

# FitzroviaNews



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

Issue 131 Winter 2013

## UCLH unveils new plans for workhouse and Odeon sites

By News Reporters

Plans for redevelopment of two large sites in Fitzrovia have drawn criticism from campaigners. University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (UCLH) in a flurry of activity over the autumn have announced outline proposals for the former Strand Union Workhouse site in Cleveland Street and the former Odeon cinema site on the corner of Tottenham Court Road and Grafton Way.

UCLH will this winter submit plans to Camden Council to build a mix of private and social housing on the former workhouse site which is currently occupied by property guardians and used as welfare offices for a nearby construction site. The proposals include demolishing all the non-listed parts of the site.

Dr Ruth Richardson, the Cambridge historian who led a high-profile campaign to get the former workhouse listed, has attacked the proposals as being unsuitable on a site of this historical importance.



Poor deal for housing and heritage. UCLH's plans to demolish the Victorian buildings and redevelop around the Grade II listed former Strand Union Workhouse building on Cleveland Street. The proposals have been criticised by heritage campaigners and those who argue there needs to be more affordable housing on the site. Picture: UCLH.

"Dead from the Strand parishes are buried deep in the ground around the Workhouse and there are several good solid Victorian buildings, including the Master's House and the Receiving Wards, on each side of the listed building. At the back, there are two splendid Nightingale Wards which are unique in London for being attached to an eighteenth century poorhouse.

"The owners of the site have recently put forward plans which envisage the destruction of everything but the listed building. A high-rise apartment block will occupy the burial ground and glitzy buildings are planned to flank the most famous Workhouse in the world, which will be broken up internally for expensive flats.

"I asked a man who said he was the architect if his buildings would last as long as those already standing there have done – yet, for some reason, he seemed unable to enunciate a reply," writes Richardson on [SpitalfieldsLife.com](http://SpitalfieldsLife.com)

The development plans also fall short of the amount of socially-rented housing that should be included on the site say local campaign groups the Charlotte Street Association and the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association.

As previously reported (FN 130 September 2013) UCLH made two attempts to wriggle out of its section 106 obligation to provide affordable housing on the site and the penalty clause that allows Camden Council to buy the site

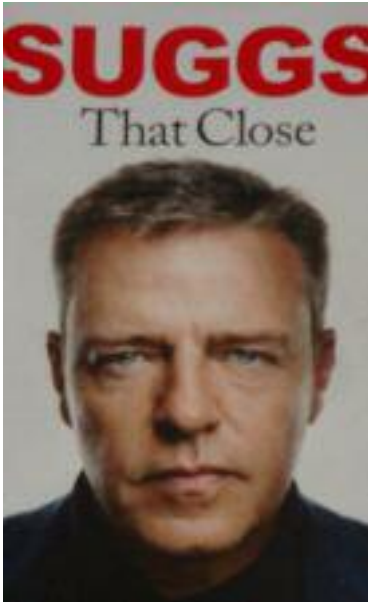
for £1 if the obligation is not met.

Camden Council refused both the applications to renegotiate the section 106 agreement to provide housing. But the s106 agreement stated that there should be at least 44 social housing units on the workhouse site, plus a contribution of units commensurate with planning policy.

However, UCLH's proposals only include 41 socially-rented units.

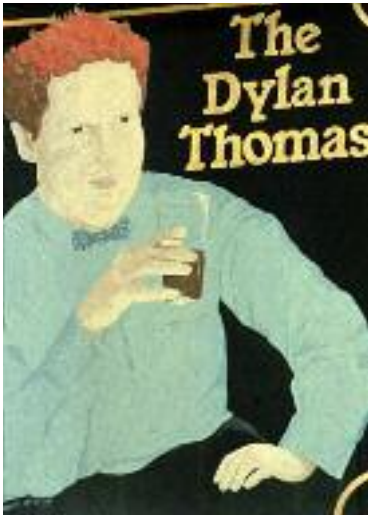
Plans by UCLH to build a new cancer treatment centre on the Odeon site have also drawn criticism. The public exhibition held in the autumn did not show enough detail and a very large building is planned with no open

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### Madness in Tottenham Court Road

See page 19



### Infamous poet celebrated

See pages 12-13



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# Letters, emails and comment

Write to letters@fitzrovia.org.uk or post to Fitzrovia News, Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association, 39 Tottenham Street, London W1T 4RX

## Boris's plan for out-of-hours deliveries will be a nightmare for residents

I noticed a couple of weeks ago that in the *Metro* newspaper Transport for London had a page of their news. At the top was the news that Boris Johnson and TfL are aiming to lift the restrictions on out-of-hours deliveries.

This is the successful outcome of much lobbying by the road freight lobby over the last few years. While they clearly aim to enable HGVs to come into central London after 11pm, through the night, it looks as if it will include allowing the usual daytime and evening deliveries by vehicles of all sizes to be carried out after 11pm.

There have been a few trials of late night deliveries already, some before the Olympics and during the Olympics period. Boris Johnson has declared the latter to be a great success, but for very many residents it was a nightmare, with vans of all sizes arriving under their windows at all hours after midnight, waking them up and keeping them awake during long noisy deliveries.

A Code of Practice was devised for quieter deliveries, but in reality even if it was kept to, it made little difference. The proposal includes allowing construction vehicles to deliver after 11pm as well.

Anyone who lives, as I and my neighbours have been, between several long-term building sites will dread having huge materials and cement deliveries close to their homes throughout the wee hours.

We already have a high number of extremely noisy private waste and recycling collections rat-running through the West End residential roads and grinding away under people's windows late at night, diesel powered street cleaning machinery up and down all night long, Ferrari's and similar upmarket cars with ear-splitting souped-up exhausts driving round and round all night, and pedicabs with full-volume music echoing down side streets until 3am and later.

Boris Johnson and TfL are completely disregarding the fact that people live in central London, and that people do need to get a good night's sleep.

It is time for residents and the groups that represent them to stand up for residential 'amenity', for adults and children to be able to have a peaceful night's sleep.

Not only should the out-of-hours deliveries restriction remain in place, but the time after which they are not allowed should be brought back to the earlier time of 9pm.

Noise levels in central London are already at or above the levels at which human health is harmed. Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of disturbed sleep, and adults should have at least an hour or two of quiet time in the evening.

**Vivienne Loesch**  
**Brown Hart Gardens,**  
**Mayfair, W1**

## My client has been championed by esteemed restaurant critics

I am writing on behalf of Village London restaurant group, with regards to the Dining Detective review of Riding House Café in *Fitzrovia News* (Issue 130 Autumn 2013).

My client feels that the aforementioned editorial account is far from being an appropriate representation of the restaurant's offering, and would like to file an official complaint. Much of the copy contains wildly inaccurate observations which would indicate that the writer in question is not qualified to be in a reviewer position.

We would ask whether this journalist has any prior understanding of food and or the restaurant industry. Since opening three years ago, Riding House Café has been championed both by restaurant critics

in national broadsheets and esteemed restaurant guides, and is widely considered to be one of the capital's most highly regarded modern brasseries.

In your publication the Dining Detective repeatedly refers to the cooking as being 'microwaved', and that this is how they 'manage the big crowds', demonstrating a serious lack of understanding of what is offered.

A microwave would never be found in a restaurant of this quality and for your outlet to imply otherwise is unacceptable, misleading to your readers, and insulting to the many people working hard to deliver high quality food.

**Antony P. Rettie**  
**Director, Anteater PR, London**

## Happy memories of Warren Street

My mother, who is now 96 years old, was born and brought up at 33 Warren Street. Her parents, my grandparents, moved into Warren Street between 1901 and 1911 (Census) and all the children, and there were many, were born there.

Mum has many happy memories and talks about so many adventures from those days. Just as World War 2 started they moved to Shepherds Bush, but my grandmother missed Warren Street life and would often return, along with mum.

**Rose Kemp, London**

## Please stop running your engines

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of those with lung problems but everyone else whether they be young or old.

**Name and address supplied**



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## BID installs footfall cameras ahead of Fitzrovia economic report



Pedestrian movements are being monitored and analysed in Tottenham Court Road and Charlotte Street.

### By News Reporters

Pedestrian movements in Fitzrovia are to be monitored, measured and analysed this Christmas, and two new reports looking at the local economy and the impact of Crossrail on visitor numbers will be published, say the Fitzrovia Partnership Business Improvement District.

The Fitzrovia BID, which was set up in August 2012, is installing equipment to monitor pedestrian movements in Tottenham Court Road and Charlotte Street this month. Several locations have been identified as sites for footfall cameras which will track pedestrian flow patterns.

The move comes in the wake of a reported reduction in shoppers visiting Tottenham Court Road and a number of retailers having left the street over the past few years. Although known for its electrical retailers it is these stores that have left, often being replaced by chain sandwich shops. But the furniture stores have also reported declining visitor numbers.

A comprehensive economic report commissioned by the BID will be published in January, and a study on the potential effect of Crossrail on visitor numbers is also due to be published shortly. But the reports are unlikely to have much to say about the quality of life for people living in Fitzrovia.

The Fitzrovia BID say they will install seven footfall cameras: two at the northern end of Tottenham Court Road by University College Hospital and Warren Street Tube Station; two at the southern end of the street, close to the Dominion Theatre; two in the middle near the Heals furnishings store and Whitfield Gardens; and one at the junction of Charlotte Street and Goodge Street, close to what they are now calling the "Food & Drink Quarter".

Retail analysts Springboard will fix the footfall cameras on lighting or CCTV columns and software will allow the BID to collect daily information, create monthly reports on pedestrian movements, and analyse the success of marketing initiatives.

A Fitzrovia Economic report

is due to be published in January. The highlights of the report, say the Fitzrovia BID, will include a number of statistics on the characteristics of the local economy.

Electrical retailers still have a significant presence on Tottenham Court Road but spending is declining, with a trend for shoppers to view products in stores but purchase online from home. The percentage of electrical retailers (9 percent) is far higher than in the West End as a whole (1 percent).

Vacancy rates in the area are 12 percent which is below the UK average of 14.1 percent. The local vacancy rates are however skewed because of high vacancy rates in some streets due to ongoing construction work.

However, the report will also state that those people surveyed expressed a desire to see further independent retailers attracted to Fitzrovia and the surrounding area, rather than chain stores. It is these independents that give Fitzrovia its unique attraction compared to the wider West

continues page 5...

## UCLH plans criticised

### Continued from front page

space on the site. The proposed building would occupy the empty site and involve the demolition of the Rosenheim Building in Huntley Street.

The new five storey building

will be adjacent to the Paramount Court residential block with very little space in between.

The Charlotte Street Association say there should be open space between the new building and Paramount Court.

## Fitzrovia councillor resigns from Westminster Council cabinet post

Remarks made by West End ward councillor Jonathan Glanz on the right wing Conservative Home blog in October were too strong even for the hard-nosed Westminster Council leader Philippa Roe.

Glanz wrote an article titled *Trust funds for social tenants? The true cost of central London council housing* where he described the lives of those living in social housing within "a stone's throw from Oxford Street" as "not entirely dissimilar" to the "Made in Chelsea brigade, the young people portrayed in the ITV [sic] television series who spend their days dining out and sipping champagne on London's King's

Road".

Glanz, a cabinet member for housing, was asked to resign his cabinet post by leader Philippa Roe who told the *Daily Mail*: "We understand that many social housing tenants face significant financial and other pressures and are in no way comparable with those portrayed in 'Made in Chelsea'.

"We celebrate our mixed communities with private property alongside high quality social homes. We are committed to giving people ladders of opportunity through social and affordable housing and by linking them with the employment opportunities available here."

## Boris Johnson's housing policy is feeding a "developers' feast"

### By Angela Lovely

London assembly member Darren Johnson says the Mayor of London is actively encouraging overseas investors to buy up homes in London. In a report published in September he says the Mayor's policies are doing little for ordinary Londoners but everything to feed a "developers' feast".

The Green Party assembly member argues that the Mayor is supporting anything that gets homes built. But the trouble with Boris Johnson's approach is that it is encouraging the building of luxury homes that no ordinary Londoner can afford and the Mayor is not even tracking the sales prices of all the new homes getting built in London's "opportunity areas". To make matters worse, not enough social housing is being built on the back of these luxury developments.

Darren Johnson cites a number of examples of housing developments elsewhere in London, but he could also have included the Fitzroy Place development, the largest building development in the heart of Fitzrovia. Less than 18 percent of the homes built on the site will be classed as affordable, and only around 10 percent of all the flats will be socially-rented, thanks to Westminster City Council's planning committee who unbelievably took at face value the developers' pleas that any more affordable housing would make the development uneconomic. Fitzroy Place was heavily marketed by the owners

Exemplar to overseas investors, as we previously reported.

Then there's Derwent London's Saatchi Block redevelopment which was denied planning permission by Camden Council because of a lack of affordable homes, only to be overturned by Boris Johnson who said 16 affordable homes on Derwent's largest development site was enough.

And the former hospital workers' accommodation at Cleveland Residences were marketed to overseas investors even before the tenants were asked to leave by property developer the Marcus Cooper Group who acquired the flats from UCLH Charity.

Darren Johnson points out that it should be remembered what ordinary Londoners can actually afford:

"Using the definitions normally used by the Government and Mayor, we can say that to be affordable for the average household, house prices shouldn't be higher than £140,000 for a single earner and £170,000 for a couple. Rents for somebody on the minimum wage shouldn't be higher than £73 per week, or £147 per week for a couple."

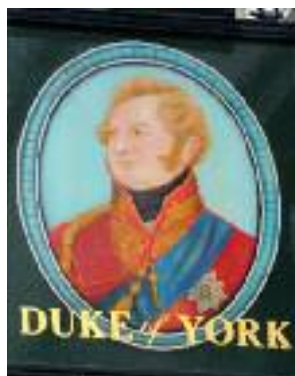
Johnson says the Mayor could call for a housing policy that taxes overseas investors; gives councils, housing associations and co-operatives the money to build affordable homes; and bring in rent controls and extra security of tenure for private tenants.

