

## Albany Voices

The Albany residents' newsletter



The Albany –Spring/Summer 1999

# Albany Security

By Jo Davies

*Jo Davies of Brunswick Court is a Policeman who was trained as a Home Office Crime Prevention Officer for the Metropolitan Police. In light of the fact that the new Board of Directors has appointed one with Safety & Security as special responsibility (Karen Steinnes), the Board is signalling an increased attention to these matters. Albany Voices asked Jo of his view of The Albany's security arrangements, and his comments were:*

Whilst North Kingston is still relatively peaceful, one cannot but notice how security is being designed into all the new riverside developments as a special feature. The Albany is now one of the few open sites left leaving us rather exposed. It is a sad fact that once a victim of crime, repeat victimisation is very high.



*The Albany is now one of the few open sites in this area.*

For crime prevention to be effective it must achieve its goals whilst not intruding into the lives of the residents. Many features can be designed into an estate which give clear psychological signals to potential intruders that The Albany residents are taking care of their own and their neighbours' property.

From the moment people enter The Albany, they need to know that they are on private ground. Measures to achieve this would include: Decorative feature signs on the roundabouts stating that The

Albany is private property and how to contact the Janitor. Decorative changes to the texture and colour of the road surface and paving around the entrances. Pillars in matching brick to the walls, with railings going from the pillars to the car ports and boundary wall. Video cameras on the corner of car ports number 1 and 75, directed at the entrances, with additional cameras placed in the carport area (where I have personally seen drug users in their cars, using empty car ports) and one extra camera covering the swimming pool. All cameras recording simultaneously on one recorder around the clock in the Janitor's lodge.

In no uncertain terms these measures will focus the minds of people entering The Albany, that not only are they entering private property, but they are also under surveillance. Most importantly, these measures will make no changes to the daily lives of the residents.

However, if these measures appear insufficient at a later date, electronic gates can be incorporated in the overall design.

I have seen many people enter The Albany at different hours of day and night, changing under my window and then going for a swim or just nosing around. People could be dissuaded from doing this by building a low wall from the boundary wall with a railing on top to the corner of flat 1, Brunswick Court. A small keyed gate should be incorporated to allow access to the path leading to the riverside gate. Similarly, a wall needs to be built at the northern end between number 4 York and the boundary wall, again topped by a railing.

This would stop people making a bee-line to the gardens from Albany Park Road, again focusing the minds of possible intruders.

Moving on to the Court entrances, a replacement of the existing entry phone with a video entry phone possibly incorporating a tradesman button to the Janitor's Lodge. I will be happy to discuss additional individual security features relating to private flats.

Lastly, replacing the roses along the border to Lower Ham Road with a low pyracantha hedge (nice but nasty) would stop late night visitors climbing over the wall.



*Security is now designed into all new riverside developments.*



## Fitness, Fun and Friendship

By Jennifer de Kerckhove

I called in at The Hawker Centre (phone 0181-296 9747), located at the Ham end of Lower Ham Road, to see what they had to interest residents of the Albany, and the answer is almost everything. Originally it was the the Sports and Social Club of British Aerospace but now fully refurbished, the facility has two halls and two smaller rooms. the main hall is ideally suited for larger wedding parties, concerts and can create staging or catwalks for fashion shows.

In the summer months a patio opens out from the main hall onto a river walk. The fully licensed bar, with cable TV, is open to the public every evening and week-end, and offers outside seating by the river.

A fully-fitted gym with the latest in high-tech resistance and cardiovascular equipment from Life Fitness, with cardio-theatre, is at their transitions gym. Here you can tone up in a welcoming, friendly atmosphere. All instructors are fully qualified to ensure you make the most of your membership, which includes free use of in-house Aerobic and Exercise classes.

On Friday afternoons from 2-4 pm you can always get a game of bridge (phone 949 4879), run by and for older people.



The Hawker Centre.

## The 1999 AGM – Batons Change

By Hugo Steinnes

Many residents felt that a new era for The Albany began on 26 February this year, when the three senior directors retired and were all replaced by members of a younger Albany generation. A relaxed and smiling George Newman, our chairman of the last 12 years, led the AGM with the air of a man looking forward to a well deserved break, and in the knowledge that he was handing over to the next generation, an estate in very good repair and with sound economy. As a token of appreciation, Alan Spong gave the retiring Chairman an inscribed silver salver on behalf of thankful residents.

Alan Spong also retired after 12 years as Director and Chairman of the Pool Committee. He was

thanked by Hugo Steinnes who pointed out that Alan's interest in and commitment to the running of the pool was really quite remarkable as he never used the pool himself.

