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Association celebrates 30th anniversary

IN EARLY January 1983, so the story goes, long-time Netherhall Gardens resident Pat Whitehouse (number 34c) was walking to Waitrose when she bumped into Jean Mercer (no 39). They commented on how few neighbours they knew despite having lived here for many years and Pat suggested forming a neighbourhood association. Once in Waitrose they came upon Isobel McGilvray (33) who liked the idea and on 18 January a group of six, including Mayer Hillman (7a), met at Pat's.

February 9 was the first official meeting of the association, held at the Holy Trinity Church in Finchley Road. There were 21 founder members, of whom many are still active. Pat was elected chair and five sub-committees were formed.

The issues of concern haven't changed much in 30 years – conservation of the original buildings and of the Victorian and Edwardian styles of architecture (the first houses were built in Netherhall



▲ Folk dancing featured at the 1985 summer party in tribute to Cecil Sharp: his blue plaque was unveiled that day.

Gardens in 1887), traffic speed and congestion, parking, crime and good neighbourliness.

But there have been some remarkable achievements in that time.

In September 1985 the association resolved to ask Camden Council to look into closing the junction between Netherhall Way and Netherhall Gardens, which was used as a major 'rat run' between Finchley Road and Fitzjohn's Avenue. It took nearly eight years but in June 1993 Camden's planning committee approved the closure and by the following January the deed was done.

Earlier still, in March 1984, the area was declared a Conservation Area, which, according to the newsletter at the time, would "protect us from unsuitable and shoddy examples of design and alteration". Mayer Hillman, who was

NNA chair from 1987-2000, says this made it much easier to "prevent Camden approving planning applications for unsightly development."

The setting up of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme and the voluntary one-way traffic system at school-run times warrant mention too.

However, one of the most significant achievements, both Mayer and Pat agree, is the undoubted increase in neighbourliness as residents get to know each other through the many local social and cultural events. As well as talks, concerts, wine tastings and garden parties, which still happen on a regular basis, the NNA organised jumble sales, softball games, carol singing, country dancing and even day trips to France (when wine was 60p a bottle!).

Instant emails

Apart from inflation, probably the most significant change has been the degree of internet use, which means almost all members can now be informed of new developments and events at a moment's notice by email. Planning applications can be checked and supported or objected to more easily and by more people, and we can be instantly alerted to criminal incidents or last minute events without the need to print and hand deliver notices.

continued on back page

As part of our 30th anniversary celebrations the NNA in association with Netherhall House invites you to a

Piano Recital

by

Bruno Ferrari

on Saturday, 11 May, at 8pm

Rachmaninov- Preludes op. 23

Chopin -Nocturnes op 9

Albeniz- El Albaicin

Scriabin -Sonata no 4 Op. 30

"A coruscating account...crystalline clarity and expressive breadth. This was in every sense a big performance."

- *International Piano 2012*

Refreshments after the concert

Netherhall House, Nutley Terrace

Tickets £5 at the door; free to children under 18, registered students and disabled.

NNA 30th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 11th March 2013, 12 Maresfield Gardens

7.00pm 30th ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION: drinks and buffet supper

7.45pm GUEST SPEAKER: Victoria Brittain on 'Shadow Lives'

Based on her latest book 'Shadow lives: the forgotten women of the war on terror' journalist and writer Victoria Brittain will talk about the lives of some of the amazing women she has met as a foreign correspondent and while working for the UN

8.20pm AGM overview of 2012, election of officials, questions and any other business

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JUNIOR CORNER

February in Netherhall Gardens



POLICE REPORT

MAKE THE MOST of seeing police on our streets in NW3 because the number of them in our Safer Neighbourhoods Team is about to be slashed from six to two! Not only are we losing two thirds of them, but they are also going to be housed at least 30 minutes walk away. So the time they spend in our streets will be even less.

As part of the changes, Hampstead and West Hampstead police stations will be sold and there is also an intention to close the front desks.