*Crumbs for Londoners – a report by Darren Johnson.*

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## Great Portland Estates wins approval for its Royal Mail site redevelopment plans

By News Reporters

Westminster City Council has allowed Great Portland Estates to get away with less than 18 percent affordable housing on its proposed mixed-use development in Rathbone Place.

Westminster's planning committee in October passed the plans to create a mix of offices, retail, restaurants and housing on the site around a central open space. The social-rented portion of this will be provided off-site in Mortimer Street and Great Portland Street.

The Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association made a representation to the planning committee expressing its concerns.

"Westminster Council's target for affordable housing is 25 percent. The proportion of affordable housing generated from this development would only be 17.1 percent of the total housing. Furthermore, only 60 percent of these would be for social rent, which means a mere 10 percent (18 units) of the housing generated by this scheme will be for social rent.

"We are also concerned that the off-site social rented housing

will displace existing private-rented housing at the sites in Mortimer Street. This existing housing in Mortimer Street while not 'affordable' is not prime luxury and therefore relatively affordable compared with the amount of prime luxury on offer. In effect the increase in social-rented would be off-set by a decrease in existing, averagely-priced private-rented.

"While we welcome the addition of the social-rented units we are concerned about the loss of small office units at 88 Great Portland Street because of a loss of employment and loss of premises suitable for small businesses. There is already a trend under way to convert small and relatively affordable office space to residential which detracts from the character of the area which currently supports a variety of commercial units and diversity of business sizes."

Great Portland Estates said it plans to start work in 2014 for completion in 2016.

"The development will be a major contributor to the regeneration of the East End of Oxford Street, ahead of Crossrail opening in 2018," they said.

## Mixed outcomes of planning applications and appeals in Camden and Westminster



*A planning inspector dismissed an appeal by an off-shore company who wanted to redevelop a row of buildings in Charlotte Street.*

By News Reporters

There have been several appeals against Camden Council who had refused permission for a number of redevelopments on conservation and planning grounds after concerns were raised by the Charlotte Street Association.

The most significant of these was an appeal made by Charlotte Street Investments (registered in the British Virgin Islands) who wanted to convert a row of buildings in Charlotte Street into private flats, and create a large retail and restaurant unit by knocking through walls

at ground floor and basement to create a larger unit. The planning inspector dismissed this appeal because of loss of small office space.

Both the Charlotte Street Association and the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association attended the appeal in support of Camden Council.

Two other appeals were made by other developers on buildings in Charlotte Street. At 74 Charlotte Street, the inspector allowed the appeal to demolish most of the Georgian building save for the facade, and another is pending. Again, the Charlotte Street Association attended the

appeals in support of Camden.

The restaurant Dabbous has also appealed against a decision by Camden to lift the conditions imposed by a previous planning appeal. These conditions state that no customers should be allowed on the premises after 11.30pm Monday to Saturday and after 10.30pm on Sunday. Written representations were made in support of Camden by both the CSA and FNA as well as by local residents. This decision is still pending.

Despite concerns raised by the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association and a recommendation for refusal by Westminster's planning officers, a planning application to convert offices to 34 private flats at 31-36 Foley Street was allowed at a November committee.

No affordable housing is being provided and a financial contribution of only £1.3m to the Westminster Council's affordable housing fund is conditioned on the granting of the application. Yet the Council's own formula for affordable housing contribution was nearly £7m.

Another condition was a parking fund of £200,000 for residents of the scheme to use in any car park within a 1½ mile radius of the site.

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## Fitzrovia West neighbourhood area application sent to Westminster Council

By News Reporters

A group of residents and business owners on the Westminster side of Fitzrovia have submitted a Neighbourhood Area application to Westminster Council for designation under the Localism Act. The application which was submitted at the end of September by the Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Forum is the first step in the process of creating a community-led framework to guide land development in the area.

This is the third application to include the Westminster part of Fitzrovia in a neighbourhood area application. An application was submitted last year by the Marylebone Forum, and an application was submitted by the Fitzrovia Forum to create a Camden-Westminster cross-boundary neighbourhood area.

The Marylebone Forum application has been challenged as being unsuitable for Fitzrovia, and the cross-boundary application has run into difficulties because Westminster Council has indicated that it would not support it, and some Fitzrovia

residents were also against it as they saw it being dominated by Camden.

Two public meetings have been held by the Fitzrovia West to discuss the various proposals and garner further support for an independent Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Area. Great Titchfield Street resident Wendy Shillam organised the meetings which have been chaired by Griff Rhys Jones who is President of Civic Voice.

Westminster councillors Jonathan Glanz and Glenys Roberts have also attended one of the meetings.

Invitees were told: "Local area residents and business owners formed the Fitzrovia (West) Forum Steering Committee in response to the Marylebone Forum neighbourhood area application. Our consultations have identified broad support for the view that Fitzrovia is distinct from Marylebone (to the west) with different development opportunities and planning issues. We have also identified broad support for the designation of a Fitzrovia (West) neighbourhood



Map (not to scale) shows approximate boundaries of Fitzrovia West and Fitzrovia East Area applications. Source: FitzWest.org from an adapted map with kind permission of FitzroviaLates.co.uk

area and the subsequent formation of a Fitzrovia (West) Forum."

The meetings gave popular support for the Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Area.

More meetings will be held and further information can be obtained by visiting: [fitzwest.org/wordpress](http://fitzwest.org/wordpress)

## What are neighbourhood plans and area action plans?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. Neighbourhood Planning was introduced under the government's Localism Act 2011

A Neighbourhood Plan may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development.

It may deal with a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues or it may focus on one or two issues only.

Although local people lead the creation of the neighbourhood plan it is usual to employ a professional to draw up the plan. Government grants are available to pay for this.

There are alternatives to producing a Neighbourhood Plan. One alternative is to produce an Area Action Plan. These have similar status to neighbourhood plans but are led by the local council rather than local people and are drawn up by council planning officers.

[mycommunityrights.org.uk](http://mycommunityrights.org.uk)

## Fitzrovia Area Action Plan reaches final stages before becoming policy



In April 2013 Camden Council sent the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan to the Government for independent examination. This is the final stage of the plan but some alterations can still be made.

The Area Action Plan refines Camden's borough plans to be more specific to the challenges of managing development in Fitzrovia, particularly those that seek to balance business and institutional needs with those of the residential community.

The Plan will next year form part of the Local Development Framework and will therefore be used when the council makes

decisions on planning applications in Fitzrovia.

The Fitzrovia Area Action Plan was initiated by the Charlotte Street Association and members of other community groups were invited to take part. Camden Council's planning officers led the process and included landowners, institutions and large businesses who wish to develop on sites within Fitzrovia.

An open space study was also carried out along with a number of other studies to support The Plan.

[bitly.com/FitzroviaAAP](http://bitly.com/FitzroviaAAP)

A separate application for a Fitzrovia East Neighbourhood Area is due to be submitted to Camden Council this winter.

Currently Camden and Westminster are consulting on a cross-borough neighbourhood area application. (Readers may have seen signs on lampposts recently.)

In neighbouring Bloomsbury, Marylebone and Soho there are also applications either submitted or pending with Camden and Westminster Councils.

You can find out more about current consultations by visiting:

[westminster.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/](http://westminster.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/)  
[camden.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/](http://camden.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/)

## BID reports on local economy

...Continued from front page 3 End.

Other statistics released ahead of publication state: There are over 4,200 people living within the BID area.

A mix of owner occupancy with 30% of homes owned either outright or with a mortgage, 29% socially rented and 33% privately rented. There are 16,813 workers in the BID area.

A transport report commissioned by the Fitzrovia BID, will reveal potential passenger flows from Tottenham Court Road Crossrail stations; taking recently revised population and employment projections for London to give new projections for Crossrail passenger inflows and outflows.

But what none of this monitoring of pedestrian movements or the reports on visitor numbers will do is assess the impact on the quality of life of people living in Fitzrovia. While the economic report recognises the number of people living in the BID it mostly views them as units of consumption.

While the traditional retail on Tottenham Court Road is in decline there are an increasing amount of bars and restaurants opening in the neighbourhood. It is this shift from a mostly daytime economy to an evening and even a late night entertainment district that will be of concern to those who live here.

What residents may well ask is: where is the report that measures the impact of this food and drink quarter on those living here, and where is the report that investigates the enforcement of Camden Council's planning and licensing policy?

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THE GEORGIAN GROUP



## Floral lawns and rain gardens will improve the environment around Holcroft Court



How greening outside Holcroft Court could improve Great Titchfield Street.

By Denise Julien

Fitzrovia has some areas with very wide pavements where we can create green spaces with floral-lawns and rain-gardens.

A Rain Garden is an urban-greening-alternative that absorbs carbon dioxide and excessive rain. A floral lawn is made up of a patchwork of various plants and weeds such as daisies, red-flowering clover, thyme, chamomile, pennyroyal and Corsican mint. This provides a better habitat for pollinating insects, including bees, than traditional grass. Combining a rain garden with a floral lawn gives the best possible outcome.

Furthermore, this floral lawn is easy and cheap to maintain, requiring to be mowed only five times per year.

Residents of Holcroft Court are near to starting this in Carburton Street, and hope to continue all the way round Clipstone Street and Great Titchfield Street.

Replacing paving with greening not only makes environmental sense, it will also block illegal pavement parking.

Once Carburton Street is completed, I'll be looking to raise money for the rest.

If anyone has a good idea for fund-raising please contact me: denise.julien@btinternet.com

## Christmas hampers for pensioners

Sir Robert McAlpine, the construction company building Fitzroy Place, are sponsoring Christmas hampers for Fitzrovia's pensioners again this year.

If you know of a neighbour or friend who would like to receive one please contact Barb at the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association 020 7580 4576.

## Fitzrovia Festival 2014

Plans for Fitzrovia Festival are being made in readiness for events in 2014. There will be exhibitions, guided walks, and music events at a variety of small venues. The Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association is organising the Festival which was first held in 1973.

Pete Whyatt has been involved with the Festival since the early 1990s. "The people live here, was the theme of the first Fitzrovia Festival and that is as important today as it was back in 1973", he says.

Festival to take place alongside other events like the Great Titchfield Street Festival and the London Festival of Architecture.

festival@fitzrovia.org.uk  
fitzroviafestival.org.uk

## Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association strengthens its housing, welfare and debt advice with new staff member

The Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association (FNA) has employed a new worker to give housing, welfare and debt advice, writes Angela Lovely.

Rumanna Akther who lives in East London has joined Samina Dewan and Barbara Jacobson as part of the advice team. Akther will be working part-time for two days a week. She is a highly qualified advice worker and also works with Westminster Citizens Advice Bureau for three days a week.

The new post is funded by the Cabinet Office and administered by the Big Lottery, which will look at what's known as 'system failure'.

The project is being delivered in partnership with the Migrants Resource Centre, the Zacchaeus 2000 Trust (Z2K) and Westminster Citizens Advice Bureau (WCAB).

The Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association which is a registered charity spends the greater part of its time giving free housing, welfare and debt advice.

Although Fitzrovia is often regarded as being affluent, most residents are living in rented accommodation and are facing increasing housing costs.

Approximately 30 percent of Fitzrovia residents live in social housing and another 30 percent live in private rented accommodation.

It is those in the private rented sector who have experienced the greatest change in their circumstances in recent years due to welfare benefit changes and increasing housing costs.

In early 2014 the FNA will finally move to its new premises at 5A Goodge Place.

The FNA has been at the Neighbourhood Centre at 39 Tottenham Street since 1975. Once the FNA leaves the premises Camden Council will be putting the building on the open market.

The Fitzrovia Trust, a local housing charity, is hoping to purchase the building and convert it into a mix of commercial and socially-rented accommodation.

FNA will continue to provide housing, welfare and debt advice on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to speakers of English, Bengali, Sylheti and Urdu at Goodge Place.

FNA also publishes *Fitzrovia News* and organises the Fitzrovia Festival. See: fitzrovia.org.uk

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## Michelin recognises Fitzrovia eateries in 2014 guide, but the food fight continues



Lima in Rathbone Place is the first Peruvian restaurant to gain a Michelin star. Nine Fitzrovia eateries awarded.

By Angela Lovely

The prestigious Michelin guide to restaurants and hotels has awarded nine Fitzrovia establishments in its 2014 edition. However, food and restaurants arouse passions in the neighbourhood in many ways.

Three restaurants — Dabbous in Whitfield Street, Pied à Terre in Charlotte Street, and Hakkasan in Hanway Place — retained their single Michelin stars. In addition Michelin awarded a new star to Lima in Rathbone Place.

"Lima is the first Peruvian restaurant to gain a star and highlights the increasing popularity of South American cuisine," announced Michelin.

"We have never produced a GB & Ireland guide that provides our readers with such diversity and variety", says Rebecca Burr, Editor of the 2014 guide. "Fantastic B&Bs, wonderful pubs, stylish hotels, world class restaurants and great value eateries — we have them all in our guide."

"The Michelin guide has always reflected what's out there and London in particular has never offered so much choice — there really is something for everyone and for every occasion and there appears to be no end to the number of exciting new restaurant openings. With cuisines and culinary influences from all parts of the globe, it's no surprise that the capital is one of the most exciting cities in the world for food," says Burr.

"This year's selection also sees 27 new Bib Gourmands — the award which recognises those establishments offering good food at affordable prices (the limit being £28 for three courses) and one that is hugely popular with our readers. The guide now has 143 'Bibs,'"

announced Michelin.

Barrica and The Salt Yard both in Goodge Street retained their Bib Gourmand status with new Bibs awarded to Gail's Kitchen in Bayley Street, Honey and Co in Warren Street, and Picture on Great Portland Street. The owners of Picture told us that Michelin reviewers visited them shortly after they opened for the first time in June this year.

