

Village Matters



Spring-Summer 2009



Liz Thomson Head of Lettings

Thank goodness it's Spring and despite what the papers say we are all still here – we haven't collapsed under the insufferable weight of their doom and gloom-mongering. There are still houses to sell and flats to rent and people who want to live in London so we just carry on doing what we have always done and so do our friends in the village. This time we thought we'd introduce you to a new kid on the block who is doing a roaring trade in his café on the Portobello Road and to a legendary figure who campaigns relentlessly for a better Notting Hill. We thought we would brighten you up with a story about the goddess of lighting and we also found a much more difficult wall for you to spot. Read on!



Michael Wilson Head of Sales

Sally Storey

Sally is one of Britain's top lighting designers. Having studied architecture at Bristol University and as head of John Cullen lighting since 1986 Sally has gone on to be designer to the stars. She knows all the secrets about flattering lighting and is a master at making the ordinary extraordinary. She has recently completed remodelling a commercial premises in Notting Hill into a three-storey home – she calls it the 'white box' converted from poky offices with concrete floors and little light into a residential haven. First removing the old partitions and remapping the living space the ground floor was set aside for the children's rooms, the first floor became the entertaining space (*continued on back page*)



PHOTOGRAPHER JAMES WINSPEAR



Treat Yourself

Sarah Rowden is a bit like a fairy godmother. She waves her wand and magical things happen. First there was St Helen's Foodstore, then her widely acclaimed book 'Custard and Crayons' the definitive guide to keeping your children amused; now, as if by magic and transported from another era, Sarah has opened 'The Treat Shop' on Campden Hill Road. It is every child's fantasy and a spoonful of sugary medicine in these testing times. The shop stocks a wide range of kids' favourites and for the grown ups delicious chocolates and excellent coffees. Have I just walked into a time warp I ask myself? Sherbets, jellies, penny chews, gobstoppers – I feel 12 again in an instant!



The shop aims to cater for parties for all age groups and already has a wide range of party bag goodies and helium balloons – you can order birthday cakes too. Like any self-respecting fairy godmother Sarah is prepared to grant wishes – if you have been very good – promising to seek out your old favourites. Just ask and your wish, if it is of the sweet variety, will be granted. From retro 80's sweets to modern twists on old classics there is something for everyone. A wonderful after school treat or a tea time cake or two makes it the new must stop shop. Sprinkle a little fairy dust into your life...



The shop is open from 8am-6pm Monday-Friday and 9am-4pm on Saturdays. Deliveries can be arranged for orders over £100. To make orders call 020 8960 2225 (St Helens Foodstore – 'sister' shop) or Sarah Rowden on 07522 436 765

What are values doing in the village?

Perhaps it's a little too soon to know for sure but there is definitely a greater sense of energy in the central London property market. A combination of factors seem to be drawing buyers back into the market – low interest rates, the weak pound and a sense that prices have 'bottomed out'. An unprecedented nervousness in the stability of the banking system is bringing buy-to-let buyers back to the market as savers pull money out of bank accounts and start to invest in property again. (*continued on page 2*) ▶

JOHN SCOTT
IS ANGRY...
- SEE PAGE 3

MOUNTGRANGE HERITAGE





Pembroke Road, W8 £3,500,000 Freehold

An imposing period house arranged over five floors (circa 4,165 sq ft) with large south facing garden and off street parking. Detached houses of this size seldom come to the market and this provides an outstanding opportunity for a family to acquire a Kensington home with wonderfully proportioned rooms and scope for improvement, reconfiguration and potential extension.

020 7937 9976 michael@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Stratford Road, W8 £1,650,000 Share of Freehold

This elegant upper maisonette has been beautifully refurbished. Arranged over the first, second and third floors (entrance at ground floor) with entrance hall, reception room, kitchen/breakfast room, four bedrooms, bathroom, two shower rooms and cloakroom. Stratford Road is a charming street in prime Kensington with its local shops retaining a real 'village' feel.

020 7937 9976 tamara@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Campden Hill Gardens, W8 £695,000 Leasehold

A stunning first floor apartment on the preferred cul-de-sac section of this fine street. Completely refurbished by the present owner the stylish accommodation offers large reception room, smart kitchen with dining area, double bedroom with good storage, contemporary bathroom and additional room on the half landing which is perfect for home study.

020 7937 9976 michael@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk

► (continued from front cover) European buyers are taking advantage of the double swing in the London market; near parity between the euro and the pound combined with diminished prices is resulting in property prices almost 50% lower for overseas investors than at the height of the market. This reality has been heavily publicised in the Italian media in particular and we are finding Italians buying in droves. It's fair to say that we are unlikely to ever experience again the transaction levels and price rises seen in 2007. In retrospect that year will probably show as a 'blip' on many a statisticians chart. It's generally held that prices increased in 2007 by approximately 28% and have now fallen by roughly the same amount meaning that we are back to 2006 pricing. In the context of market longevity this is no bad thing.