The third person to retire at the AGM was Frank Armstrong, Director and Chairman of the Garden Committee since 1988. To ensure that The Albany's most valuable asset, the Garden, was properly and professionally looked after and developed, Frank established a close working relationship with Professor Lucas of Kew Gardens. This special relationship, along with Frank's keen interest in the garden and his hard work, ensured that – even during a time when major repair on the three Courts meant less money for other Albany activities – our garden is still most beautiful and never fails to impress visitors.



Alan Spong presents retiring Chairman, George Newman, with a silver salver.

Our three new directors, Maureen Abel (20 Ulster – 546 4063), Michael Lewis (1 Ulster – 549 7073) and Karen Steinnes (12 Brunswick – 546 7324), have been given the following areas of responsibility: Maureen Abel (retired Cabin Crew Director, British Airways)

Social Activities; Michael Lewis (retired Chartered Surveyor) Maintenance and (jointly with John Williams) Projects; Karen Steinnes (Manager Public Affairs, The Peabody Trust) Security.



The new Board of Directors. From left to right: Glyn MacAulay (Chairman), Karen Steinnes, Michael Lewis, Maureen Abel, John Williams, Gary Gilmour, Company Secretary, not shown.

## "Albany Voices" interviews Glyn MacAulay, our new Chairman

**AV:** To take on the Chairmanship of the Albany Riverside Company is a great responsibility. What made you accept?

**GM:** The reason I took on the Chairmanship is twofold: Firstly I felt that George Newman was isolated and if the Albany was going to prosper we all have to muck in. Secondly, that with new



people involved, including myself, more ideas would be forthcoming.

**AV:** *We understand you have recently retired. What is your professional background?*

**GM:** I moved into The Albany in 1995 on my retirement from a major firm of Chartered Accountants in the City. During my last five years with the firm, I was the Senior Partner and my specialist area was the accounting and tax matters for members of Lloyds. In my retirement I have a couple of non executive directorships. I am also a Trustee of many Charities and in the remaining time I am enjoying watching cricket, tennis at Wimbledon and in the Winter supporting Kingstonian.

**AV:** *The previous Board concentrated mainly on bringing the three courts of the Albany, built in the first half of the sixties, back into good repair. Where do you and your Board see the main present and future challenges for the Albany?*

**GM:** I would like to see us build on the excellent work that George and his colleagues did by modernising and improving the structure and facilities of the estate. The other big hope I have is that we can develop a greater community spirit, hence Maureen Abel has taken on the specific responsibility for developing social activities.

**AV:** *Any other comment you would like to make?*

**GM:** I am very much hoping that many residents will contribute to the future of The Albany and the way they can do this is by talking to Board Members or the Committee members looking after the Garden and the Pool. Constructive criticism is always welcomed and even more I would like to hear lots of "bright ideas".

## The importance of the AGM

By George Newman

There appears to be some dissent regarding decisions taken at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and I have been asked to write a few words on the voting procedure.

Once a motion has been explained to the members, they are then asked if they have any queries. Following any discussion, the motion is then put to the vote. All present are invited to raise their hands either **For** or **Against** the motion or, if they so wish, **Abstain**.

Each vote is counted and whichever has the majority, be it **For** or **Against**, that is the decision of the members and **must be considered as final**. Members cannot at a later date request an AGM to be reconvened just because they are subsequently dissatisfied about a particular decision.

If a member was unhappy about a motion

proposed, they should, prior to the voting have informed the Chair that they wished to propose an amendment. Both motions would then have been put to the meeting.

## Another Big Development on our Doorstep

By Brenda Lewis

If you are already a member of the Canbury and Riverside Association (CARA – Secretary: John Clark, 48 Albany Park Road), you will know their activities on behalf of everyone living in this area. For instance, the proposed hotel development bordering the Kingston end of Canbury Gardens and multi-storey car park on Skerne Road.

Outline planning permission for a hotel was granted by the Council in September 1996, despite the 1995 drawing by Powergen of a hotel linked by an overhead walkway to a restaurant on the barge dock, where the Richmond Venturer is currently moored. In April 1996, Powergen wrote to the Council saying that the floorspace for the hotel and restaurant should be reduced, to allow for the inclusion of the restaurant floorspace on the main British Gas development site.

Last year, a report from the Policy and Resources Committee stated their resolve to maintaining Canbury Gardens as a park and to confirm the boundaries at present, so that the park remains in its entirety in perpetuity with no part of the park being subject to any agreement, lease or otherwise, of anything but a temporary nature.