Fitzrovia eateries have done pretty well and should be congratulated. But behind the fine dining and rave reviews the restaurant trade and Fitzrovia's residents have not always seen eye to eye.

One couple who were considering living in Fitzrovia approached me and asked what it's like to live here. I first asked them what attracted them to the neighbourhood. They said the district was relatively quiet for somewhere so central, they liked the Georgian and Victorian architecture, and that it had some very attractive restaurants.

I asked them: "Would you like to live close to a restaurant?" They looked at each other before replying with a definite "no". They didn't want to live somewhere where they could be disturbed by taxis and mini-cabs dropping people off and picking them up, and certainly not near the noise and smells of extractor fans, or the crowds that gather on the pavement outside some places.

This is a common complaint and planning applications for change of use from retail to restaurant premises are usually met with strong objections from individual residents and Fitzrovia's community organisations. New applications for alcohol licenses are similarly opposed.

Fitzrovia's restaurants it

seems are simultaneously a good thing and a bad thing, with both restaurateurs and residents expressing frustration with each other. The management of the neighbourhood's conservation areas and listed buildings while helping to keep the built environment attractive has also been a source of frustration and resentment.

A *Fitzrovia News* colleague of mine spoke to an architect who is a resident and has been working in restaurants and designing extraction systems. The architect angrily told him that arguments over conservation were frustrating his and restaurant owners' attempts to comply with environmental health concerns raised by other residents and Camden Council.

If anything, these arguments are likely to continue. Under new planning guidelines premises under 100 square metres can convert from retail to restaurant use without planning permission. And the Fitzrovia Business Improvement District (BID) is actively promoting Fitzrovia — particularly Charlotte Street — as "London's Food and Drink Quarter", with scant regard for the street's conservation or people living there.

At least no Fitzrovia restaurant has been humiliated by losing its Michelin credentials. But the constant pressure on the neighbourhood to accommodate yet more restaurants and extend the opening hours of existing ones is a recipe for continued conflict. And Michelin don't award stars for strife.

*The Michelin Guide Great Britain & Ireland 2014, £15.99. The Michelin Guide London 2014, £11.99 provides extended text on London's restaurants.*

## Opening and closing shops

### Closed



**MicroMend** computer repairs  
3 Tottenham Street  
**Lord's Indian Restaurant,**  
161 Whitfield Street  
**Masa** Afghan restaurant  
55 Goodge Street  
**Rob** menswear 24 Wells Street  
**Hat Studio** 5 Margaret Street  
**Greggs** 19 Goodge Street  
**Neony** jewellery  
48 Goodge Street  
**Nicholas** wines  
25 Charlotte Street

**Kings Canary** hair stylists  
81 Great Titchfield Street  
**42** hairdressers 42 Windmill Street  
**Goodge Street Espresso**  
31b Goodge Street  
**Remedy** wine bar 124 Cleveland Street  
**Café** 139 Whitfield Street  
**Picture** modern British restaurant  
110 Great Portland Street  
**StubHub** ticket shop  
29 Great Portland Street  
**Jonning and Riashi** hairdressers  
Goodge Place



**Drakes Tabanco** sherry bar  
3 Windmill Street  
**Tortilla** Mexican food  
6 Market Place  
**Sainsburys Local**  
1-2 Berners Street  
**Ready2munch** 48 Goodge Street



Clipstone Street petrol Station

### Opened



**Boopshi's Schnitzel and Spritz**  
31 Windmill Street  
**Frenco Manca** Sourdough Pizzas  
98 Tottenham Court Road  
**Tiger** gifts fancy goods homewares  
241-242 Tottenham Court Road,  
**Obika** mozzarella bar  
11-13 Charlotte Street  
**Bibimbap** Korean restaurant  
10 Charlotte Street  
**Nojoun** Lebanese Restaurant and Shisha 55 Goodge Street



**Kamps Bäckerei**  
café German bakery  
154-155 Tottenham Court Road  
**Archipelago** restaurant  
53 Cleveland Street  
(relocated from Whitfield Street)

### Opening soon

**Fan New Trimmings**  
14-18 Great Titchfield Street  
(relocated from Winsley Street)  
**Park Cameras**  
53-54 Rathbone Place  
**West Elm** furnishing homewares  
209 Tottenham Court Road

## Dabbous plans Barnyard

**Ollie Dabbous** the "culinary messiah" chef looks set to open his second restaurant in Fitzrovia. Dabbous Enterprises Ltd made an application to Camden Council in October to make alterations to a restaurant at 18 Charlotte Street, currently operating as 'Curryleaf', to accommodate its new Barnyard brand restaurant.

The planning application submitted by Brinkworth Design Ltd on behalf of Dabbous states: "The new tenant Dabbous Enterprises Ltd propose to continue the A3 usage and operate as 'Barnyard', an informal restaurant and bar serving wholesome comfort food in a relaxed and upbeat environment."

Itamar Srulovich and Sarit Packer are the chefs, owners and husband-and-wife team behind **Honey & Co**, a Middle Eastern cafe on Warren Street that was named best newcomer in the 2013 Observer Food Monthly Awards in October.

The chain restaurant **Burger & Lobster** is due to open a branch at 6 Little Portland Street, which was previously the ORA restaurant.



## Searching for memories of the Middlesex Hospital



Khaldoon Ahmed and Zaynab Dena Ziari standing in front of Brian Barnes' depiction of the Middlesex Hospital in a mural. They want to hear about people's stories of the Middlesex Hospital to create a lasting memory

### By News Reporters

Do you have memories of the Middlesex Hospital in Fitzrovia that you'd like to share? A doctor and an architect are working together to collect people's stories and memories of the Middlesex Hospital, which stood on Mortimer Street until it was demolished in 2007.

Khaldoon Ahmed trained as a doctor at the Middlesex from 1994 until 2000 before continuing his career at other hospitals. But it is the Middlesex he has returned to, to piece together people's memories about the hospital that he and many others still hold a fondness for.

Zaynab Dena Ziari from the Architectural Association in Bedford Square never visited the Middlesex but as an architect she is interested in people's relationship with the hospital and their memories of it as a place. "My interest is beyond the building — memories of a place I haven't been to," she says.

Her father is from Iran, but she's never been there. But his memories of the country and how he relates them to her is what interests her.

"My relationship to this place that I have a strong emotional connection to, but no physical connection, has been entirely constructed through stories. And for that reason, storytelling has played a very important part in my life — and has been much more significant for me than 'place'.

"More than anything I am interested in the significance of story-telling in the construction of memory, or what you might

call false memory (in my case), and I continuously question the importance of being situated in a 'place' without a story.

"My interest in the Middlesex Hospital is something akin to that, but the architect in me wonders to what degree the form of the space directly or indirectly affected the people who used it. So I will be curious to know how much of people's memories are tied into how the space actually was," she says.

Ahmed remembers as a trainee "following the doctors through the wards and corridors, the smell of the hospital, the patients sitting with oxygen masks", he says. "The smells and sounds of the old hospital are very different to a modern hospital. Just by walking you'd experience different sounds because some of the floors were wooden. I remember the grand wooden panelling, the chapel, and the Frederick Cayley Robinson's Acts of Mercy paintings which used to hang in the foyer."

Together the two of them want to hear from former staff and patients about their experiences in the hospital to create a collection of lasting memories. The stories that they gather will directly impact the potential outcome of the project.

"Were you a neighbour? Or just a passerby? Whatever your connection is — do you have any stories of memories related to the Middlesex Hospital in Fitzrovia that you would like to share?" they ask.

[themiddlesexhospital.co.uk](http://themiddlesexhospital.co.uk)  
[stories@themiddlesexhospital.co.uk](mailto:stories@themiddlesexhospital.co.uk)

## Nurses celebrate 50 years



By Pete Whyatt

On 11 November 1963 35 young trainees embarked on their nursing careers. Fifty years later they returned to the site of the hospital where they trained.

Known as the "November '63 Set" they spent the first three months of their nursing lives based at Lancaster Gate and bussed to the McDonald Buchanan nursing school in Ogle Street for lectures and basic practical training. They lived at John Astor House in Foley Street for their first year, where they could enjoy the grandeur of the wood-panelling and the on-site swimming pool, but had to adhere to a curfew of being in their rooms by 10pm each night.

For work they had to abide by strict regulations for hair length, skirt length and no make-up or jewellery, but off duty, mini skirts and hot pants had arrived by the mid 60's

It was a rewarding but tough life with long hours and the first pay packet was £7 per month.

In their second year they lived at York House in Eastcastle Street, later moving on to share

Above: the November 1963 set

Right: Tessa, Sheila, Harriet, Madeline and Gill at the November 2013 reunion visiting Fitzroy Place



with other nurses in independent flats.

After the three-year apprenticeship they qualified as State Registered Nurses (SRN). They were encouraged to stay and work on the wards as junior staff nurses with black belts

The trained nurses all went on to receive a certificate from Brigadier Sir Geoffrey Hardy-Roberts (Secretary-Superintendent of Middlesex Hospital, 1946-1967). They were blessed at a service in the hospital chapel.

The group kept in touch with each other and held regular reunions where they returned to Fitzrovia and the hospital. Ten years ago they met at the Boardroom of the Middlesex, but since the Hospital has been

demolished they've had to make do with a walk around the site and reception at the King and Queen in Foley Street.

November 11th 2013 was their 50th anniversary, and 27 out of original 35 came from all over the UK to celebrate. At the Langham Court Hotel on Langham Street (which used to be the Howard De Walden nurses home) 27 former nurses met for a drinks reception and celebratory meal. As the wine flowed so did the memories. "Freshly baked doughnuts for tea. Being measured for uniforms, the utter fear of the first Ward. Days of bed baths, making beds, tinc benz inhalers, flatus tubes and hiding in the sluice were followed by the dread of night duty. and other memories that are probably best left out of print."

Before the reception five of the group (escorted by Bruce Nixon, Sir Robert McAlpine's external relations manager) took a trip around the Fitzroy Place site including entry into the chapel which is being renovated.

## Anti Apartheid Artist Appeal

Does anybody remember an artist who worked in an office at 49-51 Rathbone Street in 1970?

He helped to produce a comic in that year entitled "The Story of Simon and Jane" about the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. It has been acclaimed as "a magnificent piece of pop art" by Ronnie Kasrils, who fought apartheid in exile in Rathbone Street at the time, and wishes to contact him. He describes him as being about 40 at the time (so about 83 now) and was of medium height, slender build, merry brown eyes, high brow, dark curly hair, and possibly Jewish.

If you have any information please pass it to Mike Pentelow, c/o Fitzrovia News, 39 Tottenham Street, London W1T 4RX (email: [news@fitzrovia.org.uk](mailto:news@fitzrovia.org.uk)).



Angela, Margaret, Harriet and Lindy standing on steps outside Middlesex Hospital with fellow nurses in 1965

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## Word from the Streets

By CHARLOTTE STREET and her family



### CHAMPAGNE CHARLIE

My brother Percy was incensed by remarks that council house tenants in the area are living "a champagne life style."

He is one of them and has just had a cap placed on the benefit he can claim for rent, leaving a short-fall, and a further cut from the so called "bedroom tax." That does not leave him much to splash out on bubbly.

The remarks came from Westminster Council's then housing chief, **Jonathan Glanz**, the councillor who represents the West End ward covering south west Fitzrovia.

He bemoaned the council's subsidising of local authority property rents to social housing tenants near Oxford Street who, he claimed, lived the life of "Made in Chelsea" television stars "who spend their days dining out and sipping champagne." What a Charlie, as we used to say.

When he eventually agreed to resign from his housing position, over the offence caused, the corks were popping in Percy's flat. A very cheap sparkling wine, I hasten to add.

Cartoon by Jayne Davis.

### MODEL ANSWER

**Mandy Rice-Davies**, the model involved in the Profumo Scandal of 50 years ago, revealed a little known fact on the radio on November 15. She was treated in Middlesex Hospital at the age of 17 (a year before the scandal) for a drug overdose after her lover **Peter Rachman** had died. It was part of a dramatised account of the affair called "Well, He Would, Wouldn't He?" on Radio 4. The title comes from her famous answer in the trial to the the prosecution statement that **Lord Astor** denied her claim that they'd had sex. "I was not trying to be funny but just stating the obvious," she said.

### NOBBS BADGERED

**David Nobbs**, writer of *Reggie Perrin*, also came up with an amusing anecdote on Radio 4. He was returning from a broadcasters' conference on the tube at Tottenham Court Road station when a passenger addressed him as *David* and

asked how his writing was going. Thinking his fame must have been recognised he gave a brief run down of his latest project. It was only on emerging from the station that he realised he was still wearing his conference badge which read: "David, Writer."

### HAPPY AS LARRY

**Laurence Olivier's** time as a pupil and choir boy in All Saints Church at 7 Margaret Street was briefly mentioned on Radio 4 last month. His latest biography "Olivier" by Philip Ziegler was serialised as the Book of the Week. It marked the 50th anniversary of the National Theatre, of which Olivier was the first director and co-founder. Olivier boarded at All Saints for five years from the age of eight when his acting skills were nurtured. He also got married there at the age of 23.