This is being done as part of a London-wide reshuffle which will see police being 'centralised'. Unfortunately for us, the points of centralisation are far away. The Metropolitan Police are unwilling to pay the cost of rental in the higher priced neighbourhoods – despite realising the upside of property prices in the value they will obtain for selling Hampstead police station.

The official comment from MOPAC (the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) is that over the whole of London the number of police will stay broadly the same. But police will now be mostly focused on those areas which have had higher incidences of crime – and, at the moment, that is not NW3. Give it a few months without police though...

Emergencies should continue to be reported by dialling 999, while non-emergency matters can be reported by dialling 101, or go online: <https://online.met.police.uk>

What can we do?

We as residents need to decide what action to take. There has been a distinct lack of leadership from any political side about the threatened loss of police. The Frognal and Fitzjohns Safer Neighbourhoods Panel is making efforts to secure a nearby location where our few remaining SNT officers can be based – potentially as part of a planning order on any redevelopment of the police station site – so that at least their time in our streets is maximised.

But do people think we need to consider private security such as in some roads in St John's Wood?

We certainly need voices and signatures to make ourselves heard. But we must be focused and target the critical point, namely that the police walking the beat are going down by at least two thirds. Please consider if you think this significant enough to get in touch and help.

By all means write to me at keith.lipman@gmail.com but the NNA now has its own email address which will be monitored on a regular basis: enquiries@netherhallneighbours.com

Keith Lipman

ADVERTISEMENTS

HAMPSTEAD-based, long established accountancy practice offers company formations, payroll, secretarial, accounting and taxation services.

Tel: Lilly Sahni 020 7794 5670

JANE AND DADA, iconic fashion boutique at 59 Hampstead High Street, opposite tube station, which closed temporarily in December because of water damage following a fire in the flat above the shop, plans to re-open soon after Easter.
For updates call St Albans branch on 01727 838283

Digging deep for England!

THE COST OF land and lack of availability of new development sites combined with high sales values inevitably means that we are suffering an increasing number of attempts to develop in the airspace above our homes.

Recently Imperial Towers in Netherhall Way had approval to enlarge considerably its penthouse floor.

In 2011 the freeholder of Mourne House in Maresfield Gardens put in plans for an additional floor on top of its 22 apartments as well as a glass lift. The design was poor and insensitive and, after a vociferous campaign by leaseholders, helped by the NNA, Camden rejected the proposals.

However, the freeholder has since submitted a fresh application, devoid of glass lift but still unacceptable within our conservation area. Objections have again been raised by the NNA together with many residents and we await a decision.

How low can you go?

Developers also seem to want to 'Dig for England' to create basements, often several storeys below ground. At 59 Maresfield, where the NNA has fought a hard fight since a lapsed approval was resubmitted, the aim is to create three storeys of basement *plus* the depth of a swimming pool. For a small end of terrace house, it is wholly inappropriate.

As well as giving advice to adjoining owners, we have made several submissions to Camden and succeeded in getting the council to commission an independent Basement Impact Assessment. This is a significant advance as previously Camden has resisted the expense and rubber-stamped assessments submitted by the applicants' specialists.

Together with the Heath & Hampstead Society and Redfrog, we see this as a very serious issue as it can have a major impact on our underground water courses and, as has already been experienced elsewhere in Hampstead, on the structural stability of adjoining properties.

As well as building up and down, there is also pressure to build in our back gardens. For instance, the owner of 13 Fitzjohn's Avenue, a house in multiple occupation, has applied to build a large gym at the rear of the garden abutting numbers 6, 8 and 10 Maresfield. There are several significant reasons why this is



inappropriate and we have submitted the NNA's objections and advised residents.

Meanwhile, we did successfully oppose a proposed height increase to the new hostel development at 120 Finchley Road.

