

FitzroviaNews



Fitzrovia News is produced by residents and volunteers and distributed free to all businesses and residential addresses in Fitzrovia

Issue 128 Spring 2013

Hospital charity criticised over staff homes sell-off

By News Reporters
UCLH Charity has been criticised for the cavalier way it sold off doctors and nurses homes to a property developer who is now evicting dozens of hospital staff and causing misery for those who remain.

As we reported in the last issue of *Fitzrovia News*, UCLH Charity had quietly sold the 53 flats to an off-shore company Pendragon Properties. The flats were quickly marketed in the far-east even before eviction notices were sent to the tenants.

Frank Dobson, MP for Holborn and St Pancras, told *Fitzrovia News* that UCLH Charity had "acted without any consultation with the staff or Camden Council", because apart from the misery to hospital staff it was putting pressure on the council's housing allocation.

Sources have told *Fitzrovia News* that housing managers in Camden Council had demanded an explanation from UCLH Charity as to why they had not consulted with the housing department before selling the hospital staff housing.

The small number of residents who have secure tenancies

and who can remain in the blocks in Cleveland Street and New Cavendish Street face further disruption as the flats around them are being gutted to be refurbished for sale as pied-à-terre and investment properties.

One tenant, who is a retired hospital worker, told *Fitzrovia News* that the noise from the refurbishment work is so bad that she has to leave her flat and return later in the day after the work has been finished.

All this is happening after millions of pounds were spent on refurbishing the properties during 2010 and 2011.

Frank Dobson was clearly

moved as he listened to the hospital workers at a meeting in the offices of the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association in January. He brought with him a housing lawyer who is offering the services of the law firm Hodge, Jones & Allen to advise the tenants who are facing eviction.

The Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association wrote a complaint to the Charities Commission saying that UCLH Charity was in breach of its charitable aims as it claims to support its staff.

However, the Commission dismissed the complaint, stating:

"On the limited evidence available the Commission has no clear basis to conclude it has a regulatory interest in the matter or to justify an approach to the charity."

Although the properties are now owned by a company calling itself Pendragon Properties, the company is registered in Guernsey by two signatories of Barclays Corporate Wealth. However, it is believed that the real owners are the Marcus Cooper Group who are agents for the properties. Both Barclays Corporate Wealth and the Marcus Cooper Group declined to comment.

We are 40
and still
growing -
with 8,000
print run



We are celebrating our 40th birthday by increasing our print run to 8,000 for this issue.

It was in March 1973 that the Tower community newspaper, forerunner to *Fitzrovia News*, was first published (see page 7), making us the longest known community newspaper in the country which is still running.



Back then it was just four pages with no photographs. Since then we have grown and grown, with one issue reaching 24 pages last year.

We are restricted to eight pages this time because we are using Royal Mail to deliver 7,300 copies which involves a weight limitation. The other 700 copies will be delivered by our team of volunteers to certain places, such as doctor's surgeries, hospitals, clubs, chippies and pubs, which like more than one copy for their customers.



A compendium of some of the best articles we have run over the last 40 years is being prepared for publication.

School celebrates the Chinese new year



The Chinese New Year (of the snake) was celebrated last month at All Souls Church in Foley Street with a visit from Chinese embassy officials. A special assembly was held with examples of Chinese dancing and writing.



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Your Letters

Kids treated the blitz like a firework display

Your excellent feature about Graham Greene, being injured as an air raid warden in Gower Street during the blitz (Fitzrovia News, Winter 2012), was ruined by one inaccuracy.

You refer to him drinking in the Horseshoe "pub" at 264 Tottenham Court Road. It was much more than a pub - it was a big hotel with several bars.

I know because my parents had their wedding reception there in 1933 (the year before I was born). My father upset my mother by leaving the reception for a while to go to White City greyhound racing, but she cheered up when he returned with substantial winnings. He must have known Graham Greene from drinking in the Horseshoe.

Later in the 1960s it opened a Norwegian restaurant in the hotel, and was packed every night. I went with a Norwegian waitress there who got lots of



tips, enabling us to tour for ten weeks in Norway - people joking we had the biggest car and the smallest tent!

But going back to the blitz, I remember it well, being seven years old at the time, living at 88 Gower Street.

To me it was just like fireworks, and I did not have any

fear, not really understanding what was going on.

My mother said not to shelter in the tube but to stay in the house and take our chances there. So when the sirens went we carried on as normal, and I went to bed, sleeping through it. I don't suppose my mother did.

One day a bomb landed in

the kitchen, and she just picked it up and threw it out.

We were targeted because we were close to three railway stations carrying troops.

But, as I say, we kids just treated it like a firework display.

Gower Street was full of holes from fire bombs and incendiaries, but not too much damage.

After the war the bomb sites became our playgrounds and we climbed all over them. They were very slow rebuilding and took at least five years. Sometimes we would find old newspapers there from the 1930s and would read them.

Brian Keats,
Hampstead Road.

Kicking families out of area tragic

Money has pushed people out of Fitzrovia and they have kicked a lot of good people out. Property values have gone up and families can't afford to buy places here any more.

It is a tragedy what happened to long time Fitzrovia, Fiona Green, a very close friend of my mother and me and my brothers whom we had known for 41 years.

Now they are evicting nurses from Howard House. It is not fair.

Richard Payne

Send your letters to Fitzrovia News, 39 Tottenham Street, London W1T 4RX, or email news@fitzrovia.org.uk

Mail collection centre

Residents will soon be able to pick up their mail from a Royal Mail local enquiry office. "This will be in New Cavendish Street, with an entrance in Hanson Street," spokesperson Sally Hopkins told *Fitzrovia News*.

"The new premises should be ready within the next few months. We are in the process of finalising work on the premises and making arrangements for the move. Deliveries to customers in the area will continue as usual." But later this year the delivery operations will move from Rathbone Place to Mount Pleasant.

Pensioners' lunches

Sir Robert MacAlpine (the Fitzroy Place builders) are sponsoring a series of weekly lunches for Fitzrovia pensioners at the George and Dragon in Cleveland Street. Lunches will start in March. For more details please see the Older Fitzrovia newsletter or contact Barb at the FNA on 020 7580 4576.