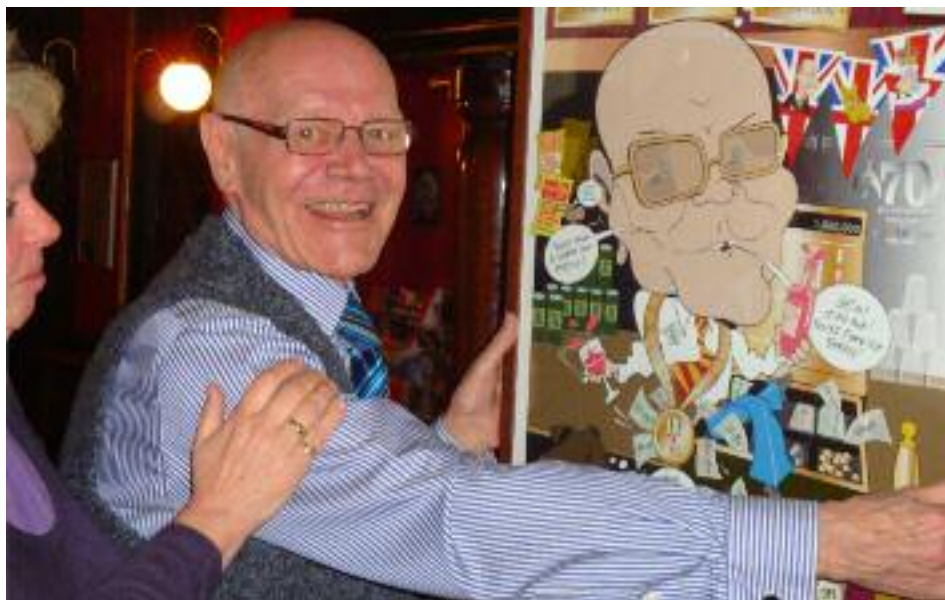
### HENDRIX SMASHING TIME

Legendary guitarist **Jimi Hendrix** was renowned for smashing his guitar in a frenzy on stage. Now a part of his heritage has been smashed by the University of Westminster in Little Titchfield Street.

Back on October 1, 1966 the then unknown Jimi was invited on stage from the audience by **Eric Clapton**, who was performing with Cream there in Portland Hall when it was part of the Regent Street Polytechnic. Jimi's performance was so electrifying that Clapton felt completely upstaged. But he became one of his best friends as he rose to stardom.

This historic event was commemorated by a glass etching of Jimi in the corridor of the building (by then the Polytechnic of Central London), which was seen by my older brother **Mortimer** when he was a student there. Now that has been smashed and thrown out by contractors for University of Westminster carrying out "refurbishments."

Will Jimi be turning in his grave? More likely he would have smashed it to pieces by now.



### ELTON LOOKALIKE

**Johnnie Andrews**, governor of the King's Arms in Great Titchfield Street, was very touched last month to receive a portrait of him by this column's talented illustrator, **Jayne Davis** (left in picture), one of his customers.

There was much amusement when we

quoted an article in our gossip column of exactly 40 years ago by my illustrious predecessor, the late **Alfie Maron**.

Writing in the December 1973 issue of *Tower* he said Johnnie "has often been chased and almost manhandled because fans mistake him for the musical personality **Elton John**."

### FOLK HERO

Good to see folk singer **Peggy Seeger** performing at the King & Queen in October. She introduced one song by saying it contained one line which was particularly resonant to her. When my younger brother **Warren** asked her afterwards which one it was, she rather flummoxed him by asking which one he thought it was. As it was the first time he had heard it he could not remember a single word of the lyric.

### BLUE MURDER

Newman Street could soon be getting two blue plaques. An article in the latest issue of *Camden History Journal* reveals that **Jerome K**



### WRESTLING BEAR

**Jimmy Chipperfield** of circus fame had an unusual visitor when he was a patient at Middlesex Hospital in 1938. It was his Siberian wrestling bear, **Bruni**, who had pined so much for his missing master that a visit was arranged.

This picture, plus another of the massive bear emerging from a taxi in Mortimer Street, are part of a fascinating new exhibition in University College Hospital at 235 Euston Road. It is called the Heritage Trail and is situated on four floors at the podium (up until now this and other treasures from the rich past of the area's two historic hospitals have been hidden in the basement of the new hospital).

It is run by UCLH archivist **Annie Lindsay**, who told me: "Do encourage your readers to visit the exhibition, they are most welcome. If they have any questions they can contact me at: [annie.lindsay@uclh.nhs.uk](mailto:annie.lindsay@uclh.nhs.uk) or on the phone 020 73447 7717." I can certainly recommend a visit, and thanks **Annie** for letting us reproduce the photograph free of charge. **Jimmy Chipperfield**, by the way, became a

fighter pilot in the war a couple of years after leaving the hospital. But he managed to keep in touch with **Bruni**, as his RAF Weathersfield base was used to house the circus animals! After the war he became manager of the circus, whose earlier animal trainer, his ancestor also called **Jimmy Chipperfield**, had been born in Tottenham Court Road in 1846.

### GIANT GRIZZLY

Talking of bears, the giant brown grizzly (stuffed) in Tottenham Court Road was there until 1965, not the 1940s as I implied in a recent column. So let's hope there is more chance of someone remembering the seven-foot high beast and what happened to it... as it is believed to be worth at least £10,000. It was outside **Catesby's** furniture store at 64-67 Tottenham Court Road, which had been there from 1886.

### MAORI COOKING

If you are contemplating cooking in traditional Maori style with earth... don't get it from Regent's Park. The Maori friend of one of our contributors decided to cook in the traditional way when visiting (although on a gas stove rather than in a pit). He heated some stones in a wok, put pork ribs, chicken and sweet potatoes on the hot stones, then put the earth wrapped in a tea towel over it like a big flattish pudding.

The result was delicious... but only after he rejected the Regent's Park earth and got it instead from Epping Forest.

**Jerome** (author of *Three Men in A Boat*) lived at 36 Newman Street in the 1880s. It was written by my lordly friend **Professor Richard Ekins**, from neighbouring Bloomsbury, and actress **Debbie Radcliffe**. On page 19 of this paper you will read that the artist **Richard Dadd** lived at 71 Newman Street in 1843 when he killed his father.

### CELEB WATCH

**Michael Portillo** was spotted by my sister **Margaret** in Charlotte Street walking towards Oxford Street. "He looked calm, dapper and very smart," she told me. Not at all like a "sad man on the train" as he is unkindly belittled by his fellow "This Week" television host, **Andrew Neil** (who makes **Margaret's** blood boil).

*Charlotte Street*





Friends and Family of Bertie Dinnage gathered in Whitfield Gardens on Saturday 30 November to help plant a tree in his memory. Camden Council supplied a seven-year-old Paper Bark Maple paid for by friends and relatives to be planted in the gardens.

Dinnage for many years led the Friends of Open Spaces Fitzrovia community group. He was also a leading member of the Charlotte Street Association and cared passionately about public open spaces and greenery in Fitzrovia.

Max Neufeld of the Charlotte Street Association led a tribute at the planting ceremony while Dinnage's widow Keiko was first to place soil at the roots of the tree.

Dinnage who for much of his working life worked at the London Borough of Haringey architects' department had the unusual distinction of having six mentions in the Pevsner guide for London. His design for a library is influenced by the Scandinavian architect Alvar Aalto — a humane modern architecture influenced by landscape and natural materials.

Bertie Dinnage died after a short illness on 16 February 2011.



Plumbing for charity. MPL Maintenance and Plumbing Supplies had a busy coffee morning at their shop in Goodge Place in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. Across the UK on Friday 27 September people took part in what is dubbed the "world's biggest coffee morning".



Euston Shuffle. Long-established Fitzrovia cafe Double J's re-opened for business at 333 Euston Road. Having closed the shop on Charlotte Street at the end of last year it's been a long wait for the regular customers to again sit down for one of their famous breakfasts. Owner Mustafa (centre) is joined by Lisa and Ioana from the previous shop in Charlotte Street. The cafe is on the site of the Regent Chinese Restaurant which closed earlier this year after more than 20 years of trading.



Pictured: Staff of LDG visiting the Soup Kitchen at Whitfield Street. LDG estate agents in Foley Street are supporting the Soup Kitchen at the American International Church. Laurence Glynnne, founding partner at LDG, said he was very keen for the business to sponsor the Soup Kitchen both financially and with volunteers. Glynnne told Fitzrovia News: "We are delighted to work with the Soup Kitchen and support the work they do feeding the homeless and needy in central London". LDG are also helping raise awareness of the Soup Kitchen and encouraging their clients to donate. The Soup Kitchen will feature on the cards given out by the company this Christmas. "We hope to raise people's awareness of this very worthy cause", said Glynnne. Photo: Marek Chilicki Gold Lens Photography Ltd.

The Soup Kitchen, founded in 1986, is a resource for the homeless, elderly, lonely and poor in central London, providing free hot meals, clothes, and creating a sense of belonging and community. Serving around 70 people a day from 10am to 12 noon on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, with the Clothes Closet open on alternate Mondays. For more information and to donate, please visit the Soup Kitchen website [www.amchurch.co.uk/soup\\_kitchen.htm](http://www.amchurch.co.uk/soup_kitchen.htm)





The restoration of the Fitzrovia Mural in Whitfield Gardens took a leap forward with a condition survey carried out in November to determine the state of the render and paintwork. This survey is the first step in gaining an accurate cost of the restoration ahead of a grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to pay for part of the restoration. Funding from elsewhere will be essential to the project's success. So far sponsorship has been obtained from Great Portland Estates, Hudsons estate agents, and the Fitzrovia BID is also pledging financial support. The project will provide opportunities to learn about the history of Fitzrovia as well as attend arts workshops, talks and involvement with the restoration itself. If you are interested in learning more about the project or how to get involved please email [fitzrovi mural@gmail.com](mailto:fitzrovi mural@gmail.com) or contact the Fitzrovia Community Centre who are managing the project.



Above: Picture of festive lighting as sent by the Fitzrovia Partnership Business as part of their publicity. "We are delighted that for the first time the famous Tottenham Court Road, Charlotte Street, and Goodge Street area has its own Christmas celebration of lights and trees organised by The Fitzrovia Partnership," said Lee Lyons, BID Manager.

However, an investigation by Fitzrovia News has revealed that the cables and junction boxes attached to the 30 trees have been attached in a way that is possibly damaging to the trees. While the lights are hooked onto the branches with rubber hooks and will be removed in January, the lighting infrastructure which will remain all year round for four years has been attached with 6mm plastic cable "zip-ties" tied tightly around the branches without room for growth. In the daylight the boxes and bunches of excess cables also look unsightly in the mature trees which are mostly in a conservation area. The Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association has asked Camden Council who maintain the trees to check for damage. Camden say its tree officers will carry out an inspection.

In 2009 The Fitzrovia Partnership nailed lights to the trees with a staple gun.

Below: Picture taken by Linus Rees of a London Plane tree in Charlotte Street showing junction box and cables attached with 6mm cable ties.



SNOWY: Cleveland Street last January.

Fitzrovia will not get its fair share of street and pavement gritting this winter according to a local pensioner who rang Fitzrovia News to complain after reading Camden Council's latest guide to its services.

The male octogenarian called our news office to draw our attention to page 17 of Camden's magazine which is delivered to all residents in the borough. In an article entitled "Get ready for winter" it shows a map of the streets Camden will grit. In Fitzrovia, only Tottenham Court Road, Great Russell Street and Gower Street are on Camden's gritting route. Under the map it says "our reduced budget and resources means we may not be able to grit some side roads and footpaths".

So watch your footing this winter.







*Pictured: Front row left to right - Emily Wilden, Jeff Towns from the Dylan Thomas Society, Jamie Spindlove, and Katie Merritt, Director. Back Row left to right - Sarah Dorsett, Roger Sansom, Ceri-Rose Lacombe, Adam Haigh, and Nick Hennegan, Artistic Director. Photograph: Clancy Gebler Davies*

## Play for voices moves Wheatsheaf audience on anniversary of Dylan Thomas death

By Clancy Gebler Davies

The 60th anniversary of Dylan Thomas's death on November 9, 1953 was marked by a production of *Under Milk Wood* held at the Fitzrovia pub where he fell in love at first sight with his wife Caitlin Macnamara.

The Wheatsheaf in Rathbone Place was one of a number of Fitzrovia haunts, including the Fitzroy Tavern, where Thomas drank and it is thought to be in the Wheatsheaf in 1936 that the painter Augustus John introduced Dylan to Caitlin, the hard-drinking chorus girl and the daughter of a poet who he was to marry a year later.

The production was attended by singer/songwriter, author and broadcaster Cerys Matthews and chairman of the Dylan Thomas Society of Great Britain Jeff Towns, who brought a sizeable contingent with him from Swansea.

Brainchild of Maverick Theatre's artistic director Nick Hennegan, the production's cast of six - Emily Wilden, Jamie Spindlove, Sarah Dorsett, Roger Sansom, Ceri-Rose Lacombe and Adam Haigh - were directed by Katie Merritt in a spirited and moving production. Reading from the script in the style of a radio broadcast, the performance had several members moved to tears, especially by the stand-out performance of Emily Wilden as Pretty Polly.

Maverick Theatre's Nick Hennegan had the idea to put on the show whilst running his London Literary Pub Crawl which started earlier this year.

"One of the scenes in the pub crawl is where Dylan meets his wife at the Wheatsheaf" says

Hennegan, "and I knew this big anniversary was coming up. I had this strange kind of feeling that we should make this nod to him by doing *Under Milk Wood* upstairs here, so I went to see if I could get the rights to put it on."

He recruited director Katie Merritt - who recently graduated from the MFA Theatre Directing course at East 15 Acting School - and there was a big response when they put out a call for actors to take part.

"I liked the idea of doing it pretty raw - in the pub without any lights or recorded sound effects, just the human voice," says Hennegan. "It was a very stripped back minimalist production."

He had concerns that they wouldn't pull it off.

"We had very little money and I wasn't sure we'd get an audience," says Hennegan. "But we hit social media pretty hard and the Dylan Thomas Society got to hear about it. They came to the Wheatsheaf directly after they laid a wreath to Dylan Thomas at Poets Corner in Westminster Abbey."

"We sold out most of the performances."

About 25 people came from Swansea with the Dylan Thomas Society of Great Britain.

"Dylan loved Fitzrovia," said chairman Jeff Towns.

"Caitlin was with Augustus John when she met Dylan and I don't think John was best pleased at first, but later he became their patron and gave them money."

BBC Radio 6 DJ Cerys Matthews brought her family along.