Property may no longer be a short term 'cash cow' but the safest place to have your money is still bricks and mortar. ●

Don't miss the final concert!

The 2008-2009 season of Kensington and Chelsea Music Society concerts is coming to an end but you still have a chance to catch the final concert. The **DORIC STRING QUARTET** with **BARTHolemew Lafollette** cello will be performing at St Andrew's Church, Park Walk, SW10.

7.30 Wednesday 13 May 2009.

Sponsored by Mountgrange Heritage for more details visit www.kcmusic.org.uk



Tucked away

down an alley at the top of the Portobello Road the newly opened Charlie's café is an absolute delight and a well kept secret. In November 2008 the well-known Lazy Daisy Café had a makeover. Charlie Bowles fresh out of Leeds University, with a degree in product design under his belt, teamed up with his father and opened what is best described as a stylish, New York style café with a distinctively English flavour. Away from the hustle and bustle of Portobello Road it is the perfect place to eat, drink and relax and offers a hearty menu from breakfasts to delicious cakes and salads.

Charlie himself is very much at the centre of the operation; he is calm, considered and genuinely serious about the Notting Hill community. He buys his groceries from the Portobello market and his meat and eggs from small farmers from the countryside to ensure the best quality produce – on the walls are black and white photos of those very suppliers to prove it. "I think it is very important to support British farmers and local people," he says. Charlie doesn't stop here as 10% of his profits go directly to St Peter's Hall for youth projects. Look out for Charlie's – you can't miss the attractive old fashioned sign which lures you down the alley and you instantly feel you have stumbled across something special. Be careful though. The café feels like a home from home – once you've settled in you may not want to leave!

Mountgrange Heritage recommends a Full Charlie – the best full English Breakfast around! Open all day 7 days a week. Big private table available for large parties. Private functions by arrangement.

59A Portobello Road, Notting Hill, W11 3DB 020 7221 2422
charliesportobelloroadcafe.co.uk



John Scott is angry...

he has spent a third of his working life running The Notting Hill Improvements Group, but he insists "I have been substantially unsuccessful." John Scott is modest. For 15 years he and his 30 members have achieved a great deal for the Notting Hill community.



If you have ever walked over the Newcombe Piazza by Waterstones on Notting Hill Gate or used the lavatories on the Turquoise Island, Westbourne Grove you will have experienced just two of the many developments that John has pioneered. He has planted trees and sponsored waste bins.

His next project is a wondrous Eco Halo which has had an

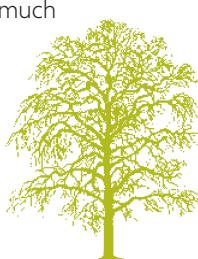
overwhelming response from the community and the media but is in desperate need of funding. The Halos will act as magical ethereal focal points, celebrating the Gate and hovering over the key junctions with Kensington Church Street and Pembridge Road. The purity of the Halos will bring a sense of harmony and identity to the area. Behind the simplicity of the gesture lies real purpose – the Halos record and display changing environmental pollution levels. Environmental data will be collected 24 hours a day and a diffuser controls night sky light pollution and unwanted light spillage. It is an amazing project both for the environment and the community.

John also wants to wipe out fly posting and chewing gum littering in the area – promising £100 for anyone who by his or her efforts succeeds in making a prosecution. In fact there are a number of issues that John is ready and able to tackle he just needs community support. In a world that has become so transitory John feels that it is time for everyone to come back down to earth. "Happiness is not



about having more it's about living in the now – bettering where we are now. Be satisfied, enjoy things and your surroundings." It is extremely important that people take pride in their community – everyone in the area has a duty to Notting Hill's welfare. John usually finds that if he can rally a certain amount of funding for a project then the Council will contribute too; with no financial backing prior to asking for funding they are not interested. This is extremely frustrating but John Scott is hopeful. "Maybe this article will enthuse someone to join us and set the powers that be alight and shame those responsible into action" – we do hope so. John Scott is a fascinating man with a fighting spirit who continues to do so much for the community. With more help and interest from other locals he can go from strength to strength. Your community and what you do for it is part of your legacy. Take action today!