When Bob Dylan was in pub audience

The day Bob Dylan sang at the King & Queen in Foley Street 50 years ago was recalled by folk singer Martin Carthy when performing there last month.

Martin was also playing there back in December 1962 when he recognised Dylan in the audience from a picture on a magazine cover he had seen earlier in the day. "I asked him if he wanted to perform, and he said ask again later. Eventually he got up and played three songs, a rag time one, Talking' John Birch Paranoid Blues, and the Ballad of Hollis Brown."

Last month Martin played to a packed house a wide range of love, anti-war, and comic songs as well as an incredible version of the Harry Lime theme tune on acoustic guitar - all interspersed with humorous stories.

He was pleased to meet up with Pete Maynard, who ran the pub's club with him over 50



Martin Carthy (left) chats to Pete Maynard in the King & Queen.

years ago. Pete played double bass and washboard in the City Ramblers skiffle group, who can be seen in Moscow in 1956 on youtu.be/b2U0Wr6Si4M. It is a zero not a letter O in the middle.

Martin, who was in Steeleye Span, also appeared on Desert Island Discs recently and mentioned Dylan at the King & Queen (see Word on the Street, page 6).



All Saints Church Margaret Street

Your neighbourhood church as featured in Fitzrovia News, Summer 2010

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If you come new to All Saints because of this advertisement please tell us that you saw it in Fitzrovia News



Lucky black cat returns home

By HANNAH PRESSMAN

There was heart warming news for Fitzrovia residents with the return of Scala Street's black cat, Gungo.

Many of you will have seen, over the last months, the forlorn posters adorning lamp posts and trees, in local windows and doorways. If you live in a high-rise apartment you may be familiar with the sight of him stalking the rooftops or ascending trees and drainpipes, but for six months he was absent without leave, and sorely missed by everyone but the mice.

A ray of hope was given when Jack Fawdry, Gungo's owner, received a call from an observant stranger proclaiming the cat to be in the Marylebone area. This led to a surge of new posters which luckily caught the eye of two builders. They informed Marylebone resident Eddie, whose cat they recognised as the much-loved and missing pet. Eddie had kindly been caring for Gungo for five weeks, and quickly arranged for him to be brought home.

Another local figure who was thrilled at Gungo's return is Haggis, the west highland terrier/poodle cross, who you most probably will have been greeted by upon entering Pollock's Toy Museum. The two animals have been firm friends since Gungo was a kitten, and some might say they are related (both of their owners being of the Fawdry family).

Many people are to thank for this happy reunion, in particular Eddie, the builders who showed him the poster, the mysterious stranger, but also all of the local businesses who kept their posters up when hope seemed almost lost.

Bondage apartment

A fetish apartment with an "adult play space" in Warren Street is being advertised for a minimum of £211 a night on the internet by Wimdu.

"The fetish and BDSM furniture include a spanking bench, sling and stretch rack, fetters with cage, a cross, bondage area, throne and electric suspension," it states. "The adult play room

Doctor's surgery to close under UCL's commercialisation plans

The doctor's surgery in Gower Place, which treats UCL students and local residents, is to be closed next year as part of a "horrendous" plan to commercialise the university.

"UCL has informed us that it has no plans to renew our lease when it expires in 2014," Dr Clare Elliot, a partner at the practice, is reported to have

said. "It does not wish to provide a space for the NHS practice on the UCL campus."

It is part of a "masterplan" approved in 2011 by the UCL council to "enable institutional growth", in the words of the provost, Malcolm Grant, over the next decade.

It involves moving, reducing or losing libraries, teaching

space, laboratories, and student and staff facilities... and new space made for commercial projects, including shops such as Starbucks, plus luxury accommodation and a "social lounge" for VIP visitors.

A senior lecturer stated: "As staff we find this whole prospect horrendous."

Competing Forums stake claims for Fitzrovia as a neighbourhood area

By News Reporters

Competing proposals to designate different parts of Fitzrovia as a neighbourhood area under the Localism Act have been staked by different forums.

Designating a neighbourhood area is the first step in creating a neighbourhood plan to devolve planning policies and development to local people.

Last year the Marylebone Forum applied to Westminster Council for a neighbourhood area covering the area west of Cleveland Street as far as Edgware Road. The Forum was led by the Marylebone Association and supported by the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association.

However, in January this year the Fitzrovia Forum submitted a new proposal to both Westminster and Camden councils for a cross-boundary neighbourhood area. The Fitzrovia Forum's proposal overlaps with the Marylebone Forum's proposed area between Cleveland Street and Great Portland Street.

It is the first cross borough application to both councils.

Wesley Skow, speaking on behalf of the Fitzrovia Forum, told *Fitzrovia News*: "Boundaries



WESLEY SKOW

– for whatever reason – are always difficult, and usually contentious. I think one needs to be clear about the nature of the area that is being proposed and the reason for having a boundary.

"Some people will no doubt say that a neighbourhood area should follow local government boundaries. The problem here is that those boundaries were designed for very different purposes, and have been carried forward for historic reasons, and have no real logic 'on the ground' in themselves."

"Neighbourhood planning is

an opportunity for us to step away from town hall politics and work together as a local community.

"I think that the essential criteria for defining a neighbourhood is the area's character, scale, use and function. The use of the local government boundary makes no sense when defining this neighbourhood.

"Conversely, the neighbourhood area proposed by the Fitzrovia Forum forms a cohesive whole and is similar in terms of use, character, scale and function. The area changes dramatically to the west at Portland Place and to the east at Gower Street (the university and British Museum)."

The Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association has been asked to support the Fitzrovia Forum's proposed area and withdraw support for the Marylebone Forum.

Bloomsbury residents are also considering a neighbourhood area and some have expressed interest in including the area Tottenham Court Road and Gower Street, which would overlap with part of the neighbourhood area proposed by the Fitzrovia Forum application.

Chippy champs!

Congratulations to Fish Bone, 82 Cleveland Street, winners of the Chip Week 2013 London region Choice Chip Award.