"We had to squeeze them all in behind the bar," says

Hennegan. "Cerys sent a text afterwards saying we'd done Dylan proud so it did what we intended it to do."

## Maverick wins theatre award

Stage One, the charitable arm of The Society of London Theatre (SOLT) gave Nick Hennegan a new producers bursary award for his London Literary Pub Crawl - a promenade show that doesn't go near a theatre but was inspired by Nick's work at The Billesley - a Birmingham pub where he created the city's first full time pub theatre.

The guided literary walk features many Fitzrovia pubs.

"I'm incredibly flattered to win this award from SOLT. They make and represent the biggest and best theatre in the world," said Nick. "I also love the fact that a council estate kid from Brum can play with the big boys in London. When I first got to London and sat in the Fitzroy Tavern in Fitzrovia with pictures of Dylan Thomas, George Orwell and others I thought, there must be some stories here. It was a process we'd used to create new work using Birmingham stories. The result was the London Literary Pub Crawl - a promenade theatre production that has been very well received".

Nick set up the Maverick Theatre Company in 1994 with a mission to increase access to the performing arts.

[londonliterarypubcrawl.com](http://londonliterarypubcrawl.com)  
[mavericktheatre.co.uk](http://mavericktheatre.co.uk)

# The poet famed for causing mayhem in the pubs and cafes of Fitzrovia

By MIKE PENTELOW

Prior to meeting Caitlin Macnamara in the Wheatsheaf, Rathbone Street, in 1936 Dylan Thomas had already been barred from the Cafe Royal in Regent Street.

His offence was "scraping his tongue with the menu and presenting the detritus to another diner."

His dining habits were however tolerated in Fitzrovia at the Bertorelli restaurant, 19 Charlotte Street, and the slightly more basic Tony's Cafe, also in Charlotte Street.

He was introduced to artist Augustus John in the Fitzroy Tavern, Charlotte Street, by fellow artist Nina Hamnett in 1936. When Augustus John later walked into the Wheatsheaf with his girl friend Caitlin and met Dylan the couple hit it off.

Dylan and Caitlin spent the next five nights together in the Eiffel Tower hotel, 1 Percy Street, charging the bill to Augustus John much to his chagrin.

Caitlin found Dylan's clothes were stinking and his knowledge of foreplay non-existent. They ate no food throughout the five days, but just drank in the local pubs including the Fitzroy Tavern, where there is now a basement bar named after him.

They arranged to get married, but the first two times they spent the licence fee on drink so had to pull out. They finally made it the third time lucky a year after meeting each other.

In 1941 Dylan was living at 8 Conway Street, when his friend the film director Ivan Moffatt, who lived round the corner at 4 Fitzroy Square, got him a job writing scripts for the Ministry of Information (where he befriended the Soviet spies Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean).

By 1944 Dylan was living in the top floor at 12 Fitzroy Street and, according to Nick Bailey's book on Fitzrovia, "not without some disturbance to other tenants in the house" including composer Elizabeth Lutyens.

After the war he was employed at Broadcasting House, Langham Place, by George Orwell and John Arlott, to recite poetry on air. He liked a glass of Frascati beforehand round the corner in the flat of his friend the artist and writer Michael Ayrton at 4 All Souls Place. On one famous occasion Dylan turned up drunk for the broadcast and read *Ode on St Cecilia's Day* as *Shaint Sheshiliash*.

While writing his own masterpiece *Under Milk Wood*, set in the Welsh village of Llareggub ("bugger all" backwards) he often recited parts in the Wheatsheaf, including passages which were censored from the final version - such as town hall messages about fish declaring war on the area, and the Anti-Christ reaching the district. As reported in *Fitzrovia News* recently he was said to have left his only copy of the play in The George, Great Portland Street, while drunk.

Occasionally he was said to have recklessly drunk in the Marquis of Granby, Rathbone Street, to pick fights with guardsmen who were there to pick up gay men. Just across the road from this pub he was ejected from the Rathbone Arts Club, 28 Rathbone Place. Another pub he frequented was The Stag in New Cavendish Street. Margaret Taylor (wife of AJP) sought him here in search of money he owed her, so Dylan hid behind the bar until she left.

He finally finished *Under Milk Wood* the year before he died, and was on a tour of America giving public readings of it that he collapsed and died after consuming a large amount of whiskey. At the funeral in Wales, fellow poet Louis MacNeice had also been imbibing when, in a confused state, he threw his sandwiches on the coffin in the belief that they were a bunch of daffodils. Strangely, Dylan had once eaten a bunch of daffodils for a bet with another Fitzrovia poet, Roy Campbell.





## His legacy lives on in the pub he was barred from

Dylan Thomas was often ejected from the Fitzroy Tavern for his drunken behaviour. Now he is commemorated in its basement Artists and Writers' Bar (pictured above).

His daughter, Aeronwy, visited the pub every year in her role as president of the Dylan Thomas Society until her untimely death in 2009.

She is pictured right with her brother Llewelyn who frequently stayed in the Tottenham Street flat of Fiona Green from 1994 until his death in 2000.



## Warsaw Concerto composer in Mortimer Street had famous fan

By Edward Kellow

Joyce Grenfell, the celebrated actress and singer, was a frequent visitor to the Mortimer Street flat of Richard Addinsell, the composer who is best known for his 'Warsaw Concerto'.

From the letters she wrote to her mother, it is clear that Grenfell took great pleasure from composing, recording and performing with Addinsell.

"I find him the perfect companion," she wrote in 1943, though she knew Addinsell was not "the least interested in me as a gal".

Grenfell also did a lot of "washing, dusting and generally housemaiding" for Addinsell, getting his rations, and making up beds. In November 1943, Grenfell and Addinsell "tuned in to a programme in praise of D, and his music".

Grenfell wrote to her mother: "One thing that pleased him specially was that the factory at the back of his house had the programme relayed throughout the works!" This is the only clue as to the location of Addinsell's flat in Mortimer Street.

## Festival of music planned for churches and pubs

A Fitzrovia Music Festival is being planned for 2014 which will see performances in local churches, civic buildings, pubs and restaurants.

The concerts, the brainchild of local musician Daniel Bates who lives in Hanson Street, are going to be presented in a new way.

"No stuffy concert halls — so don't worry if you've never been to a concert before. The musicians will take you on the journey with them that will not only give you some of the world's most beautiful music but lead you through the streets of Fitzrovia to learn more of its colourful characters and mysteries," says Bates who promises a music festival with international musical stars from both the classical world and also a wide

range of other world musical styles.

The concerts which will take place over three or four days would be "beneficial to the development of the area culturally" and also "foster a sense of local community and friendship", he says.

The Fitzrovia Music Festival will also be running a full education project funded externally by one of Britain's leading musical charities.

The programme will consist of music workshops in local schools and playgroups based around the artistic characters of Fitzrovia.

It will aim to promote a greater understanding of the local area through the children composing their own music and performing it.

Also they are excited to present the "Concert in your own home" programme, where the elderly and less mobile in our community can sign up to be entertained by a merry band of musicians in the comfort of their front room.

Bates says: "I want it to be first and foremost a community event and would love as much influence and interaction from all members of our community to set it all in motion."

"Whether you have ideas for music, or great stories of the area, or are fabulous at making cakes and tea, your music festival wants your input."

Contact Daniel Bates:  
fitzmusic@hotmail.com



# Yorkshire lass who put Churchill in his place

By BRIAN JARMAN

She's been an actress, a successful businesswoman, a reluctant housewife, and she trained with James Bond. She's hobnobbed with the political elite of Europe, and once refused to talk to Winston Churchill because he was drunk.

But 86-year-old Rosita Simpson, still going strong, doesn't really want to talk about any of it.

"I've spent my whole life

avoiding publicity," she says. "It's false. People don't tell the truth and people don't believe it."

Ros comes from a long line of independent Yorkshire women. She was named after her grandmother, who ran away to America on her 16th birthday to join her young man, of whom the family disapproved.

She returned a few years later with a new scheme for hire

purchase – selling goods from the family business with weekly repayments.

"She was very much of the people," says Ros. "She knew what everyday people working in the mills needed, and what they could afford. She never made the weekly amount more than what they could pay."

Her mother would cycle around the villages collecting the money.

Ros herself left Yorkshire towards the end of the Second World War to come to study at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in Gower Street. She lived in girls' hostels in the area and worked at Lyons Corner House on Oxford Street.

"We used to get searched on the way out for sugar lumps," she says. "Sugar was really scarce in the war."

One of her contemporaries at RADA was Roger Moore, who went on to play James Bond. With her typical Yorkshire bluntness, Ros says, "He couldn't act. He was the laziest person I ever met. But a film director took a shine to him and decided he was going to be a star."

Ros herself was spotted by the BBC radio drama producer Felix Felton, who used to come and teach there.

She started playing the part of Ethel in the BBC's original production of *Just William*, and worked on *Children's Hour*.

Under her maiden name of

Rosita Cussins, she played in weekly rep up and down the country, and in the West End, including the London Palladium.

She didn't like working there because the stage backed directly on to a wall, so if you had to exit one side and enter another, you had to run downstairs, underneath, and up the other side.

"You'd hear all the actors above moving around the stage."

Apart from that, she loved every minute of the actor's life. But it all came to an end when she met and married an older man, Alfred Simpson, who was a mandarin at the Ministry of Supply.

"Young men never appealed to me," says Ros. "I felt like taking their hand and seeing them across the road."

But she didn't take kindly to being a housewife.

"Working was more important to me than being married," she says. "I tried to go back on stage when I came back from honeymoon, but my husband wouldn't take me to rehearsals."

By that time she had gone to live with him and his 15-year-old daughter in Eltham.

"I was never much of a housewife," she says. "I tried. But I was a good stepmother."

She turned her energies instead to acting as a hostess to visiting dignitaries from Europe,

showing their wives around London. But even this she did with her characteristically independent style.

"I didn't want to meet De Gaulle. I was at a function with Winston Churchill but I said I didn't want to speak to him because he was drunk."

Eventually Ros had two sons of her own, bought a Georgian manor house in Kent, and set up various businesses, including some in the Fitzrovia area.

Her son followed in her footsteps, and she worked with him when he set up a chain of movie rental stores, long before the days of video or DVD.

And now she's come back to the area she first came to 70 years ago. She lives in a home in Great Titchfield Street, which she says is lovely. She has family connections to Sergio's restaurant there and opens it up every morning.

Of course it's changed since then. Whole blocks would disappear in bombing raids. She remembers the area clogged up with trucks full of American soldiers.

"They used to shout at us girls in the hostel, 'Want some gum?' We thought they meant glue."

And she thinks the area has changed for the good.

"People are nicer. In the war people were friendly, but they were jealous of what other people had. Now people are freer."



WINSTON CHURCHILL. Getty Images



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# Stranger on a bus

She was sitting near the aisle, her bag and umbrella placed on the seat next to the window. She knew she shouldn't block the seat, but she needed to finish annotating the novel *Black Water* for her seminar that morning; she could hardly do it with her things on her lap. That was why she'd sat towards the back of the top deck – the rows ahead had at least one free seat. She hoped if she kept her head down no one would bother her, but each time the bus stopped, she would glance up to see who got on, instinctively assessing which of the travellers she would mind least. It was quite incredible to think that in a lifetime of journeys by tube and bus you'd probably sit next to at least one murderer, perhaps a handful of rapists, and any number of wife beaters without even knowing it.

She was making a note in the book about The Senator's big teeth, when she heard a throat being cleared and stared up two pillars of navy pinstripe to see a broad-shouldered man standing over her.

He said, 'Do you mind moving up?'

She took in the other vacant seats, meaning for the man to see her annoyance and go elsewhere; he didn't. She shuffled over, and he sat down, his legs falling open so that his left thigh pressed against her. She crossed her legs away from him. How arrogant, she thought. To fancy himself so well endowed as to need to trespass onto her side.

She returned to her novel; her concentration was rattled by the attempt to keep her thigh away from his. Adjusting her umbrella into the crook of her arm and resting her book on her bag, she tried to get back into the story, but her neighbour's phone was trilling every couple of seconds. She glanced at his screen and saw that he was swiping through pictures of provocatively posed women. One of those 'casual sex' apps. She couldn't help gawping. He flashed a look in her direction, catching her before she could shift her gaze, and snapped, 'Didn't anybody tell you it was rude to snoop?'

'Sorry,' she mumbled.

'Well, what type are you?' he said, eyeballing her.

She fidgeted, and turned her body towards the window away from him; she stared at her book, thinking that perhaps she should move. But she could feel him watching her, and if she asked to move, he might get angrier.

He said, 'What's that you're writing then?'

'Nothing.' She tilted the cover of the book so that he couldn't see.

He leaned over, scrutinizing the blurb on the back cover. 'Joyce? That ponce writer, is it? James Joyce?'

'It's Joyce Carol Oates.' She couldn't resist defending; then wished she hadn't.

## A SHORT STORY BY SUNITA SOLIAR

'Never heard of her,' he said, with a sneer. 'So you like to poke around in other people's business, do you?'

'I'm just trying to study,' she said, her gaze locked on her page. She could feel his breath on her cheek. Her umbrella slipped and she clamped it with her left arm, resettling her things and taking the opportunity to close *Black Water*: he was tainting it. She thought about putting it away, but she didn't dare open her bag: it seemed too exposing. She tucked the book down the side of her seat.

He said, 'So you're at university, are you? UCL, is it?'

He must know this route; it pricked her, and her face must have given her away because he said, 'On your way there now?'

The bus pulled to a halt and she grabbed her things to get up. 'It's my stop,' she mumbled.

He put his hand against the seat in front of him. 'This isn't your stop,' he said. 'You've got another two at least. Sit back down.'

She looked around her: most of the passengers wore headphones or were focussed on their phones. She thought she could call out for help, she could say he was harassing her. Then what? Most likely no one would do anything, and she was still

stuck on the inside. She sat back down.