The CARA committee has asked the council to confirm these boundaries, including the status of the barge dock, to ensure that any development will not encroach on any part of Canbury Gardens or the river.

## The Thames and Us

By Alan Spong

Many people move to the Albany for the fine view up and down the Thames, the constantly changing scene and the number of different craft. We watch the cruises going both ways on the river, some bedecked with white ribbons for a wedding party and others full of laughing dancing people. Turk Launches can also cope with conferences, office parties, club events etc. and will loan out self drive motor boats. Phone Turks on 0181-546 2434 for all functions and prices.

From April to September their passenger boats cruise between Hampton Court, Kingston and Richmond and you can go ashore at any pick-up



points and rejoin another for the rest of your journey. Now we have a new and wonderful attraction. Over £16 million is being spent on a regeneration project for the Pool of London, including the reconstruction of Tower Pier; the provision of a local hop-on hop-off ferry servicing the piers in the Pool; and the co-ordination of festival events in the area.

Work is well underway with this huge project, much of which is expected to be in place by August. The P.L.A. have organised, with the Corporation of London, the centenary celebrations for Tower Bridge and since then a summer festival. Pedestrian links around the Tower have been much improved, with new walkways, disabled access and a better river front, leaving enough time to inspect the Hays Galleria with its delightful small shops, stalls and cafes.

If you would like to see the historic views and sail under the famous bridges downstream past the Millenium Dome to the Thames Flood Barrier, phone Thames Cruises Ltd., 0171-930 3373 for details and bookings. All these cruises are a world apart, quiet and beautiful.

*For more information about the Thames, see the Albany Handbook pages 24/25. Ed*



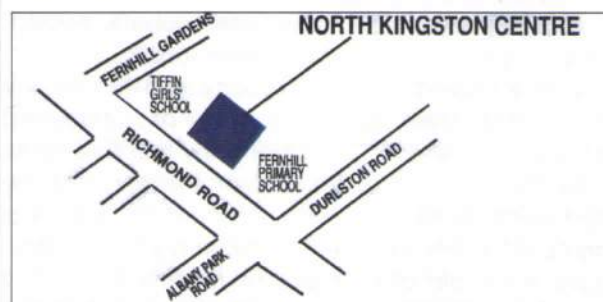
*The Silver Sturgeon*

## Courses at North Kingston Centre

These contain a wide range of part-time courses and classes to suit most needs, during the day, evenings and week-ends. Many Albany residents already enjoy the experience and fun of attending these. Starting times vary, as do prices – with reduction for those over 60. Since the centre is only a few minutes walk (see map), and there is a good car park, if too wet or too dark for you to wish to walk, why not call and discuss your interest. (Tel:547 6700).

Some of the subject covered are: *Art; Art Appreciation, Complementary therapies, (including massage, reflexology and aromatherapy); Business and computer studies; Craft (including floresty, picture framing and stained glass); Dance; Drama; Food and Drink with every conceivable kind of cookery; Health and Fitness; Homes and Gardens including soft*

*furnishing; Languages; Music; Photography and Video as well as Sport and Games.*



They have 10 classes for Bridge for Beginners. These are two hour sessions on Saturdays from 10am to 12 noon. £ 60 for the 10 weeks, next course starts on Sept. 20.

## Labour of Love

By Yvonne Robertson

Not everyone has the privilege of overlooking the pool and garden as advantageously as I, so I should like to give heartfelt thanks on behalf of all residents to: A hard working gardening team, headed by Lesley Sirrell, who have been busying about, clearing, cutting and planting in all areas, and greatly improving the appearance of our garden. We all know how time consuming this is and appreciate the result.

Then, on to the Beef and Brawn Brigade, namely Michael Green and Hugo Steinnes. It has been exhausting watching their hard labour in the pool over days, rather than hours. All this done free, gratis and for nothing (how rare!) on our behalf. Many, many thanks and congratulations including all other helpers whose names I know not.

## The Editor's Plea

At the last AGM, it was decided that the funding of our newsletter, **Albany Voices**, should be taken over by The Albany, and that the current format, developed by myself and Hugo Steinnes, should be adopted following the overwhelming positive response to the publication of the (first) Spring '98 edition.

However, I have heard on the grapevine considerable disappointment with **Albany Voices** and I would beg you to write your problems, signed please, to me. How can we possibly publish what you want when you don't want to tell me what it is.

**Brenda Lewis, 5 Ulster Court, Editor Albany Voices.**