Active Kids project at centre

Fitzrovia Youth in Action are currently running an Active Kids Healthy Living project at the Fitzrovia Community Centre in Foley Street every Monday from 3.30 to 6 pm during the school year.

The aim of these drop in sessions are to encourage children aged 9, 10 and 11 to become

more healthy with fun activities and sport. To book please contact Raaj or Marian on 020 7388 7399 or email raja.miah@fya.org.

News in brief

Off-shore company **Wainbridge Capital Ltd** (Jersey) are planning to redevelop 31-34 **Alfred Place** with more office space and new residential.

Property developer **Exemplar** is raking it in. Its **Fitzroy Place** scheme is selling for an average of £1,850 per square foot, and topped the list of fastest selling property developments. Fitzroy Place generated £290 million last year as 175 apartments sold in just eight months, according to real estate firm **CBRE**.

Exemplar are also proposing to redevelop 1 **Bedford Avenue** and 251-258 **Tottenham Court Road**, with new residential accommodation proposed in **Bloomsbury Square**. A planning application will be submitted later in the year.

Almost all of the 15 refurbished apartments in three Grade II listed buildings on the corner of **Grafton Way** and **Conway Street** sold as investment properties in southeast Asia.

Three contractors are chasing the £100m deal to redevelop 80 **Charlotte Street**.

Developer **Derwent London** will transform the building once **Saatchi & Saatchi's** lease expires in March. The building will be part demolished and rebuilt with 55 new homes and 323,000 square feet of office space. **Saatchi & Saatchi** are hoping to stay in Fitzrovia.

BBC Studios and Post Production have moved into **Charlotte Street**. We hope they are not disturbed by the building works next door to them after **Derwent London** were given planning permission to demolish the **Margaret Pyke Centre** on the corner of Charlotte and Tottenham Street.

The **Mental Health Resource Centre** in **Tottenham Mews** will be demolished and a new 5-storey building constructed.

Charlotte Mews is having new cobblestones laid.

Do any of our readers

continues on page 4



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Police officer injured in Margaret Street burglary

Police are appealing for information and witnesses after an officer sustained serious head injuries when he disturbed burglars in offices in Margaret Street.

At around 11.10 am on Saturday, January 19, two police officers separately started to search the building.

One of the officers, a male police sergeant, disturbed two suspects. Following a foot-chase up onto the roof, the officer was

School football team plays at QPR

All Souls school football team represented Fitzrovia in a tournament organised by Queens Park Rangers of the Premiership. They did not win overall but performed very well.

struck with a heavy tool causing serious head injuries.

One suspect was seriously injured when trying to escape. He was attempting to get down from the rooftop when he slipped and fell, breaking a leg and his back. He was arrested and taken to hospital. A second suspect was later arrested.

The suspects are believed to have been part of a team of at least three people. They had a VW Golf get-away vehicle wait-

The school, in Foley Street, has also been giving weekly Spanish lessons to all the children, who celebrated that country's culture, songs, and music throughout a week last month.

ing in Great Titchfield Street at the junction with Little Titchfield Street.

The injured officer was taken to hospital for treatment to serious head injuries. He has now been discharged.

Police are seeking any witnesses who may have been in the area of Margaret Street or Great Titchfield Street between 8 and 11.30 am on that morning. In particular, they wish to hear from anyone who may have seen the suspects running off or the VW Golf and its occupants in Great Titchfield Street.

Any witnesses or anyone with any information should call the Burglary Squad on 020 7321 6969 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Emergency crews rush to Goodge Place after reports of meteorite strike

Residents in Goodge Place called emergency services on the evening of Sunday 27 January after they heard a "loud bang", and saw a "red flame coming down from the sky" which they thought was caused by a meteorite.

Fire engines, police, helicopter and "special forces" arrived at the scene where a hole in the pavement had appeared. Police officers were seen pointing up into the night sky.

Even Sky News turned up, though a little late, said resident Mark Hebblewhite who kept us updated on Twitter.

In the air above, the Metropolitan Police Service helicopter updated people across London:

"We are not treating it as suspicious. It may be a issue with local utility supplies or even a small meteorite strike!"

The London Fire Brigade ended the excitement when they reported it was caused by a broken electric mains cable under the pavement.

Homes and offices nearby lost their electrical supply.

...News in brief continued

know anything about the social and architectural history of **Berners Street Mansions?** Residents in the mansion block are researching the history of it. Contact us if you can help them out.

Awkward questions were asked at the annual general meeting of the **Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association (FNA)** about why the charity were not moving into the new Camden-funded **Fitzrovia Community Centre**. The FNA said the space offered was too small and expensive. The FNA is due to move into new premises in March.

The **Fitzrovia Trust** intends to buy **39 Tottenham Street** to refurbish it to create a mixed use building including social housing.

People in **Ogle Street** are suffering with "noise levels equivalent to an airport runway" from the **Peabody Housing** building site in the street. The new occupants will arrive in "a neighbourhood exasperated and traumatised by its construction" said one resident.

The **ring-scam** is happening a lot in the neighbourhood, mainly targeting **pen-sioners**. The scammers try to sell you a 'gold' ring for £10-20 after dropping it on the ground, pretending they've just found it. Please tell them "take a hike!"

Victorian loo now serves sarnies

By **BRIAN JARMAN**

Gents – and for the first time, ladies – you have the chance to visit one of Fitzrovia's historic underground monuments for a cup of coffee and a sandwich. At your convenience.

The Victorian gents' loos on Foley Street, which have been derelict for years, are re-opening as a gourmet coffee and New York-style sandwich bar called The Attendant. Many of the original features, such as the full-length porcelain urinals and the attendant's office, have been retained.

It's the brainchild of former PR man Pete Tomlinson and his business partner Ben Russell. Like many good ideas, it came to them as they were having a pint after work one night outside the Crown and Sceptre, looking at the chained-up loos with a 'To Let' sign on the gate.

They had a vision for keeping the urinals, repairing the tiles, restoring the porcelain light shades, ripping out the cubicles and putting in a kitchen.

The loos were bought from Westminster council in the 1980s by the father of the present own-

ers. He wanted to launch a local paper from the premises but it never took off.

The pair are sourcing their products from family-run businesses and, wherever possible, local ones, such as Caravan who roast their coffee in an old granary in King's Cross.