The man grinned. It was a quick, sharp movement, like peeling skin. 'Look,' he said. 'Sorry I flipped. No hard feelings. I'm sure you didn't mean any harm, a pretty girl like you. What's your name?'

She pressed her knees together; her throat felt dry.

'Come on,' he said. 'I'm only being friendly. Tell me your name.'

She didn't want to, but his knee nudged hers. His hand was spread over his thigh and she noticed what a thick, compact hand it was, bright pink, as though pumped up with blood, and she thought how quickly it might spring into a vice.

'Sophie,' she told him.

'Sophie,' he said, as though swilling it. 'That wasn't so hard, was it?'

Did she imagine him flicking her hair with his finger? She flinched and scanned the other passengers. No one seemed the least bit concerned and she almost wondered if she were exaggerating things in her head. The way people carried on in public, looking on, not paying attention to each other, it was easy to think that whatever happened to you wasn't real. She looked out of the window and watched the buildings pass by.

He said, 'I knew you were a nice girl. That's why I sat next to you.' He patted her knee, his fin-



Illustration by Clifford Harper

gers lingering a moment too long. She definitely didn't imagine that. Nor did she imagine him saying, 'I've got an eye for the nice girls.'

She felt sick, and as the bus pulled up at her stop, she froze, wondering if he would let her off, thinking of how to ask confidently because she was sure that she must not sound like she was begging. But then he said, 'This is your stop, isn't it?'

She nodded and got up, clutching her things. He tucked his legs in, giving her only a few inches in which to squeeze past him. She could feel his knees against the backs of her thighs and his eyes on her.

'You have a nice day now,' he said.

She glanced back, almost with gratitude, and mumbled 'You too.' Then she ran down the stairs and off the bus. As it drove away she took a breath, which seemed like her first for several minutes: he had let her go. Hadn't he let her go? Only once the bus was out of sight did she notice that she had left behind her novel. He had her book and he was reading her notes. She drew her hair through her fingers as though wiping away his touch. Or maybe not. Perhaps the book was still wedged down the side of the seat, of no interest to him whatsoever. She couldn't say for sure. You could just never tell.

## Two good but slightly different Spanish eating places

**Drake's Tabanco, 3 Windmill Street; Barrica, 62 Goodge St.**

Tapas were once slices of salty ham or chorizo, served free in a bar with sherry to persuade drinkers they wanted another drink! Then they evolved into cheap snacks and alcohol in an informal atmosphere. In London at least, the tapas bar has come a long way.

Barrica, the very popular tapas bar in Goodge Street now has a sister establishment about three minutes away. Just off Charlotte Street, Drake's Tabanco is a Spanish restaurant related in some managerial way, and in the way it presents itself – indeed I had seen some of the very pleasant and friendly staff I met at Drake's, working at Barrica. Both places have some excellent dishes: here's to the chefs at both places.

Drake's has a bar/tapas area in the front like Barrica; the floor in Drake's is made in interesting old stone blocks and there are sherry vats behind the counter, and then down a few steps there is a comfortable dining room with a charcuterie bar at the very back. I read a review of Drakes in one of the national newspapers by their restaurant critic which praised the food but

By the DINING DETECTIVE



the back of 33 Warren Street  
Warren Mews, under the arch at  
PICTURE PUZZLE ANSWER:

complained rather of the 'choice of sherries' and how their prices added to the final bill (and no doubt his bill was paid by his employer!). The article forgot to mention that there are also very nice Spanish wines and beers available.

And at Drake's there are also proper main courses. The tapas included a small but most excellent portion of cured sardines in a kind of mayonnaise (£5.50) and a large fresh serving of a delicious creamy mackerel pate (£4.50). There were pickled cockles (£3); but a plate of small slices of a special pig, fed only, it is said, on acorns, cost £15. It

was beautiful if the slices were very thin and freshly sliced. But not if part of the presented plate held thicker, possibly pre-cut pieces which were dry and – literally – uneatable. You could share various tapas 'boards': Seafood board for £17.50; Charcuterie Board for £17.50 or Cheese Board for £12.00. I liked the fact that there was a short, clear main-course list. Rolled Lamb Breast and Puy Lentils (£11) was very tasty; there was also Octopus for £18; Hake for £15; Beef Short ribs (£14); and a vegetarian stew of white beans and wild mushrooms (£9.50) The desserts were mostly tarts but there was a scrumptious raisin ice-cream with a liqueur sauce, (very alcoholic) for £5.

At Barrica (where all dishes are tapas) there are small snacks at the bar, almonds, olives etc and then more interesting ones in the diningroom. The Patatas Bravas is £4.50 and I think the best Patatas I have ever had, and a good cauliflower and pear salad is £5.50. £3.50 for one extremely small piece of toast with duck breast seems perhaps a bit ambitious price-wise; there is squid for £6.95. Presa (a small char-grilled sausage of pork shoulder) is £8. But as I say the

dishes in both places are on the whole enjoyable and if you are a regular I guess you work out what you like and what you can afford. On a recent Friday night Barrica was absolutely full, progressively noisier and with queues waiting, whereas Drake's – not yet as well-known – was more relaxed, less full and much less noisy – so a three-minute walk would be worth your while if you're tired of waiting.

I leave the other dining critic to speak of the sherry prices. But in both places – particularly it seems to me at Barrica – wine is expensive and if you and a companion are drinking different wine, by the glass, the cost of your meal can double. To charge, in a tapas bar, over (sometimes hugely well over) £7.50 for a 'large' glass of wine, or nearly £6 for 'small' (this is before 12.5% service charge is added) seems (to me) to defeat the meaning of 'tapas bar.' Rather, these two places are two slightly different, good, Spanish eating houses but, like most of the burgeoning places in Fitzrovia, a couple need to choose their meal very carefully and frugally, or have at least £70 in their pocket.



## Unforgettable characters No 5: NANCY CUNARD

## Aristocrat against racism

By MIKE PENTELOW

Nancy Cunard (1896-1965) was born into a rich shipowning family but rebelled totally against its values, becoming a communist and strong campaigner against the racial discrimination that was rife in her day. She also endured considerable hardship and danger when reporting against the fascists in Spain during the civil war.

She is portrayed in a new book called *Flappers, Six Women of a Dangerous Generation* by Judith Mackrell (Macmillan, £20). The author described her as her favourite of the six when giving a talk to the Sohemian Society in the Wheatsheaf, Rathbone Place recently.

The book describes the prejudice shown against Nancy's black lover, jazz musician Henry Crowder (1890-1955), in Fitzrovia in 1930. On hearing of their relationship Nancy's mother, Lady Maud Cunard, hired private detectives to follow the couple for any evidence that might get Henry arrested and deported.

The couple often stayed in the Eiffel Tower restaurant and hotel at 1 Percy Street, run by the Austrian chef, Rudolf Sutlik, who had been interned during the first world war. Lady Cunard made anonymous phone calls to him threatening him with jail unless he evicted Crowder, which he reluctantly did.

This further alienated Nancy from her family who had already disinherited her because of her liaison with Crowder.

Nancy had first been introduced to the restaurant, a meeting place for bohemian writers and painters, by her friend Iris Tree, a Slade art student at Gower Street (who is another of the six women in the *Flappers* book). Nancy and Iris rented a studio, nicknamed "the Fitz", in Fitzroy Street in 1913, widely described as "squalid." Judith Mackrell, in her talk, supported this, explaining: "There was always blood, vomit, and semen after their parties in the studio, which they did not bother to clean up."

In July 1914 Nancy read the first issue of the "heretical" magazine *Blast*, edited by Vorticist artist and writer Percy Wyndham Lewis from his studio at 4 Percy Street. This included a "Bless" list of approved characters such as artists, music hall singers, and prize fighters, and a "Blast" list of establishment figures to be destroyed, such as conductor Thomas Beecham, the long time lover of Nancy's mother.

It was in the Eiffel Tower that Nancy met many men who became her lovers, including authors such as Samuel Beckett,



Nancy Cunard and Henry Crowder, watercolour by Anthony Wysard, 1928 (National Portrait Gallery).

Michael Arlen, and Aldous Huxley. Sex with the latter she described as "like being crawled over by slugs." His appeal was not redeemed when they were sunbathing once and a dead dog, which macabrely had fallen out of an aeroplane, landed on them.

In about 1919 she rented a room above the Eiffel Tower for the first time and wrote a poem about it called "To the E.T. Restaurant". She described it as her "carnal spiritual home" with its "wits and glamour, strong wines, new foods" and the "strange sounding languages of diverse men."

One of them was the satanist Aleister Crowley who gave her blood poisoning by biting her neck with his filed fangs in a "serpent's kiss."

Her relationship with Henry Crowder lasted from 1928 to 1935, the longest of her life. Being with him, said Judith Mackrell in her talk, "opened her eyes to what it was like being in a disadvantaged position, and informed her sense of natural justice, leading her to take on the culture of oppression." She spent years compiling an 800-

page book anthology of black culture and history, called "Negro", published in 1934 which was a pioneering work of

its time.

From 1933 to 1934 she shared an attic flat in Percy Street with

the left wing poet Edgell Rickwood.

When the fascist army of General Franco rose in armed revolt against the democratically elected Spanish republican government in 1936 Nancy was commissioned by the Associated Negro Press to report from the front line. This she did with great courage, often under fire, until the government was finally defeated in 1939.

She spent most of the second world war back in London, then during the 1950s stayed in several Fitzrovia guest houses and cheap hotels. Part of her rebellion had been to smoke in public (which had been illegal for women until 1908) and she often used the tobacconist at 29 Rathbone Place.

In 1960 she visited Franco's Spain and was promptly thrown out, returning to London in a precarious mental state. She roamed the streets "insulting policemen and making outrageous sexual approaches to strangers." This landed her in jail and then a sanatorium, from which she was released on a course of anti-depressants. When she mixed these with alcohol, for consolation after breaking her thigh in a fall in 1965, the combination drove her to madness.

She fled to Paris where she set fire to her hotel room and then escaped to a taxi driver who, observing her wild expression, took her to the nearest police station. She died two days later in hospital. "She refused to conform to what others wanted of her to the very end," concluded Judith Mackrell.



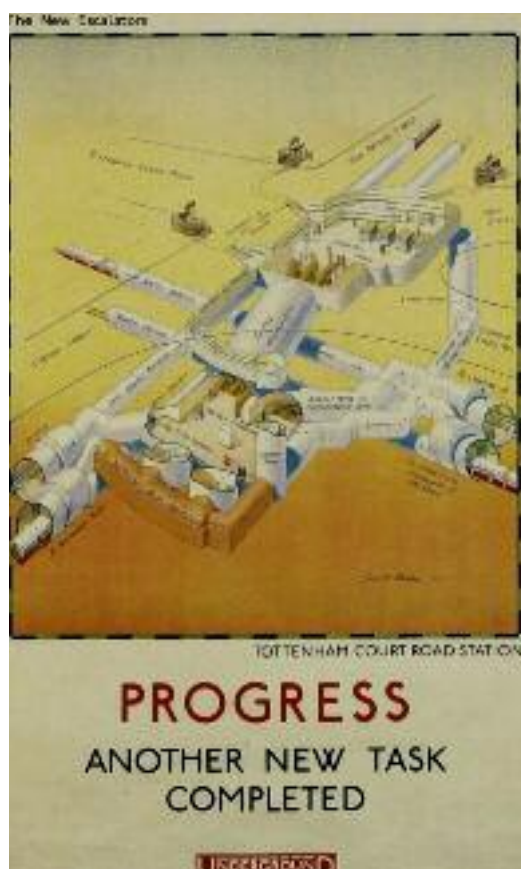




ABOVE: Goodge Street station in 1925 when the Northern Line was called the Hampstead Railway. (Courtesy of Transport for London).

RIGHT: Tottenham Court Road station undergoing a previous reconstruction in 1924 (Courtesy of Transport for London).

The exhibition continues until December 31 at Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre



# Going underground

Where was Tottenham Court Road underground station in 1907? Well on the Northern Line it was where Goodge Street station is now, and what is now Tottenham Court Road was called Oxford Street. But Tottenham Court Road on the Central Line was always called that since it opened in 1900.

Confused? You may well be, because from 1908 to 1909 four of the stations in Fitzrovia had name changes.

All this is chronicled in a free exhibition called "Take the Tube, A History of the Underground Railway in Camden" which is showing until December 31 at Camden Local Studies & Archives Centre at Holborn Library in Theobalds Road.

When the Northern Line opened in 1907 the present Warren Street was called Euston Road (as can still be seen in tiles on the platform walls), and as mentioned Goodge Street was called Tottenham Court Road, and Tottenham Court Road was called Oxford Street. Because of the confusion of the two different Tottenham Court Road stations between the Northern Line and the Central Line (run by two separate companies) the Northern Line stations were renamed in 1908 to their present ones.

To complete the story Euston Square station was called Gower Street from when it opened in 1863 until renamed in 1909; and Great Portland Street was Portland Street when it opened in 1863, became Great Portland Street in 1917, then Great Portland Street & Regent's Park in 1923,



Gower Street station before it was renamed Euston Square in 1909 (Courtesy of Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre).

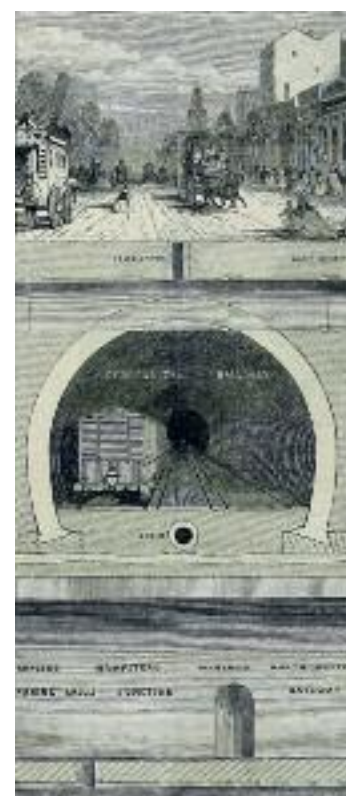
and back to Great Portland Street in 1933.

