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## IS IT WORKING?

In our first issue we declared that the purpose of BAM Bulletin is to make it easier for residents of this estate to communicate with each other.

So how are things going?

John Benjamin's reminiscences brought back memories for a number of other oldtimers, and a few of you have taken up our invitation to advertise.

The item about the possibility of some children's play equipment in the gardens has brought a few parents together to draw up plans for a play area, and some

readers have come up with suggestions for future articles.

None of these results have required a great deal of work on the part of those involved - just a few phone calls, a meeting or two and a sprinkling of letters.

A number of residents who'd never spoken to each other before have become acquainted as a result of our first issue, so we regard that as progress.

It's a bit like striking a match and watching some kindling crackle away. We haven't set the neighbourhood on fire, but it is good to see it warming up a bit.

## MORE MEMORIES

Our story about John Benjamin's boyhood in Avenue Mansions set a few other people to reminiscing.

Doris Davis, who moved to Marlborough Mansions with her husband Frank in 1943 after the bombing of their home in West End Lane, recalled that in those days only two families on the street owned cars - "one in our block - to the great delight of my children - and the other in in No. 86 where Dr Coldstream lived. How different now!

"Of course in those days everyone had a coal fire and each morning (except Sunday) we used to put our coal scuttles out on to the tradesman lift at the back and the porter used to wind the lift down and go to our coal cellar and then re-wind the lift up for us to take our scuttles off. The same procedure used to be in force with our rubbish. Hard work then for all!

"Of course then by mid-day the porters

used to put on very smart uniforms and were "on tap" if any of us tenants wanted any assistance. These uniforms were given an airing once a year and spread out on the lawn if it was a nice, sunny day.

"There used to be more large trees in the road - at one time the Council removed some of them but spared the one opposite here because it had a bird nest in it!

"We cannot rival the rent John Benjamin paid originally but I do recollect that we paid £260 annually which included Rates!"

Ida and Maurice Raber, who also live in Marlborough Mansions, wrote in with some recollections of a few illustrious neighbours from the past. These included Sir William Coldstream, the famous portrait painter who once lived in number 87 Marlborough Mansions, the Du Maurier family (Daphne, Gerald and their parents), and the well known conductor Sir Adrian Boult.

## TALKING IT OVER

Anyone with questions or issues they would like to discuss with the directors of BAM Estate are welcome to attend a "surgery" on the first Monday of each month.

Since the first surgery was held in December, several people have dropped in for a chat. Board member Peggy Lewis says that at the January surgery there were several enquiries ranging from questions about central heating to the refitting of windows.

### HELP WANTED

Do you have a favourite decorator, plumber, joiner or other contractor you'd like to recommend to your neighbours? One of our readers has suggested that we produce a list of reliable contractors.

If you have someone you think deserves more business please send their name and telephone number to BAM Bulletin.

"We saw four people in the hour that we attended the surgery, and there was one phone call," says Mrs Lewis, who regards the surgeries as a safety valve for people who might otherwise be feeling frustrated about an unsolved problem.

"People know that they can come and talk to members of the Board at these surgeries, and if they can't actually come along to see us they are free to telephone us during the surgery hours," says Mrs Lewis. "People are responding pretty well to the idea and are showing up at the surgeries. The main thing now will be to follow up on the things we discussed."

### BAM BULLETIN

is published quarterly for shareholders and residents of

#### BAM Estate

Submissions for the Spring 1992 issue should be sent to Joanie Phaup at 89 Marlborough Mansions not later than 15 April 1992.

## STAIRS WORTH STARING AT

Does the grille that greets you when you enter the front door of your block make you wish your guests could get in some other way?

Or is there something else about your entrance hall you would like to change?

A little teamwork between you and the other residents on your stair can make a pleasing difference.

One block in Marlborough Mansions recently installed a partition and mirror over the lift grille at a total cost for labour and materials of just £300 - a simple change which greatly improved the appearance of the entrance hall.

Other stairs have been more ambitious in their improvements. But even simple changes can yield satisfying results.

Every stair will have its own approach to this matter, and some may not want to make any improvements. But if you are interested

in making some changes, here is one possible way to go about it:

1) Canvass your neighbours to see if there is support for the idea for making some changes. This does not have to be unanimous, but you do need to get a sense that other people are keen before you go to any further trouble. It's also useful at this stage to get an idea of how much people would like to do. How much money are they willing to spend?

Do they want a complete redecorating project or would they rather take things one step at a time?

2) Come up with a plan and get some estimates

### CURTAINS FOR SALE

Like New!  
Elegant beige satin  
curtains and pelmet  
for reception room  
£500 ONO

Tel: 435 3278  
Buck'ham Mansions

for what it would cost. Then submit your ideas to the estate office care of the Company Secretary. The estate management supports these improvement projects but wants to

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### TUNING IN

Good news for television fans: you can join together with other interested people in your block to organise the installation of a satellite dish.