And for those of you who may have qualms about eating your lunch in a lavatory, never fear. You can press a buzzer at street level, place your order, and it'll be brought up to you. It sounds like they'll be flushed with success.

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Author Paul Willetts interviewed

New film of strip king 'funny and touching'

By CLIVE JENNINGS

Many local residents and workers were surprised last year to spot Steve Coogan sporting an extravagant blond bouffant "combover" hairstyle as he strutted round the streets of Soho with Anna Friel on his arm. They were portraying Paul Raymond and his wife Jean for the filming of "The Look of Love" the new Michael Winterbottom ("24 Hour Party People", "The Trip") film about Soho's notorious striptease entrepreneur and latterly property magnate.

Also featuring Tamsin Egerton as his protégé and girlfriend, Fiona Richmond, Imogen Poots as his daughter Debbie, and Stephen Fry, David Walliams and Matt Lucas in supporting roles, it promises to be a comprehensive celebration of Soho sleaze. Due for release here at the end of April, reviewers at the Sundance Film Festival described it as "funny and touching".

I spoke to Paul Willetts who wrote the book "Members Only", on which the film is based, and was a consultant on the script, about the project. He explained that the book had an interesting genesis that started when he accessed a Scotland Yard file about a bizarre episode in Raymond's life when he was terrorised by a purported IRA plot to extort money from him, and the perpetrator turned out to be a chancer painter and decorator. The tragi-comedy aspect of this incident, and his life in general, had Willetts hooked and he was drawn into Raymond's world, from the seedier end of variety in the 1950s to becoming the richest man in Britain in the 1990s.

As author of "Fear and Loathing in Fitzrovia" - a biography of the writer, dandy, flaneur and epicentre of the literary circle that revolved around the saloon bar of the Wheatsheaf in Rathbone, during the '40s, Julian Maclaren-Ross - Willetts had serious previous Fitzrovia credentials including "North Soho 999", the true story of a spectacularly audacious crime at a pawnbrokers on the site what is now the Margaret Pyke Centre on Charlotte Street, that catalogues a forgotten chapter of teenage gangs gun crime in the 1940s.

Willetts is now one of the most prolific writers about the area and its characters, revelling in tales of post war Fitzrovia,

featuring such dubious characters as Tommy Yeardey - stunt man, boyfriend of Diana Dors and father of Tamara Mellon, doyenne of the Jimmy Choo designer shoe empire - who ran the Paintbox Club, a strip joint in the basement of what is now Sergio's restaurant on Great Titchfield Street, until the local gangsters beat him up and drove him out of business.

Hotfoot from the exclusive cast and crew viewing the previous day, Willetts described to me a scene in the film in which an older Paul Raymond slowly glides around Soho in his Rolls, casually pointing out of the window and proclaiming "Mine, mine, mine" as he indicates to his daughter, Debbie, that he owns most of the properties in Soho as nonchalantly as a child saying "gottit, gottit" about a stamp collection. This proved to be a poisonous legacy as Raymond evolves from a jaunty, pencil moustached spiv, via showbiz lothario to become a sad old man, bereft at his daughter's early death.

Steve Coogan, was the initiator of the project. He had long wanted to make a movie about a little known slice of British

History and approached his friend and regular collaborator, film director Michael Winterbottom. Willetts has a small role in the film as anti-porn campaigner Lord Longford and enjoyed working with Coogan in a scene that recreates a famous TV debate. The irony of all Raymond's legal battles about nudity is that 50 years on, most of what was considered salacious on the stage of the Revuebar can now be seen on our TVs most nights.

Willetts remembers filming at a freezing Brixton Academy where the iconic Soho landmark, the Raymond Revuebar had been accurately recreated, complete with working bar for the use of the performers (shivering in g-strings and feathers) and crew (cosily wrapped up in scarves and coats). Every time the camera went by on its track a shout of "duck" went up and the drinkers dodged behind the bar to get out of shot. His only regret is that his suggested title for the film, "Panties Inferno" (an early Raymond show) was not adopted - I think it catches the mood of the period rather well.



Steve Coogan plays Paul Raymond. Revolutionary Films

Pirate film star was driven to acting

By MIKE PENTELOW

The bushy bearded tavern keeper in the fourth Pirates of the Caribbean film, "On Stranger Tides", was played by local actor Richard Payne (pictured right).

Richard, who lives off Fitzroy Square, has international film star Terence Stamp to thank for encouraging him to take up acting.

"I was a bus driver when Terence got on the bus and dropped his wallet, which my conductor picked up," said Richard. "I told him of my interest in the arts and he said to me pursue it and I hope to see your name in lights. Then he added 'You won't let me down' which is a line from one of his films. It was the final push I needed. I have seen him since and he is not only a internationally acclaimed actor but a wonderful human being."

Earlier Richard had performed for the Camden People's Theatre in Hampstead Road, near Warren Street, and trained in stage fighting at City Lit, but had not taken the plunge to give up his job as a bus driver after 12 years to be a full-time actor.

Now he has got his Equity card, has appeared in the Cranford television series, several adverts, and of course the "On Stranger Tides" film with Johnny Depp.

"Johnny Depp was a lovely person, as was the director Rob Marshall, and the whole crew were very nice people," said Richard.

His first screen appearance could have been on the "Sweeney" television show in



the mid-1970s. "Friends of mine said they saw me in it running across the road in Charlotte Street in the background."

His mother, Helen Payne, ran the Salonika Greek restaurant in the basement at 69 Charlotte Street from 1970 to 1980, and they lived at 8-10 Tottenham Street from 1971.

"I remember the newscaster Andrew Gardner, and the rest of the ITN team [based then in Wells Street] being regular patrons of the restaurant, as well as artists Gilbert and George who had a certain style about them. They were eccentric in some ways but very friendly and relaxing and calming. Nurses and doctors also came in and we all had a lot of fun until the early hours."

But he is angered how the area has changed. See "Your Letters" on page 3.

FITZROVIA WIDE AWAKE HAND SURGERY

The BMI Hospital In Fitzroy Square is pleased to announce the arrival of the One Stop Wide Awake Hand Surgery (OSWA) service in Fitzrovia in December 2012.

