

GARAGES...GATES...VIDEOS

SECURITY EXPERIENCE OF the recent Spring Bank Holiday, when the Green Fair was held in Canbury Gardens, has emphasised the urgent need to improve the Albany security. Several residents and car drivers intruded the grounds and had to be repelled by Helen Sandford, Peter Clarke, George Newman and the Janitor, who spent several hours on patrol.

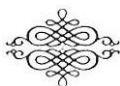
Two trespassers seemed to think the Albany was a urinal, one young man parked his car across two car bays and others tried to use the grounds as a right-of-way to Lower Ham Road and the towpath.

We are now considering the cost and installation of chains across the Albany entranceways on these Bank Holiday occasions and having "private property" signboards erected when unwanted visitors try to use the grounds as a "short cut" to the river area.

We are also investigating the question of fitting deadlocks to the two garden gates. As the gates would have to be locked manually, flat owners would be given a key each.

"Unwanted callers" to the three Courts is another problem. So we are thinking of putting up discreet Perspex signs at the entrances as a deterrent.

It is vital that residents should refer such callers and itinerant salesmen to the Janitor's Lodge and not admit them to the courts. A recent attempted break-in was only just foiled in time at No. 29 York Court by George Newman.



SWIMMING POOL The opening of the swimming pool was delayed a few days because of a faulty thermostat. A few brave bathers have defied the inclement conditions, but most would-be swimmers are waiting for summer to arrive and temperatures to rise before they test the waters. Perhaps the weather will improve in July and August! The pool cover is deteriorating and will need to be replaced next season.

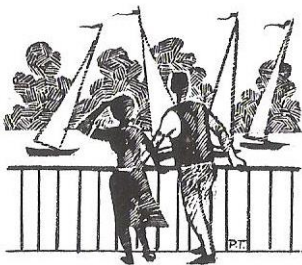
GARDEN PARTY If something like a heatwave should come, be prepared for the quick announcement of the first of our two garden parties. Flexibility is the order of the day.



Chairman Desmond Higgins and Secretary Helen Sandford will consult before trying to give residents a few days' notice, at least. It could be a Saturday OR a Sunday lunchtime. It all depends upon the sun, if any. As usual residents will bring their own drinks and canapes and other tasty titbits.

POOL STOREROOM Flat-owners who keep sunbeds or deckchairs, etc., in the Pool storeroom are given a final reminder that they should label and address their property. The storeroom has become cluttered, British Gas have expressed concern for safety reasons, and it is intended to remove all unwanted or unidentified property after this weekend. Don't delay any longer, please.

DEATHS March, 1991 - Mrs. Thurza Ford (Brunswick)
June, 1991 - Mrs. Josephone Day (formerly of Ulster)



GARDENS The gardens are looking most attractive right now. The Committee thank all those who have worked to achieve the present results.

CARA THE ALBANY's local interests are being closely defended by the Canbury and Riverside Association and in its first year has established itself as a strong voice in Kingston's environmental activities. Perhaps that is not surprising. CARA's hon. secretary is none other than May Bate, The Albany Association's former indefatigable secretary! May tells me that their membership now stands at 221 households - about 450 individuals - plus associate members. Among their activities, which are of vital interest to Albany residents, are:-

CAR PORTS After consideration of lock-up garages, your Committee has moved to the subject of electronically controlled gates at each end of the car ports. The result of the canvass of Albany residents was disappointing and the idea was shelved. Secretary Helen Sandford reports that she has had further support for the "gates" plan and no doubt it will be discussed at our annual general meeting in October.

We are now looking at closed circuit television systems. Helen Sandford, Pam Smith and I visited the Photo Scan headquarters at Sunbury this week to see how the system works and a demonstration camera is to be set up one evening next week to give more idea of its possibilities.

Photo Scan suggest six infra-red cameras, mounted on poles on the car port roofs, operating 24 hours a day with a video screen installed in the Janitor's Lodge. Everyone entering or leaving the car ports would be shown on screen for identification to help the police, if necessary, and it is felt that surveillance notices would be an added deterrent to would-be vandals and thieves.

The estimated cost of a seven-year rental agreement, we are informed, would be £120 a week, plus VAT, which would work out at £1.56 a week per flat spread over the 90 flats. Think about it.



LIGHT SHADES Exterior light shades at the Albany have been replaced or renovated by our "Mr. Fix-it". It is interesting to realise that the cost of D.I.Y. was approximately £38. A quotation from a local firm, involving a specially-made tool, was for £360!

SOIL STACK The soil stack repairs at York Court have been completed. It is reported that there should be a small saving of some £400 on the contractor's total of £17,186.

BIRD NUISANCE Residents are reminded once more of the nuisance created by pigeons and other birds and requested again not to feed them. A few residents have tried to prevent the birds from settling or nesting in their patios by covering their balconies with netting or ribbons, but the effect is not uniformly tidy. The nuisance has reached the stage whereby Judith Jones, the managing agent, has been asked to contact the local Pest Control Officer. So, please, don't feed the birds. It only encourages them.

ALBANY PARK CANOE & SAILING BASE Although the Kingston Council had decided to sell the base, which borders our grounds, for redevelopment, it has now been saved for leisure, youth club and education services. That achievement required determined campaigning and May Bate, who convened and financed the steering committee which launched CARA, was one of the leaders.

NORTH KINGSTON CENTRE The Kingston Council's proposal to sell off the North Kingston Centre for a Sainsbury supermarket has been withdrawn, which will relieve many residents in this area.

CANBURY GARDENS The parking situation around Canbury Gardens is becoming worse. Apparently, many of John Lewis's 1,000 staff leave their cars all day in roads near Canbury Gardens with tail-back effects in the Albany neighbourhood. After approaches to Kingston's Director of Transport, measures to stop heavy goods vehicles jamming the roads have been taken, including new road junction warnings. Lower Ham Road, beyond the barrier, has been renamed Skerne Road.

There is now a zonal lorry ban and, by all accounts, Creed Miles on Lower Ham Road have asked their suppliers to use smaller vehicles, where possible.

Council control schemes for problem areas will include licensed parking for residents, metered parking for visitors, some free areas, yellow lines and strict enforcement by clamping.

You have been warned!

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Janitor	Fred Brazier		546-3807