There are pictures in the exhibition of Goodge Street station in 1925 and 1957, Warren Street station in 1930 and 1939, Tottenham Court Road station in 1914 (and a poster of it from 1924), and Gower Street station in 1863.

The cover of Penny Illustrated Paper in January 1885 reports an explosion in the tunnel between Gower Street and Kings Cross, caused by dynamite in the Chalton Street signal box.

And a page of Illustrated London News of 1864 depicts underground works at the top of Tottenham Court Road by the junction with Euston Road. This was just a year after the first underground line opened from Paddington and Farringdon, the 150th anniversary of which was recently celebrated.

The exhibition also records how General Eisenhower's headquarters for planning the Allied landings of France in June 1944 were in a shelter under Chenies Street and Goodge Street station.



Tunnelling work at the junction of Tottenham Court Road and Euston Road from Illustrated London News of 1864 (Courtesy of Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre).

## Picture puzzle



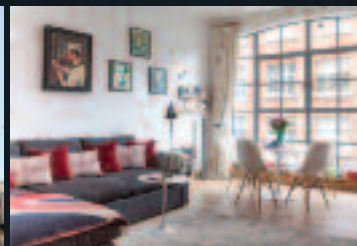
How well do you know Fitzrovia's landscape? Can you identify where the picture above was taken by Eugene McConville? Clue: the wall and door have since been painted black. The answer is below the Dining Detective picture on page 15.

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SUE BLUNDELL continues her series on Secret Families of Fitzrovia

# Kindly ladies who entertained H G Wells in small flat

The author of over 100 books, including *War of the Worlds* and *The History of Mr Polly*, H G Wells was as energetic as a lover as he was as a writer. So it comes as little surprise to learn that some of his amorous activities were conducted within the boundaries of Fitzrovia. The law of averages alone would seem to dictate this.

Today Wells would almost certainly be termed a sex addict. But back in the early years of the 20th century he saw himself as a disciple of the strand of socialism which advocated free love and communal marriage. This was never a dominant strand, and Wells' affairs shocked many of his fellow members of the Fabian Society. In 1909 his relationship with a beautiful and brilliant young Fabian called Amber Reeves had ended in scandal and in the birth of a daughter, Anna-Jane. The 43-year-old Wells set about consoling himself for the loss of Amber in a typically robust but for him relatively discreet fashion.

At the time Wells was living with his wife Jane and their two sons at 17 Church Row, Hampstead. Remarkably he found Hampstead too noisy – the house was close to St John's Church and it hosted numerous funerals – and in his hunt for a writing retreat he'd lighted on the

peaceful streets of Fitzrovia.

From 1909 to 1913 he rented a small flat on Candover Street, in what David Lodge, in his excellent novel about Wells, *A Man of Parts*, calls 'the nondescript area east of Great Portland Street'. It may have been in Belmont House, although so far I haven't been able to verify this. The flat had a kitchenette, a bathroom, and a living-room just large enough to hold a divan bed as well as a desk and a chair.

The divan had multiple uses of course. By all accounts Wells' saintly wife Jane was tolerant of his numerous relationships, stipulating merely that he did his best to keep the gossip at a minimum. Perhaps she was just grateful for a bit of a break. So if Wells was detained in town overnight she can't ever have been in much doubt about the nature of the event that was keeping him there.

Who knows how many women Wells escorted to the narrow divan bed in Candover Street? In *H.G. Wells in Love*, a postscript to his autobiography, Wells writes, 'Among those kindly ladies who honoured me at Candover Street ... there came a very bright little lady ...' whom he nicknamed 'Little e'. This was Elizabeth von Arnim, an engaging and sprightly novelist whose

domineering Prussian husband – referred to as 'The Man of Wrath' in her books – died in 1910. Von Arnim's affair with Wells began in the same year, and lasted until 1913. She was 43 herself at the start of the relationship, far older than Wells' usual targets.

In recent years von Arnim's work has enjoyed a revival of interest, thanks in part to a 2011 episode of *'Downton Abbey'* in which the valet Molesley made the servant Anna a present of Elizabeth and her German Garden. This was von Arnim's first novel, a runaway bestseller published in 1898. She wrote 21 books in all – my personal favourite is *The Caravaners* – and she comes over as a wickedly observant and witty woman. Prolific in more ways than one, she used to complain that her husband Henning only had to sneeze in a room where she was sitting and she immediately got pregnant. She had struggled to support her five children after the collapse of Henning's finances, and was clearly not short of energy and determination herself. So I do hope she enjoyed the afternoons which she spent in the studio flat with the indefatigable Wells, not to mention her forays into the backwater which these days we know as Fitzrovia.



H G Wells about 1908. National Portrait Gallery



Elizabeth von Arnim. Getty Images

## When we had a bookshop...

A Tottenham Court Road bookshop of a century ago pictured on this postcard (right) is now for sale at 40p at Camden Local Studies & Archive Centre, which is above Holborn Library in Theobalds Road.

As can be seen it is of Harold Brown, Bookseller, Books Bought and Book Binding. It was at 79a Tottenham Court Road on the northern corner with Tottenham Street, and you can just make out part of the sign of Wakelin Garage which was at 5 and 7 Tottenham Street in 1900.

Just before this time George Bernard Shaw noted the area had several brothels in the area but not a single bookshop.

The card captions the bookshop as c1900 but it first appears in street directories in 1910.



## Bloomsbury ward councillors' surgeries

6:00 - 7:00pm first Friday of the month at

Fitzrovia Community Centre, Foley Street, W1W 6DN

6:00 - 7:00pm second and fourth Fridays of the month at

Marchmont Community Centre, 62 Marchmont Street, WC1N 1AB

Third Friday of the month is a 'roving surgery'. Get in touch if you would like us to conduct the surgery at your street or building.

**Adam Harrison, Milena Nuti, and Abdul Quadir**

Contact 020 7974 3111 or [adam.harrison@camden.gov.uk](mailto:adam.harrison@camden.gov.uk)

[milena.nuti@camden.gov.uk](mailto:milena.nuti@camden.gov.uk) [abdul.quadir@camden.gov.uk](mailto:abdul.quadir@camden.gov.uk)

## Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association

is moving to new  
premises during  
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# Artist who killed his father subject of two new books

By MIKE PENTELOW

Two books have come out recently about Richard Dadd (1817-1886), the artist who was living at 71 Newman Street when he murdered his father in 1843.

The first is a novel called *The Fairy Vision of Richard Dadd* by Miranda Miller (published by Peter Owen, £10.99).

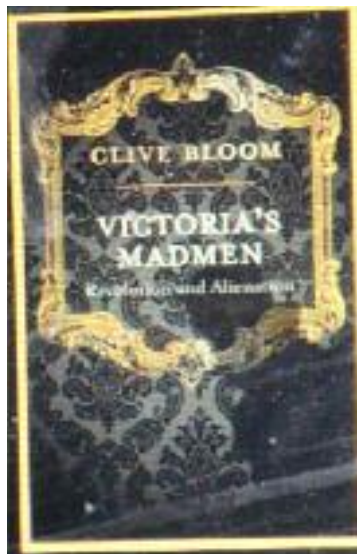
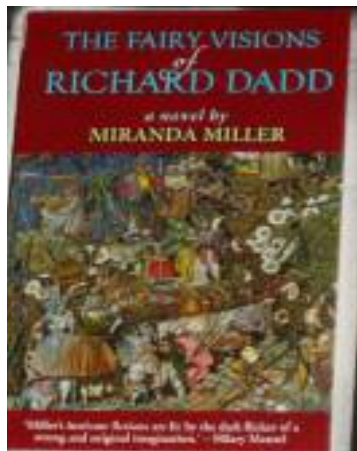
The author gave a talk about him at Camden Local Studies and Archive Centre in Theobalds Road recently, and stated Dadd had shared a studio at 70 Charlotte Street with fellow artists William Powell Frith (1819-1909) and Augustus Egg (1816-1863).

Dadd in fact was a model for Frith's famous painting of *Derby Day*, in which he appears wearing a red fez on the left of the picture. All three artists often got drunk together when they were students at the Sass school at 6 Charlotte Street (now 32 Bloomsbury Street). And all three are now hung in the Tate Gallery.

Dadd's problems started when he went on a year-long trip to the far east in 1842. His landlady at Newman Street (just opposite Newman Passage) became terrified of his odd behaviour on his return, and his doctor said he was very ill and should stay in hospital.

But Dadd's father insisted he was suffering from nothing more than sun stroke and just needed a rest. He took him for a trip into the countryside, which was where he stabbed his father to death with a knife and razor, under the delusion that he was the devil.

Like three of his siblings he



was declared insane and confined to Bedlam (where the Imperial War Museum now is), and moved to Broadmoor in 1863, where he continued painting. One of his paintings *The Fairy Feller's Master-Stroke* is now in the Tate and depicts a detail of his father (a chemist) with a pestle and mortar.

Dadd is also included in a book called *Victoria's Madmen, Revolution and Alienation* by Clive Bloom (published by Palgrave Macmillan, £20).

The author gave a talk on it to the Sohemian Society at the Wheatsheaf in Rathbone Place recently.

He said that Dadd, whom he described as the fairy painter, "became more and more paranoid, believing the devil was in his head." And, concluded Bloom, "his medical problems exemplified the terror of the 1830s and 1840s."

Among those who were outcasts by temperament and choice, he added, was the artist and writer Percy Wyndham Lewis (see Nancy Cunard feature on page 16) whose nihilist magazine *Blast* aimed to "get everything out of the way and regenerate."

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Suggs, *That Close* (published by Quercus, £20). Reviewed by Mike Pentelow

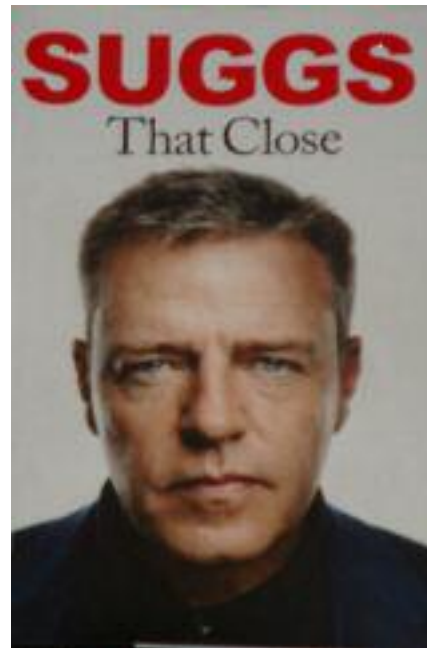
**M**adness singer Suggs reveals how he ended up in Middlesex Hospital after breaking his toe near Gower Street in this pleasingly idiosyncratic autobiography.

He was auditioning for a film at "a dance studio near Gower Street" [surely the Drill Hall at 16 Chenies Street] which had a lot of dance sequences. He started with a "free-form routine, just skipping about and throwing shapes", then went into spinning and starjumping. Told to jump higher and higher he "took one last Valentinoesque leap" and landed awkwardly on his big toe. The adrenalin kept him hobbling through more routines until the session ended. But he ended up in Middlesex Hospital in Mortimer Street with his foot in plaster, having broken his toe.

Suggs was outside the council flat he lived in with his mother at Maples House, 149 Tottenham Court Road when he bumped into a friend who told him about the band that became Madness. He described it as "a brand-spanking-new flat, it had two bedrooms, a bathroom, a fridge, everything, it was like a palace."

The band in those days was called The Invaders, and he became its singer. As a devoted Chelsea fan occasionally he put going to football above rehearsing with the band. One day he saw an advert in *Melody Maker* for a band seeking a "professionally minded singer", with a phone number which he recognised

# Madness in Tottenham Court Road



as his own band's leader. He phoned it with a disguised voice to apply and asked what had happened to the old singer. He was told: "He had an attitude problem, always down the football." After revealing his true identity he was asked to play drums because the drummer had taken his job as singer. This he did for a while before being sacked again. But he got back

into the band as lead singer before long.

They had to change the name because there was already a band called the Invaders. Madness was chosen as the new name, from the title of a single by Prince Buster, which Suggs had heard playing in "a pool hall in Tottenham Court Road" [surely the amusement arcade at number 69].

One of the band's greatest hits "Baggy Trousers" was about a pair of garments he bought in Laurence Corner on the corner of Drummond Street and Hampstead Road, just north of Warren Street station.

After performing at the Jubilee Party at Buckingham Palace in 2012 he was introduced to the Queen and could not resist repeating Tommy Cooper's question to her of decades earlier. This was "Scuse me, ma'am, but are you still into football?" She said, "Not particularly," and he repeated the reply: "Can I have your Cup Final tickets then?" Quick as a flash she said: "That's Tommy Cooper."

## Scandal of empty flats and overcrowding

### 40 years ago

"One in every eight dwellings in the Camden half of Towerland was empty on Census Day 1971 and in the Goodge Place area four out of ten dwellings were unoccupied.

"These alarming figures, which are bound to be worse today, have been compiled from over 1,000 questionnaires that were filled in by householders two years ago. They were released last week.

"At the same time, 48 per cent of all households with more than three people had more than 1.5 persons in each room.

"The survey also reveals that of households renting furnished property 13 per cent did not have an inside lavatory and 19 per cent had neither a bath nor shower.

"Similar figures are yet to be published for the Westminster part of Towerland, but meanwhile a survey, carried out by the Cavendish ward of the Labour Party, shows that there are 200 or more flats lying vacant...

"Much of the blame can be

laid at the feet of the big landlords of the area, Middlesex Hospital, EMI, University College, Joe Levy's Stock Conversion and those faceless others protected by estate agents such as Davis & Co, Berners Street, who carry out their plans for large scale redevelopment."