The OSWA service specialises in Wide Awake Hand Surgery which enables treatment of complex hand surgery problems under local anaesthesia without general anaesthesia or regional anaesthesia or sedation or tourniquets. The service has been the subject of multiple scientific publications in 2012 is now available in London in the prestigious setting of BMI Fitzroy Square in Fitzrovia. Please search "BMI Fitzroy Square" and "One Stop Wide Awake" for further information or call 020 7388 4954. The before and after photos, below, show the seven week results of one 45 minute OSWA treatment...

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The way she walked

A short story by
SUNITA SOLIAR

He waits at an outside table at a café on Rathbone Place. He knows if he sits there for long enough she will come, and his senses prick up for her approach.

The waitress comes over with his coffee. He has a newspaper on the table and the waitress tries to clear the other place setting to make room. He clamps his hand over the napkin, the neatly laid cutlery.

'I'm expecting someone,' he says.

'Oh, I'm sorry.' The waitress straightens the table. 'Is it a lady friend?'

'Yes.'

She looks disappointed. He knows that she has been watching him, but she isn't the one. He can tell by her walk: she has a bouncing swagger, little miss popular.

'Well who's the lucky girl?'

Picture puzzle



How well do you know Fitzrovia's landscape? Can you identify where the picture above was taken by Eugene McConville? The answer is below the Sherlock Homes picture on the page opposite.



Illustration by Clifford Harper

she says and smiles as she places his coffee cup. Catching his eyes she stumbles, as though they were too vivid, lacerating. She

knocks over the cup. 'Oh dear,' she says, her hands shaking as she tries to dab up the liquid. 'I don't know what's gotten into me. I had a funny feeling.' But she avoids his eye now and he feels that she is eager to get away. Good.

When she has cleaned the table he sits back. A waiter brings over a fresh cup, and he sips it, watching the women pass. One wears dun-coloured trousers, and walks with a quick, impatient step. She is in her fifties – he does not need to look at her face to know this. Another does a deliberate down-trodden shuffle; she is followed by light, tripping plimsolls; arro-

gant strappy heels, then there are flat, laced shoes splayed out like a duck, and after that, wait. A pair of legs in sheer stockings, the heels giving an apparently confident click-clack, but there is a slight quiver in the ankles, and the hips are not at all sure of how they should move: she is the right type. The pavement is narrow and she passes close by his table, he extends his leg. She trips over his foot, and gives a

'I'm a klutz,' she says, and there are tears in her eyes.

little cry of pain, reaching down her shin.

He springs up from his chair and helps her.

She is flustered and limping. 'I'm a klutz,' she says, and there are tears in her eyes. 'I don't know...' and she looks over the ground for the offending object.

'Uneven pavement,' he says and gives her his big, toothy smile. She blushes, her eyes darting as though she didn't know where to look. With his support, she tries to walk, but she winces.

'Here,' he says. 'Sit down.'

'I don't want to impose.'

'Not at all! The table's all set.' He sweeps his arm towards the extra place setting. 'You see, I've been waiting for you.'

'That's kind,' she says, and sits.

She wears a dress with a V-shaped collar, and he likes her neck, the colour that comes into it. His fingers fidget and he grins, dazzling her with his bright eyes. 'Good,' he says. 'Splendid.'

NEXT ISSUE
Quentin Crisp
the colourful
alumni of
Fitzrovia
by Christina Latham

Word on the street

Knock on wood

Who would have thought Bob Dylan would destroy a piano in order to keep warm in London in the bitter winter of 1962-3?

Yet this was revealed on Desert Island Discs by folk singer Martin Carthy, who recalled Dylan performing at the King & Queen in Foley Street at



Illustration by Jayne Davis

that time before he was well known. Carthy put up Dylan in his flat and when it went well below freezing, and they had little money, he explained they would have to chop up the piano to fuel the fire.

At first Dylan objected on artistic grounds. But when the deadly deed had to be done, he asked if he could have a go with the axe.

Stargazers' paradise

West Fitzrovia is becoming a veritable stargazers' paradise since most of the BBC moved back into the area. My brother Percy tells me he saw actor Brian Blessed wending his stately way into Mail Boxes in Great Titchfield Street not so long ago. Minutes later Evan Davies came striding past, fresh no doubt from grilling the nation's great and not-so-good on Radio 4's Today programme.

Then the other day my sister Margaret spotted Jeremy Vine ushering a guest into the Scandinavian Kitchen. And have you seen the aerial shots of the new Broadcasting House and surrounding streets under the credits of Newsnight? Come summer, and I fear I'll have to be a little more discrete when I sunbathe on my rooftop terrace.

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Dancing with dukes and dope dealers

By MIKE PENTELOW
A future king, black jazz musicians, Chinese dope peddlars, "flapper" dancers, and good time girls all rubbed shoulders in a Jewish owned Tottenham Court Road club in the 1920s.

It ran from 1919 to 1926 at 71 Tottenham Court Road (with an entrance at 38-42 Whitfield Street), and changed its name from the Albert Rooms to Moody's Dance Club in 1921 and then to Moody's Vaudeville Cabaret Club the following year.

The Prince of Wales (who later became Edward VIII in 1936 briefly before abdicating to become the Duke of Windsor) was a regular visitor... as was dancer Freda Kempton, who died from an overdose of cocaine in 1922, supposedly supplied by a Chinese dealer called Brilliant Billy Chang for which he was jailed.