The Notting Hill Improvements Group
welcomes all environmental warriors.
Contact John on 020 7221 7722
233-235 Westbourne Grove, W11 2SE



Elgin Crescent, W11 £375 per week

A lovely south-facing flat situated on this fashionable street in the very heart of Notting Hill and is only moments away from all the shops and restaurants of Portobello Road and Westbourne Grove. Both Ladbroke Grove and Notting Hill Gate underground stations are only a short walk away. Double bedroom, reception room, bathroom and kitchen. Furnished.

020 7221 2277 aileen@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Ledbury Road, W11 £1,150 per week

A wonderful upper maisonette with fabulous light and generous living accommodation situated on the best stretch of this fashionable street just seconds from all the shops and restaurants of Westbourne Grove and only five minutes walk from Notting Hill Gate. Four bedrooms, reception room, two bathrooms and kitchen. Furnished or Unfurnished.

020 7221 2277 aileen@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



Artesian Road, W2 £2,300 per week

A beautiful home in this quiet little street moments from Westbourne Grove and Portobello Market. This family house has been refurbished with style and charm and benefits from wonderful natural light – both the garden and the terrace face south. Five bedrooms, double reception room, kitchen/dining room, three bathrooms, paved garden and stunning roof terrace. Unfurnished.

020 7221 2277 louise@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk

Spot the wall competition

This fantastic mural was painted about 10 years ago by the infamous Peter Harrap as part of the Earls Court regeneration project and had a European Commission grant.

At the time the artist had a love of the Old Masters and particularly Tiepolo; he had just painted a vaulted ceiling with angels ascending and Anthony Gormley had just completed his Angel of the North so it seemed appropriate to include this theme. The artist now lives between Notting Hill and the Brighton seafront and paints for galleries and museums. His next show is in Copenhagen www.peterharrap.com – so, where is the wall?

Clue: There are no tombstones on this street. The first person with correct answer will win dinner for two at Manzara. Please email your answer to us at – win@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk



The magic of Manzara

Anyone who has taken a stroll down Pembridge Road will have seen the yellow awning that has made

Manzara a landmark of the Notting Hill community. Sergio's family took over the restaurant 38 years ago. Manzara is a Turkish restaurant with a continental twist. Delicious Turkish staples and authentic cuisine are on the menu as well as English dishes and a plethora of coffee choices and fine wines. Sergio is extremely proud that he has been able to keep track of the market and respond to it, maintaining the authenticity of the restaurant but also keeping up with the times. He introduced a wide selection of coffee choices long before the coffee conglomerates arrived on every high street.

Manzara is a restaurant for all occasions – you can pop in for breakfast, grab a delicious take away, relax with a coffee and the paper or dine well into the early hours. "It is like a theatre sometimes" Sergio declares. You are sure to spot a member of the Notting Hill glitterati dashing in for one of the yummy Turkish treats. You cannot help but admire the exceptional quality, reasonable prices and friendly service at Manzara – Nadir, the manager, is known to all and the 'face' of the place. The restaurant is authentic and warm, as is the owner. As you leave, Sergio's parting words seem to trip off his tongue as though he has said



them a thousand times. "This place is not mine, it belongs to the public... everyone knows Manzara." Perhaps it is this attitude that has made this spot such a great success over the years.

Mountgrange Heritage recommend the cheese and spinach pizza rolled up to take away!

New Meal Deals

Organic burger with salad, fries and a glass of beer/wine £8.95
Pizza and a glass of beer/wine £7.95.

A La Carte Menu available. Open Daily 8.00 am - 1.00 am.
24 Pembridge Road, London W11 3HL 020 7727 3062

Portobello news

It's true some market predictions have not been good, however according to Lindy Wiffen of 'Ceramica Blue' in Blenheim Crescent,

"If you're reasonably priced and give quality, which Portobello's shops and stalls do, then customers will shop locally."

Portobello market traders report not only an increase in footfall but also a rise in customer spending. This seems to reflect the priority to cut indulgence purchases in favour of quality and value for money.

If you couple these attractions with a reputation for innovation and independent retail creativity, then maybe the future of Portobello Market – your local shopping mall – is a lot brighter than you think!

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SHOPPING MALL

PORTOBELLO MARKET
(LONDON'S ORIGINAL SINCE 1888)
ONLY 2 STOPS FROM WESTFIELD
LADBROKE GROVE UNDERGROUND, BUSES 7, 23, 52, 70.

► (continued from front page) and the top floor was transformed into a bright and airy master suite. The use of mirrors throughout adds a sense of space and a touch of theatre – it is a masterpiece. The first floor is most certainly her showpiece in terms of lighting – a single control panel altering the focus and mood of the room to spectacular effect. This innovative makeover has coincided with planning and creating her new Kings Road store which opens shortly continues the themes she highlights in her home project. Luckily for us she has also written a critically acclaimed book so we can all have the opportunity to feast on her expertise.



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