At the south end of Maresfield there are currently four construction sites. The biggest is the redevelopment of South Hampstead High School, to which the NNA finally lent its support on the basis of verbal and written assurances that there would be no construction traffic on our side of the school. When demolition started last autumn, it quickly became clear that these assurances had not been kept, with Maresfield Gardens subject to heavy use by large construction vehicles and the bottom end becoming effectively a builders' van and car park.

Together with Councillor Gio Spinella, we made strenuous representations to Camden to stop this traffic, but learnt they had permitted it despite these earlier assurances. This raises serious questions on local democracy, which have not to date been satisfactorily answered.

However, we have now met the contractor, Wates, and they have prepared amended proposals stating that Maresfield will not be used except on exceptional, unavoidable occasions. They have also undertaken to issue monthly newsletters and meet us quarterly.

The continuing reduction of Trinity Walk due to the extended builder's hoarding is a concern. We have no indication of when this work to the rear of the Bank will be completed although we were told it was only for a year or so.

Similarly work has stopped on 2 Maresfield Gardens, where yet another developer has gone bankrupt leaving the exterior incomplete. Next door at no 4 the old hostel is being converted into a family house, a plan the NNA supported as it meant maintained residential use and halting the building's decay.

Finally, we had an extended dialogue with the developer of Otto Schiff House,

◀ **SHHS construction vehicles block Maresfield despite assurances that they would only use College Crescent.**

the fine building at 11 Netherhall. The plan was to demolish and replace the ugly and relatively recent extension and refurbish the rest. While there was a great deal to commend the proposals, there were several significant issues which could not be resolved, and the developer withdrew. We can expect a new submission shortly.

While we do not oppose good and courteous development, the NNA will continue to resist any development it sees as devaluing and not enhancing our much-loved conservation area.

Meanwhile, we have expressed our interest in establishing a Forum with others to create a Neighbourhood Plan under the recent Government Localism Act. We have already held several meetings as well as discussions with Camden to establish the procedure for setting up such a plan. We believe this is an important new element in planning which will allow local people a greater say in what they see their area becoming in the future. Anyone wishing to join the Forum will be welcomed.

Traffic and parking

The NNA has also been talking to Camden about the inconsiderate use of school buses in our streets. Recently we have seen Nutley Terrace used as an all-day parking spot and we have requested a more suitable designated coach-parking bay away from the junction with Maresfield and away from residents' windows. We also discussed smaller coaches, which Camden is encouraging local schools to adopt with limited success.

We have been in separate talks with Camden about introducing the 20mph speed limit into our neighbourhood – although not at the expense of a rash of extra signage and speed cameras. It certainly seems illogical that cars should be able to travel at 30mph up our narrow streets if they are going to be restricted to 20mph in Fitzjohn's Avenue.

Plans are being prepared for two pilot speed-calming measures in Maresfield and, if suitable, we will ask for residents to be given an opportunity to comment.

Stephen Williams

Industrialist who won't stop working

A football-loving would-be socialist politician who became a boss at BP, Bryan Sanderson now likes little better than digging his garden – plus just a few 'jobs' on the side

ACAREER WITH BP that culminated in the managing directorship of the main board but also embraced the chairmanship of BUPA, of Standard Chartered Bank and of Northern Rock; more non-executive, honorary and voluntary roles than you could shake a stick at; and now at least two days a week on charitable work. It's certainly tempting to typecast Bryan Sanderson as one of 'The Great and The Good'. And yet, when you spot him skivvyng in his front garden on the corner of Netherhall and Maresfield, earth under the fingernails, or learn that his abiding ambition remains to play centre forward for Sunderland, you soon realise that here is a very different kind of 'establishment' figure.

Boldon, where he was born (in October 1940 – during an air raid!), was in a mining area just slightly nearer Sunderland than Newcastle. His father wasn't a miner though, but a local government officer and his mother was a housewife. Bryan describes the family (he has a younger sister) as "poor but happy". Always a bright boy, aged 10 he won a free place to nearby direct grant school Dame Allan's and fell under the spell of geography teacher Don Walker, who got him interested in the world outside north-east England.