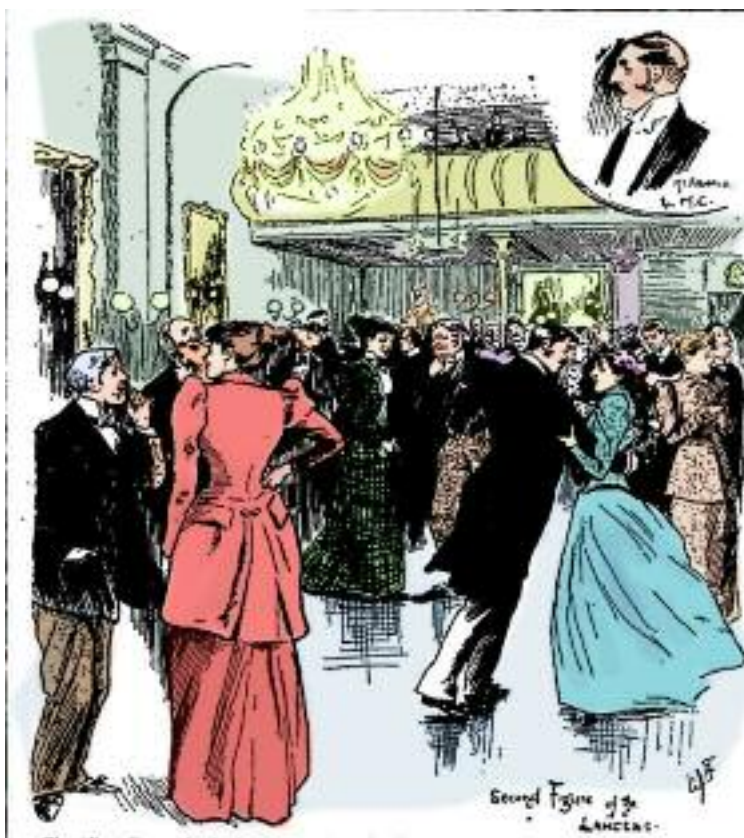
The whole story of the venue, dating back to the 1840s, is told in a booklet called "Ballrooms, Shadows & Dancing Fred" by Andrew Wyatt, who will soon be looking for a publisher (see panel, below right), but has shown it in advance to *Fitzrovia News*.

The author describes how Moody's was publicly mentioned at the inquest into the death of Freda Kempton, who died in agony after being given cocaine allegedly by Chang.

Describing it as a "Jewish run night club employing black musicians linked to white females getting cocaine from the Chinese" he recounts how this led to newspapers leading "a crusade against drug taking and the so called Yellow Peril in night clubs."

Flappers are depicted dancing to a jazz band in the club's Moroccan Palace decor in a 1923 film called "Moody's Club Follies", which can be seen on the British Film Institute's website.

It was an early jazz club, run by Haimon and Morris Schwarzenberg, sons of a Soho



The Albert Rooms pictured in the *People's Illustrated Paper* in 1891, since coloured in by Andrew Wyatt.

Russian hairdresser, and a regular venue for black bands. They took over the venue in August 1919 and on their opening night had "native Africans, Afro-Americans and young coloured men from London" as well as guests from Liberia, South Africa, and the West Indies.

Max Goldberg, who later became a trumpeter with dance bands Ambrose and Ted Heath, was part of the resident quartet at the club in 1925. Other members later joined the Billy Cotton band.

Back in 1883 the building was owned by the piano manufacturer and music publisher, James Windus. In that year he was approached by two men who wished to use it as a dancing school and hall. They were Frederick Wyatt (an ancestor of Andrew Wyatt, author of the booklet) and his friend James Arnold, who was a professional clown.

Frederick lived and worked at his father's print shop at 2 Goodge Place (where Windus had his sheet music printed),

and James lived in Hanson Street (where Fred's uncle had a butcher's shop).

Frederick and James had worked at the Argyll Rooms, Great Windmill Street, a public dance hall frequented by prostitutes, until it was closed after a police raid in 1878 making them unemployed.

When James Windus accepted their offer to use his Whitfield Street premises they called it the Albert Rooms and ran their own dancing school and ballroom there. There were connecting rooms through to 71 Tottenham Court Road where there was also an entrance.

Next door at 73 was a dancing school run by Katti Lanner, described as "the queen and mother of London ballet", who was a friend of composer Johann Strauss. This building was demolished in 1903 to make way for Goodge Street station.

In 1891 the *People's Illustrated Paper* published a drawing of dancers in the hall, (see picture, coloured by Andrew Wyatt) which drew attention to the ballroom's impressive new chandelier.

Sadly, in 1913 there was a fire which burned the ballroom, severely damaging it. This prompted James Arnold to retire. Fred Wyatt continued as a dancing instructor at the Albert Rooms when it reopened after the war in 1919 and was taken over by the Schwarzenberg brothers. He died in 1933, aged 81, described as a former Professor of Dancing.

Do you have old pictures of dancing teachers?

Andrew Wyatt, author of "Ballrooms, Shadows & Dancing Fred", started his research initially to find a photograph or image of his ancestor Frederick G Wyatt, who died in 1933. Yet he has still to find one of this popular West End master of ceremonies and dancing teacher.

"Somewhere out there could be a wonderful scrapbook or album with what I am looking for," he told *Fitzrovia News*, "and possibly any further details, or promotional ephemera of him or other early ballroom dancing teachers including Katti

Lanner, Edward and Walter Humphrey, William Jabez Lamb, Francis Piaggio, Henry Robert Johnson, and Charles D'Albert. Also anything to do with the Fitzrovia based Ballroom Dancing Teachers or Professors of Dancing would be fascinating."

Anyone with any information or pictures of these, or who is interested in publishing the booklet, should contact Andrew on andrew.wyatt@virgin.net.

The Dining Detective has a taste of the exotic

ARCHIPELAGO,
110 Whitfield Street

This is a funny restaurant: it advertises itself as 'Exploring the Exotic' and is decorated with African masks and strange Indian goddesses, and a few paintings and photographs that seem to have no connection, and a Buddha. All very low lit with candles, and furniture that might have come from the British Raj or Malaysia.

When I asked the waiter which 'archipelago' they were thinking of he said 'the Archipelago of Your Dreams' which was either charming quick thinking, or an answer to a question he had been asked before.

The menu was wrapped

with a flower, and the wine list was in a carved wooden container. None of the glasses matched but they were all big and chunky and nice to hold.

A £2 cover charge includes a little plate of tasty snacks and dips because, the menu explains, everything is freshly cooked, so be patient.

The menu offered fish from the Indian ocean with samphire, kangaroo, bison, alpaca, frogs legs and crocodile (I am not making this up).