(*Tower*, December 1973)

### 30 years ago

Westminster Council, under Lady Porter, announced that it was axing the Library in Little Portland Street, and its Urban Aid grant to the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Centre.

Nick Bailey, Chair of the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association, declared: "The FNA refuses to accept that Westminster can just pull the plug on its responsibilities in East Marylebone..."

Gossip columnist Alfie Maron wrote: "I add my horror of the thought of the Little Portland Street Library possibly closing down. The number of pensioners who rely on this comfortable library with its helpful staff will be sadly put to

much inconvenience if this move takes place."

An advert on the back page proclaimed: "Portland Library, Little Portland Street, is YOUR local library. Why not pay it a visit?"

(*Fitzrovia Neighbourhood News*, December 1983)

### 20 years ago

A book celebrating witchcraft was published by a local author. It was called *A Woman's Book of Shadows - Witchcraft: A Celebration*, published by The Women's Press, and written by Elisabeth Brooke. She said she practised "herb craft, astrology and women's mysteries." This was her fourth book to be published.

A BAFTA award for best trailer of the year was won by Electric Pictures of Percy Street. The trailer was for the film *Delicatessen*. The small independent film distributor had been going for eight years and had recently set up its own video label for distributing films.

(*Fitzrovia News*, December 1993)

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# WHAT'S ON AROUND FITZROVIA

Email [news@fitzrovia.org.uk](mailto:news@fitzrovia.org.uk) by February 19 for the March 2013 issue, and put "Listings" in the subject box.



*La Palette Bastille* by Glynn Boyd Harte, showing at the Curwen Gallery. The artist lived in Percy Street for many years.

## ART GALLERIES

### 4 Windmill St

([4windmillstreet.com](http://4windmillstreet.com)): See web.

**Alison Jacques Gallery**, 18 Berners St

([alisonjacquesgallery.com](http://alisonjacquesgallery.com)): Matt Johnson, until Dec 21; Matter & Memory, Jan 16-Feb 15.

**Art First Projects**, 21 Eastcastle St ([artfirst.co.uk](http://artfirst.co.uk)): Simon Morley, Feb 5-March 15.

**Coningsby Gallery / Debut Art**, 30 Tottenham St ([coningsbygalleries.com](http://coningsbygalleries.com)): Jill George, Dec 2-7; Joe Wilson, Jan 13-25; Stephan Walter, Jan 27-Feb 7; Patrick Morgan, Feb 17-March 1.

**Curwen Gallery**, 34 Windmill St ([curwengallery.com](http://curwengallery.com)): Glynn Boyd Harte, Stanley Jones, Dec 5-23; New Year, New Work, Jan 8; Andrew Ingamells, Feb 4; Robin Richmond, March 5.

**England & Co**, 90-92 Great Portland St ([englandgallery.com](http://englandgallery.com)): Chris Kenny, until Dec 7; Artists of the Colony Room, Dec 12-Jan 11.

**Gallery Different**, 14 Percy St ([gallerydifferent.co.uk](http://gallerydifferent.co.uk)): Sex, Drugs and..., until Jan 5.

**Gallery at 94**, 94 Cleveland St ([galleryat94.com](http://galleryat94.com)): Murano Italian Art.

**Gallery Libby Sellers**, 41 Berners St ([libbysellers.com](http://libbysellers.com)): Spaces in Between, until Dec 14; Drawn From, Jan 14.

**Getty Images Gallery**, 46 Eastcastle St ([gettyimagesgallery.com](http://gettyimagesgallery.com)): Winter Sale, until January.

**Hanmi Gallery**, 30 Maple St ([hanmigallery.co.uk](http://hanmigallery.co.uk)): Interim Exhibition: Slice, Dec 7-14.

**Josh Lilley**, 44 Riding House St ([joshlilleygallery.com](http://joshlilleygallery.com)): Peter Linde Busk, until Jan 10.

**Laure Genillard**, 2 Hanway Place ([lgondon.org](http://lgondon.org)): Exploding Utopia, until Dec 21.

**Lazarides Gallery**, 11 Rathbone Place ([lazinc.com](http://lazinc.com)): John Tsombikos (formerly known as Borf), until Dec 21.

**Modern Art**, 6 Fitzroy Square ([modernart.net](http://modernart.net)): Katy Moran, until Dec 20; Yngve Holen, Jan 10-Feb 8; Mark Flood, Feb 20-March 22.

**National Print Gallery**, 56 Maple St ([nationalprintgallery.com](http://nationalprintgallery.com)): See web.

**Paradise Row**, 74 Newman St ([paradiserow.com](http://paradiserow.com)): Johann Arens, Shezad Dawood, Dec 13-Feb 1.

**Pilar Corrias**, 54 Eastcastle St ([pilarcorrias.com](http://pilarcorrias.com)): It Means It Means! until Jan 11; Sabine Moritz, Jan 24-Feb 22; Tala Madani, Feb 28-March 14.

**Rebecca Hossack Gallery** (1), 2a Conway St ([r-h-g.co.uk](http://r-h-g.co.uk)): Silver 25th Anniversary Exhibition, until Dec 24.

**Rebecca Hossack Gallery** (2), 28 Charlotte St ([r-h-g.co.uk](http://r-h-g.co.uk)): David Farrer, until Dec 24; Alasdair Wallace, Jan 9-Feb 1.

**Regina Gallery**, 22 Eastcastle St ([reginagallery.com](http://reginagallery.com)): Alexey Kallima, Dec 10-Jan 31.

**Rook and Raven**, 7 Rathbone Place ([rookandraven.co.uk](http://rookandraven.co.uk)): Noma Bar, Cut The Conflict, until Dec 21.

**Rose Issa Projects**, 82 Great Portland St ([roseissa.com](http://roseissa.com)): Hanieh Delecroix & Keyvan Saber, until Dec 20; Mourad Salem, Jan 15-Feb 14.

**Rosenfeld Porcini**, 37 Rathbone St ([rosenfeldporcini.com](http://rosenfeldporcini.com)): Emmanuel Barcion, until February.

**Richard Saltoun**, 111 Great Titchfield St

([richardsaltoun.com](http://richardsaltoun.com)): Roelof Louw, until Dec 13; Transformer, Aspects of Travesty, Dec 13-Feb 28.

**Store Street Gallery**, 32 Store St ([storestreetgallery.com](http://storestreetgallery.com)): Winter Exhibition, Dec 12-Jan 11.

**T J Boulting**, 59 Riding House St ([tjboulting.com](http://tjboulting.com)): Lion Man, Stephanie Quayle, until Dec 14.

**Woolff Gallery**, 89 Charlotte St ([woolffgallery.co.uk](http://woolffgallery.co.uk)): Valeria Nascimento, until Jan 4.

## LIVE MUSIC

**The Albany**, 240 Great Portland St ([thealbanyw1w.co.uk](http://thealbanyw1w.co.uk)): Ukuleles on Wednesdays.

**All Saints**, Margaret St: Organ recital by Charles Andrews, Jan 26.

**Bolivar Hall**, 54 Grafton Way ([cultura.embavenez-uk.org](http://cultura.embavenez-uk.org)): Harp and Strings in London Dec 6; Eva Thorarinsdottir (violin) and Ben Powell (piano), Dec 13; Grupo Alcabra (Venezuelan traditional ensemble), Dec 14;

**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 [web.mustradclub.co.uk](http://web.mustradclub.co.uk)).

**The 100 Club**, 100 Oxford St ([the100club.co.uk](http://the100club.co.uk)): Northern Soul All-Nighter, Dec 7; Todd Sharpville's Xmas Blues Extravaganza, Dec 12; Stompin' Christmas Party, Dec 17; Soul Party, Dec 18; Northern Soul Xmas Party, Dec 19; Steve Hogarth Christmas Show, Dec 20; Pretty Things Mod Ball, Dec 21.

**UCL Chamber Music Club** ([ucl.ac.uk/chamber-music](http://ucl.ac.uk/chamber-music)): Concerts, Haldane Room, Main Campus, Gower St, Dec 5, 5.30pm; North Cloisters, Wilkins Building, Gower St, Dec 10, 6pm.

## CAROL SERVICES

**All Saints**, Margaret St: Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols with the choir, followed by mince pies and mulled wine, Dec 16, 6pm. Lunchtime Carol Service, also followed by mince pies and mulled wine, Dec 20, 12.30pm.

## THEATRE

**Bloomsbury Theatre**, 15 Gordon St ([thebloomsbury.com](http://thebloomsbury.com)): The Nutcracker, Dec 6-8; Snow Play, Dec 10-23; Comedy Club 4 Kids, Santa Claus, Dec 15 and 22; Laugh Till it Hurts, Jan 22; Festival of the Spoken Nerd, Jan 24-25; Science Show Off (UCL anarchic cabaret), Feb 5, 7.30pm.



BARRY HUMPHRIES: See London Palladium.

**Camden People's Theatre**, 58-60 Hampstead Rd ([cptheatre.co.uk](http://cptheatre.co.uk)):

She Was Probably Not a Robot (surreal comedy from Edinburgh Fringe), Dec 11-13; Tony & Mike, Dec 14-15; The Quant, Dec 16-18.

**Dominion Theatre**, 269 Tottenham Court Rd ([dominiontheatre.co.uk](http://dominiontheatre.co.uk)): We Will Rock You, ongoing.

**London Palladium**, Argyll St ([the-london-palladium.com](http://the-london-palladium.com)): Barry Humphries' Farewell Tour, until Jan 5; I Can't Sing (X Factor Musical) from Feb 27.

**New Diorama Theatre**, 15 Triton St, opposite top of Fitzroy St ([newdiorama.com](http://newdiorama.com)): Gismo Love, Dec 3-21; Nativity in Creakbottom, Dec 23; Hamlet, Jan 4-Feb 22.

## CINEMA/FILM

**Bolivar Hall**, 54 Grafton Way ([cultura.embavenez-uk.org](http://cultura.embavenez-uk.org)): Boliwood (Venezuelan short films festival), Dec 4-5; Sing Your Song (Harry Belafonte), Dec 8, 11am; Diary of Bucaramanga (about Simon Bolivar), Dec 17, 7pm.

**Green Man**, 36 Riding House St: London Animation Club, first Tuesday of month.

**Odeon**, 30 Tottenham Court Rd: Weekly film details from [www.odeon.co.uk](http://www.odeon.co.uk) or 08712 244007.

**SERTUC Film Club**, Congress House, Great Russell St: [sertucevents@tuc.org.uk](mailto:sertucevents@tuc.org.uk) for future screenings.

**UCL J Z Young Theatre**, Anatomy Building, Gower St: When Worlds Collide (1951), Jan 21, 6.30pm. Free.

## 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.

## LIVE COMEDY

**College Arms**, 18 Store St: Mondays at 8pm.

**Fitzroy Tavern**, 16 Charlotte St: Wednesdays at 7.30pm in basement.

**Wheatsheaf**, 25 Rathbone Place: Improvisation on Thursdays, 8.30pm, and stand-up on Saturdays, 7.30pm upstairs.

## PUB QUIZZES

**The Albany**, 240 Great Portland St: Every Tuesday.

**The Court**, 108a Tottenham Court Rd: Sundays 8pm, £100 prize.

**One Tun**, 58 Goodge St: Every Tuesday, 8pm.

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

## EXHIBITIONS

**British Museum**, Great Russell St ([britishmuseum.org](http://britishmuseum.org)): Shunga: sex and pleasure in Japanese art, until Jan 5; Perfect timing: the Mostyn Tompion clock, until Feb 2; Beyond El Dorado: power and gold in ancient Colombia, until March 23; Wise men from the east: Zoroastrian traditions in Persia, until Apr 27.

**Grant Museum of Zoology**, 21 University St ([ucl.ac.uk/museums/zoology](http://ucl.ac.uk/museums/zoology)): The Micrarium: A place for tiny things, from Feb 7; Darwin or Bust, Feb 12-Apr 2; Valentines at the Grant, Feb 14, 6.30-9pm; Killer Carnivores, Feb 17-22.

**Royal Institute of British Architects**, Gallery One, 66 Portland Place ([architecture.com](http://architecture.com)): Medal Student Awards, until Jan 29; Emerging Architecture, until Jan 22.

**UCL Art Museum**, South Cloisters, Wilkins Building, Gower St ([ucl.ac.uk/museums](http://ucl.ac.uk/museums)): Black Bloomsbury (Slade artists and models in history), until Dec 13.

**UCL Main Library**, Wilkins Building, Gower St: Flaxman and his circle, until Dec 31.

**Wellcome Library**, 183 Euston Rd ([wellcomecollection.org](http://wellcomecollection.org)): Foreign Bodies, Common Ground, until Feb 9.

## TALKS

**Sohemian Society**, Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place: Rogues Gallery, by Peter Lewis, Dec 10, 7.30pm, entry £4.

**UCL Darwin Theatre**, Gower Street, entrance in Malet Place ([ucl.ac.uk/events](http://ucl.ac.uk/events)): Lunch hour lectures very Tuesday and Thursday, 1.15-1.55pm.

**UCL Art Museum**, South Cloisters, Wilkins Building, Gower St ([ucl.ac.uk/museums](http://ucl.ac.uk/museums)): Egypt Awakened, Petrie Pops Up, Jan 21, 1pm.

**UCL, A V Hill Lecture Theatre**, Medical Sciences, Gower St: Making Capitalism Fit for Society, Colin Crouch, Will Hutton and others, Jan 30, 5.30pm.

## WALKS

**Wheatsheaf**, 25 Rathbone Place: London Literary Pub Crawl, every Saturday, 5pm. Book online [LondonLiteraryPubCrawl.com](http://LondonLiteraryPubCrawl.com)

**Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association**. Topical guided walk around Fitzrovia from 1.30pm to 3.30pm on Saturday 14 December. Free [fitzroviafestival.org.uk](http://fitzroviafestival.org.uk)

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