Paradise in Holborn

Thus, when it came to choosing a university, he eschewed local Durham – and even Oxbridge – for the London School of Economics. Indeed his first trip to London was for his LSE interview: "I thought I was in paradise!"

In fact his love and admiration for LSE has never waned; he has served as vice-chairman of the Court of Governors and remains an emeritus governor to this day.

Meanwhile, in 1959 he started studying for his BSc in economics. Already passionate about politics – "I wanted to be a really red socialist" – he chose to focus on political philosophy; and lectures by luminaries such as Karl Popper "very quickly removed any Marxist ideas".

► Bryan in his restored Victorian conservatory

On graduating in 1962 he decided to give the world of business a whirl, but politics never quite went away.

He served on many Labour Party committees over the years, chaired the Hampstead Garden Suburb constituency party when he lived there (pre-Netherhall), was on the B list to stand for Parliament and only missed getting on to the Greater London Council by 23 votes. But by that time he realised it was no longer tenable to combine politics with the day job, and he gave it a rest!

Wisely, he opted to "do something different" before embarking on his business career ladder and, Voluntary Service Overseas having recently started, he did some supply teaching while learning Spanish and then set sail for Peru where he spent two years with the United Nations Association. He taught economics (in Spanish!) at a brand new university there and helped on a range of different projects.

For 15 months he was based just north of the Atacama Desert where tremors and earthquakes were a common occurrence. He lived in a *barrriada* (slum) and life was exciting but sometimes challenging for a young man far from home. The locals still wore national dress and the only western influence was Coca Cola! He got dysentery on his first day and later survived a badly infected elbow.

It was also a very disruptive period in South American politics: Castro had just taken over, there were Molotov cocktails and other violence on the streets and the students were on strike half the time he was there. Communications were very difficult – a letter home took six weeks and on one occasion all the Christmas mail, in both directions, was set alight!



His love for football, which he played with the locals, separated him out from the then unpopular North Americans, but he acquired a girlfriend who was there with the Peace Corps and also befriended the grandson of US President Harding, who'd been to Yale and showed him how to put a CV and job application together.

He soon developed the travel bug, taking local buses into Lima (using the British Council office to catch up on newspapers), and further afield to Lake Titicaca, Bolivia, to northern Chile and for six to eight weeks to Iquitos to explore the Amazon.

Not surprisingly therefore he decided that, when it came to where he might work, it had to be an international company. At that time he could have taken his pick of BP, ICI, Rolls Royce and Shell, and the latter would have been first choice but their interview procedures took months and in the event he accepted an offer from BP, one of 15 non-technical graduate trainees.

The training was 'on the job', with new graduates moved around every 15-18 months. He began in the oil company's supply department which was concerned with shipping and then moved to a refinery to learn what went on there. With the price of crude oil fixed by OPEC and pump prices fixed by governments, shipping and

refinery were crucial to the company's fortunes and Bryan found it very exciting. BP was also at the cutting edge of computer technology at that time.

After three years he was sent to Italy, where he quickly learnt the language and got involved in product trading.

He met his Swedish wife Sirkka at a welcome home lunch when he returned from Peru ("I asked her to pass the salt!") and she was able to join him in Italy. The couple travelled all over the country and Switzerland, which they still visit a couple of times a year, along with Stockholm where they have a flat and a summer house.

Business school

In 1973 BP sent Bryan to IMEDE (business school) in Lausanne to do an MBA, which he thoroughly enjoyed. But he feels business degrees are more questionable now that graduate employees tend already to have two degrees and "what they need are specialist courses".

Meanwhile, with BP growing under his feet, and despite Middle East conflicts which meant the company lost some of its oil and had to buy it in, Bryan was put in charge of oil trading, a role which kept him central and stimulated for some years.