In a cowardly manner perhaps, my dining companion and I ordered the vegetarian options: delicious curried tofu in coconut and lime and chilli sauce, and a milder lentil curry (both round £14), with side roast potatoes

with garlic (£3.50). These were truly delicious and highly recommended and I apologise for not being more adventurous, and I think I will return.

The puddings were exotic: at all around £7. One number called (I think) African Sunset vowed to contained champagne and sprinkled gold leaf. Frozen berries with hot coconut custard to unfreeze them, with crushed nuts in the middle, was lovely; the icecream was – what shall I say? exotic; and the house wine, a Chilean Syrah-temparillo (£20) was, well, certainly not exotic, but drinkable. The bill for two with cover charge and service of 12.5% was £78.

There were lots of people there and I recommend it as a



very good eating experience and a dream. I finally decided that the Archipelago had been designed by someone while they listening to one of the Beatles more druggy albums in the late nineteen sixties.

40 years ago Street festival attracts thousands

The first issue of *Tower* (forerunner of *Fitzrovia News*) appeared in March, 1973, which makes us Britain's oldest surviving community newspaper.

It announced plans for a parade and street festival in Charlotte Street, south of Goodge Street, for June 2. This proved a huge success attracting thousands of revellers and the festival continued annually for some years.

The meeting that started all this took place in the Whitfield Street Play Centre on March 5 and was attended by 50 people.

A £475 grant from Camden Council helped fund the event, and Curwen Gallery staged an exhibition for two weeks showing the history of the district.

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WHAT'S ON AROUND FITZROVIA

Email news@fitzrovia.org.uk by May 19 for the June 2013 issue, and put "Listings" in the subject box.

ART GALLERIES

4 Windmill Street, 4 Windmill St (4windmillstreet.com): Frank Ammerlaan & Nathan Barlex, Feb 20 to Mar 16. David Quentin (Silt), Mar 21 to Apr 13. Robin Footitt (A Town Without Pity), Apr 18 to May 11. **Alison Jacques Gallery**, 18 Berners St (alisonjacquesgallery.com): Michael Bauer (Slow Future - H.S.O.P. - OPUS), Feb 22 to Mar 28. Fernanda Gomes, Apr 19 to May 18. **Arch One**, 12 Percy St (archonepictureframing.co.uk): Various artists, ongoing.

Art First, 21 Eastcastle St (artfirst.co.uk): Helen MacAlister (At the Foot o' Yon Excellent Brae), Feb 28 to Apr 6. Helen MacAlister, William Stein, Feb 27 to Apr 6. Simon Lewty (Absorbition), Apr 11 to May 11.

Arup Phase 2, 8 Fitzroy St (arup.com/phase2): Traces of Peter Rice, to Apr 5.

Bartha Contemporary, 25 Margaret St (barthacontemporary.com): Indian Tantric + Western Contemporary, to Mar 23. Stefana McClure (science is FICTION), Mar 29 to June 11.

Black Arts Company, 73 Great Titchfield St (theblackarts.org): Check web.

Building Centre, Store St (buildingcentre.co.uk): Prototyping Architecture, to Mar 20.

Carroll / Fletcher, 56-57 Eastcastle St (carrollfletcher.com): Richard T Walker (In Defiance of Being Here), Mar 1 to Apr 13.

Coningsby Gallery/Debut Art, 30 Tottenham St (coningsbygallery.com): Guy Reid (Little Me).

Contemporary Applied Arts, 2 Percy St (caa.org.uk): Hot Glass, Apr 19 to May 25.

Curwen Gallery, 34 Windmill St (curwengallery.com): Kenneth Blackburn & Edward Murray, Mar 6-28.

Gallery Different, 14 Percy St (gallerydifferent.co.uk): Various artists (Tender), Apr 19 to May 19.

England & Co, 90-92 Great Portland St (englandgallery.com): See web.

Exposure, 22-23 Little Portland St (exposure.net): Check web.

Framers Gallery, 36 Windmill St (theframersgallery.co.uk): Check web.

Fred - London, 17 Riding House St: (fred-london.com): Anand Zenz - (Is Is Not Not?), to Apr 13.

Gallery at 94, 94 Cleveland St

(galleryat94.com): Murano 1291 jewellery and collectables.

Getty Images Gallery, 46 Eastcastle St (gettyimagesgallery.com): Slim Aarons, to Mar 23.

Hanmi Gallery, 30 Maple St (hanmiguerrero.co.uk): See web.

Haunch of Venison, 51 Eastcastle St (haunchofvenison.com): Thomas Joshua Cooper (Messages), to Mar 28.

Gallery Libby Sellers, 41 Berners St (libbysellers.com): Clarke & Reilly (8 Chairs), Mar 14 to Apr 26.

Josh Lilley, 44-46 Riding House St (joshlilleygallery.com): Belen Rodriguez Gonzalez, to Apr 5. Annie Lapin, Apr 12 to May 17.

Laure Genillard, 2 Hanway Place (lauregenillard.com): Check web.

Lazarides Gallery, 11 Rathbone Place (lazarides.com): Check web.

Margaret Street Gallery, 63 Margaret St (margaretstreet-gallery.com): Jim Naughten (Conflict and Costume), Mar 5 to Apr 13.

Modern Art, 23-25 Eastcastle St (modernart.net): Check web.

Nancy Victor, 6 Charlotte Place (nancyvictor.com): Samuel Bassett, Mar 8 to Apr 8. Geoff Litherland, Apr 12-29.

Nati Gallery, 22 Warren St (nati-gallery.com): Check web.

National Print Gallery, 56 Maple St (nationalprintgallery.com): Check web.

Nettie Horn, 17A Riding House St (nettiehorn.com): Various artists (Once upon a time ...), to Mar 24.

Paradise Row, 74 Newman St (paradisewalk.com): Various artists (Kiss Me Deadly), to Mar 9.

Pilar Corrias, 54 Eastcastle St (pilarcorrias.com): Shahzia Sikander, to Mar 22.

The Piper Gallery, 18 Newman St (thepipergallery.com): Paul de Monchaux, to Mar 15. Neil Stokoe (All Things Must Pass), Mar 22 to Apr 27.

