exquisite light and well configured space. Reception room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom. Furnished. **Sole Agents**

020 7221 2277 nick@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Oakley Street, SW3 £675 per week

Simply stunning and immaculately presented, this professionally designed first floor flat is just minutes from the restaurants and boutiques on Kings Road and benefits from fantastic natural light and excellent storage. Two reception rooms, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom. Furnished. **Sole Agents**

020 7937 9976 amanda@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Barlby Road, W10 £675 per week

Stylish apartment offering lateral living space with superb light, fabulous south-facing terrace, underground parking and 24 hour porter. Close to transport links on Ladbroke Grove and the popular Golborne Road. Reception room, kitchen, two bedrooms, two bathrooms and terrace. Furnished. **Sole Agents**

020 8960 0181 susie@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Spot the wall competition

When he was created in 1938 who would have thought he would be still so close to our hearts nearly 75 years later? So where is Bugs Bunny to be found in the village? The first person to give us the correct answer will get a yummy hamper from St Helen's Deli.

win@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk

competition



Vets for pets

All creatures great and small, from petite hamsters to lolling Great Danes, are greeted with equal enthusiasm at St Helens Veterinary Practice. Group practice manager Lara Waterson says, "We are the first in the UK to offer stem cell therapy for pets suffering from arthritis, hip dysplasia and cartilage damage, as well as a state-of-the-art in-house lab, surgical theatre, animal hospital, cat boarding, dog grooming, toys, food and accessories."

St Helens also offers a 20% discount to pensioners on vaccinations, flea and worming treatments for their pets, as Waterson worries that hard-pressed senior citizens often fall through the cracks.



"Those on benefits get help from the Blue Cross, but if you're not entitled to state help you will need to pay the full amount."

Other pluses from this friendly neighbourhood vet's surgery are home visits if your animal's too unwell to travel and free welcome packs for new puppies and kittens.

Opening hours: 8.30-6.30 Monday to Friday;
2.00-5.00 Saturday; 11.00-1.00 Sunday,
71 St Helen's Gardens, W10
020 8968 8333

www.sthelensvets.co.uk



Music at Leighton House

A new season of Kensington and Chelsea Music Society concerts is about to start next month at Leighton House. Those of you who have been to these recitals before will need no encouragement to return, but if you haven't experienced any of these classical musical evenings set in this beautiful venue, they come highly recommended.

The 2012-2013 season starts on Tuesday 23 October when The Heath Quartet perform string quartets by Hayden, Mozart and Tchaikovsky. An interesting evening is promised on Thursday 15 November when Susan Porrett narrates the biographical story of Frederick Chopin and George Sand with a piano accompaniment by Viv McLean. Following the success of her concert last year Meng Yang Pan returns to Leighton House in December with a programme of piano pieces by Mozart, Debussy, Chopin, Liszt and Mussorgsky. ▶



The Heath Quartet will play the first concert at Leighton House

▶ In 2013 the season continues with five more concerts. In January KCMS present a Schubertiade with music by Schumann and Schubert, while in February the Benyounes String Quartet offer an evening of Beethoven, Janacek and Debussy. There is a concert by the young pianist Tom Hicks in March, followed by a recital by Morgan Szymanski (classical guitar) and Adam Walker (flute) in April. The final concert in May brings together Sarah-Jane Brandon (soprano) Kathryn Rudge (mezzo-soprano) with a piano accompaniment by James Baillieu.

Mountgrange Heritage are proud to sponsor KCMS for the seventh year running and you can drop in to any of our offices now to pick up a programme with full details of all of these concerts. For more information on KCMS visit www.kcmsmusic.org.uk

The first five people to call in and pick up a programme will win a FREE pair of tickets.

My dream house...

One of the local highlights in North Kensington this summer was the Oxford Gardens Primary School Summer Fair in July. Despite



the bad weather, the fair was well-attended and the day was a great success. We were glad to sponsor the occasion and to run an art competition

for the children. Lily Mae Ryan aged 5 was the winner with her painting of her dream house.



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