Any block wanting access to satellite television must submit their plans to the Estate Office as was recently announced in a letter to all shareholders.

Board Chairman Simon Lebor says that by grouping together you will save money and ensure that there is only one dish per block. You will also be protecting yourselves, your neighbours and our buildings from cowboy contractors.

The person to contact if you plan to have a dish installed is Mr W T Kelly in the Estate Office.

ensure that they harmonise with their surroundings and utilise appropriate materials.

3) Submit your plans and your estimates to your neighbours for their input and approval. Get a written commitment from those who say they will contribute to the project. Bill them for half the amount of their contribution.

4) Select your contractor and set a date for the work to be done.

5) Bill your neighbours for the remainder of the work.

6) Enjoy the new look of your entrance.

Not all improvements to entrance halls and stairways need involve residents in fund raising. If your stair is due for redecoration or a new carpet being laid, you could have some influence on the choice of colours and materials by getting in touch with the Estate Office well before the work begins.

## WATER UPDATE

The question of how our water is to be heated is getting closer to a solution, but it will be some time before a firm decision is made.

The 194 questionnaires sent out last year have been answered by 164 of our shareholders, 30 of whom oppose the proposed switch from our present communal system to individual water heating systems for each flat.

Before this plan can go ahead, the law requires that there be no more than 10% of our shareholders opposed to it and at least 75% in favour. The Board is now arranging meetings with those who oppose the change to explain the proposed changes more fully and answer questions about them.

### LOOK NEW CARPET CARE

Professional cleaners will restore and extend the life of your carpets, curtains and upholstery. We have yet to meet the stain we can't remove!

Tel: 081-347-9138

Board chairman Simon Lebor says it is too early to know exactly what the cost of this conversion will be to individual flat owners, but he indicated at the Annual General Meeting in November that the change would bring about a reduction (probably around 15%) in service charges in the long term, once the work is completed.

Editor's note: It would be a pity if we end up with a stalemate on this issue, which grows more urgent every day. If we don't make a decision reasonably soon, the impact on our hot water supplies as well as our pockets could be dire.

### BOARD NOTES:

The Board is looking into the possibility of installing video cameras on our entry phones as an extra security measure. Even with our current system, we can protect ourselves most effectively by finding out the identity of people who ring the bell before letting them in.

\* \* \* \*

A reminder: Check your household insurance policy. Not only should you have third party liability insurance in the event that you negligently allow water from your flat to leak into the flat below you. You should also be insured for water damage from above. Not having this coverage -which is usually quite inexpensive when added onto to your household contents policy - can result in great expense to the estate (paid for by our service charges) as well as stress between neighbours.

\* \* \* \*

The possibility that the Finchley Road might be designated as a Red Route where parking would be prohibited at all times has many residents worried about the already appalling parking problem here. The Board is keeping an eye on this situation and is presently examining some alternative proposals.

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Renovations are underway in a former

porter's flat beneath flats 86-96 Marlborough Mansions. This two bedroom flat will soon be available for rent -one of several on the estate that are being refurbished for this purpose.

#### BABYSITTER:

Stella O'Brien  
Mature Mother  
Tel 071-431-1553

#### ACCOMMODATION WANTED

Young professional woman seeks room with use of a piano. Quiet non-smoker. Phone 794-3128.

#### FIGHTING FESTIVE FLAB?

Too much turkey?  
Too many mince pies?

Take those extra pounds off in the privacy of your own home. Buy my "Tunkuri" exercise bike, as new £40.

Forced to sell!  
Mother has told us both to go!

Call Harriet 435-2664

## IN THE GARDEN

Visitors to the gardens on the east side of Cannon Hill will notice some new paving along what used to be a very worn looking footpath. Plans are being considered to gradually resurface all the garden paths.

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A number of daffodils were planted throughout our gardens last year, so look out for some new blooms this spring.

\* \* \* \*

A group of parents is investigating the possibility of putting some simple play equipment in the gardens for use by young children under adult supervision.

Anyone who would like to be involved in this should contact Nicki Cohen on 794-1869. Comments are welcomed from all residents -parents and non-parents alike. The group would like to find out how many under-5s there are living on the Estate, so if you have kids speak up!

## EDITORIAL:

### WHEN THE BOUGH BREAKS

We can't argue with the recent pruning of our trees, which will prevent roots from damaging our buildings and those of our neighbours. It is essential that we take every precaution we can against subsidence and other hazards caused by tree roots.

But it is also essential that we safeguard the beauty of our gardens. This could be done by replacing any trees that must be removed with species that would coexist with our buildings.

Our annual gardening costs are running at £12,000, and the recent pruning was an extra expense, so the Estate is not equipped for a tree planting programme in the near future. But thought should be given to how we will retain one of our best assets: the greenery.

Anyone for Sponsoring a Tree in 1993? If we plant wisely, that might be an idea worth considering.