Rebecca Hossack Gallery (1), 2a Conway St (r-h-g.co.uk): Garlinda Birkbeck (Antarctica), Mar 6-30.

Rebecca Hossack Gallery (2), 28 Charlotte St (r-h-g.co.uk): Check web.

Regina Gallery, 22 Eastcastle St (reginagallery.com): Group Show, to Apr 4.

Rollo Gallery, 51 Cleveland St (rolloart.com): Check web.

Rook and Raven, 7/8 Rathbone Place (rookandraven.co.uk): Bill Wyman Reworked, to Mar 21.

Rose Issa Projects, 82 Great Portland St (roseissa.com): Maliheh Afnan (Speak Memory), Mar 7 to Apr 18.

Rosenfeld Porcini, 37 Rathbone St (rosenfeldporcini.com): Silvia Hatzl (A Fragile Existence), to Mar 9. Eduardo Stupia (Reinventing Landscape), Mar 15 to Apr 27.

Richard Saltoun, 111 Great Titchfield St (richardsaltoun.com): Bas Jan Ader + others (Double Dutch), Mar 13 to May 3.

Scream Gallery, 27-28 Eastcastle St (whisperfineart.co.uk): Pakboom Silaphan (Empire State), to Apr 6.

Store Street Gallery, 32 Store St (storestreetgallery.com): Check web.

Tiwani Contemporary, 16 Little Portland St (tiwani.co.uk): Barbara Walker (As Seen), to Mar 23.

T J Boulting, 59 Riding House St (tjboulting.com): Dale Adcock (Ratio), to Mar 23.

Woolff Gallery, 89 Charlotte St (woolffgallery.co.uk): Check web.

FAMILY CONCERT

Hansel & Gretel by Naip Puppeteers, Saturday April 20 at 3pm and 6pm at Bolivar Hall, 54 Grafton Way. Free but book at: contact@opusmusica.org



LIVE MUSIC

The Albany, 240 Great Portland St (thealbanyw1w.co.uk): Ukeleles on Wednesdays.

Jet Lag, 125 Cleveland St: Jamming on Mondays 7pm, blues and boogie on Thursdays 8pm.

King & Queen, 1 Foley St: Folk once a month on Fridays (visit mustradclub.co.uk).

Tower Tavern, 21 Clipstone St: Live music Friday nights 8-11pm.

The 100 Club, 100 Oxford St (the100club.co.uk): Martin Harley Band, March 14. Revere, March 19.

Stompin', March 25. Blues, March 26. Gruhak, March 27. Simon Townshend, Apr 6. New Mastersounds, Apr 7. Stompin', Apr 8. Sheepdogs, Apr 9. Limelight, Thomas Gould, violin, Apr 10. Steve Conte & The Crazy Truth, Apr 13.

UCL Chamber Music Club, Haldane Room, Main Campus, Gower St (ucl.ac.uk/chamber-music): Concert, March 15, 1.10-1.55.

THEATRE

Bloomsbury Theatre, 15 Gordon St (thebloomsbury.com): Vivian Stanhall's 70th Birthday Party, March 25. Charity Night with The

Legendary Howard Marks, March 26. An Acoustic Evening with Ian Hunter, March 30. Richard Herring - Talking Cock, Apr 12-13. Hamlet (dance drama), May 15-24.

Camden People's Theatre, 58-60 Hampstead Rd (cpttheatre.co.uk): See web.

Dominion Theatre, 269 Tottenham Court Rd (dominiontheatre.co.uk): We Will Rock You, ongoing. West End Eurovision? May 23, 11.30pm.

London Palladium, Argyll St (the-london-palladium.com): A Chorus Line, ongoing. John Cooper Clarke, June 9.

RADA, Malet St, opposite Birkbeck College (rada.org): **Gielgud Theatre**: Mother Teresa is Dead, March 12-23.

GBS Theatre: Yerma, March 13-23. Jerwood Vanbrugh Theatre: All's Well That Ends Well, March 14-23.

Rada Studios, 16 Chenies Street: BBC Ticket office (bbc.co.uk/shows).

PUB QUIZZES

The Albany, 240 Great Portland St: Every Tuesday.

One Tun, 58 Goodge Street: Every Tuesday, 8pm.

Prince of Wales Feathers, 8 Warren St: Every Monday, 7pm.

KARAOKE

TCR Bar, 182 Tottenham Court Rd: Live mike for singers to live backing band, Thursdays, 7pm.

One Tun, 58 Goodge St: Last Saturday of month.

EXHIBITIONS

British Museum, Great Russell St (britishmuseum.org): In Search of Classical Greece, until Apr 28. Ice Age art, until May 26. Pompeii and Herculaneum, March 28 to Sept 29. Social Fabric, African Textiles today, until Apr 21. Sowe mask, spirit of Sierra Leone, until Apr 28.

UCL (ucl.ac.uk)

Art Museum, Wilkins Building, Gower St: Plastered, sculptures of John Flaxman, until Apr 19.

Main Library, Wilkins Building, Gower St: Flaxman and His Circle, all year.

Octagon Gallery, Wilkins Building, Gower St: Model Translations, until Apr 30.

Wellcome Library, 183 Euston Road (wellcomecollection.org): See web.

TALKS

UCL (ucl.ac.uk/events)

Chadwick Lecture Theatre, Gower St: Soviet Jewry and Bogdan Khmel'nitsky, March 20, 6.45 pm.

Darwin Theatre, Gower St, entrance in Malet Place: Lunch hour lectures (1.15-1.55 pm): Stuff Matters, changes to the material world, March 12. Cigarettes, the most successful product ever, March 14.

Grant Museum of Zoology, 21 University St: Darwin in London, March 20, 6pm.

Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre, Wilkins Building, Gower St: Identity through difference, Rabbinic Judaism confronts Christian Narrative, March 14, 7pm. The US Deficit Habit, April 13, 6.30 pm.

Petrie Museum, Malet St: Timekeeper in Residence, March 21, and 28, 6-8pm.

OTHER EVENTS

Grant Museum of Zoology, 21 University St (ucl.ac.uk): Fossil Forage, keep any fossils you find in a bucket of dirt, March 16, and 23, 1-5 pm.

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