In 1984 he moved to Singapore to help BP break into Asia. Money was no object and he had fun negotiating with governments and trying new initiatives: exploration proved less successful and Burma "was a real mess" but he established the first chemical plants in China (his proudest achievement), ventured into Indonesia and Thailand and expanded downstream operations (marketing and refinery) in Malaysia.

The family – son Peter and daughter Christina were aged 5 and 7 when they left London – loved it there: it was hot and humid but there was no language problem and Singapore was very friendly to the British; holidays were in Australia, New Zealand, Thailand and Malaysia.

By 1987 it was feared the oil would run out and diversification became the name of the game. Shell went into nuclear power and BP into animal feed, with Bryan becoming managing director and chief executive of BP Nutrition. Eventually BP decided this was a step too far and sold it off.

Three years later he became chief executive of BP Chemicals where he succeeded in doubling productivity, but the price was huge job losses. "We were able to throw money at the problem with generous voluntary redundancy schemes and final salary pensions at age 60; plus people could easily get another job at that

time. But it was horrible doing it." And he had to do it yet again in 1997 following BP's merger with Amoco.

After another two years Bryan was made a managing director of BP's main board. While his focus was chemicals, he continued to retain responsibility for Asia, where his people contacts were invaluable.

In 2000 Bryan stepped down – with a CBE awarded in 1999 for services to industry. He remains in touch with many former BP colleagues and has happy memories of his time in the company.

However the run-up to retirement was not without its diversions. In 1999 he got a call from a headhunter looking for a director for Sunderland Football Club. He went up to Roker Park, the old stadium, which was about to be sold off, and was offered the chairmanship of the club! During the next six years he oversaw the building of a new stadium, the sale of the plc, two seventh places in the premiership and a relegation!

Having spent his whole career in one company, bar Sunderland FC and a couple of non-executive directorships including British Steel, he decided he'd like to do something in the public sector. There followed four years as chairman of what was then Britain's biggest quango, the Learning and Skills Council, focusing on post-16 year-old education and training.

"We do higher education very well in this country," he says, but "further education remains undervalued and under-supported."

The LSC role was only, officially, two days a week so Bryan combined it with membership of Tony Blair's competitiveness advisory group (he accompanied Blair to China at one point), the DTI's steering group on company law reform and the management committee

Suddenly they all stopped answering the phone and the world collapsed around our ears."

of the King's Fund (for health service research); chairmanship of BUPA (until 2006) and of the Sunderland Area Regeneration Company (until 2009); and vice chairmanship of the LSE governors. So much for semi-retirement.

He also spent three years chairing Standard Chartered Bank but then one day in October 2007 he received an unexpected call. Newcastle-based Northern Rock had almost collapsed and the government was looking for a private sector solution. Bryan, a near local lad (though supporting the wrong football team), was asked to be chairman.



Photos: Nigel Shindler

He says he'd managed to line up Lehman, RBS and Citigroup to buy the company out but then the financial crisis really struck. "Suddenly they all stopped answering the phone and the world collapsed around our ears." The bank was taken into public ownership in February 2008 and Bryan left. It had been a hectic six months, very much in the public eye. The press largely treated him well but the token media training he'd received at BP could hardly have prepared him for an Extraordinary General Meeting on live TV all over the world!

He admits to missing the adrenaline flow of running a company like BP but, at 72, says he's slowed down "and you lose the hunger". Yet he retains a significant number of what he calls "little jobs", including the non-executive chairmanship of Cella Energy, and chairmanship of the Florence Nightingale and Home Renaissance Foundations. He is on the board of Argus Media, is a trustee of *The Economist*, emeritus governor of LSE and a non-executive director of Durham County Cricket Club. So not exactly kicking his heels!

Concerts and candles

He walks regularly on the Heath – with Nordic sticks – and is a patron of Covent Garden and a frequent theatre-goer. He has lived in and around Hampstead since moving to London and says he wouldn't live anywhere else, not least because "to see kingfishers so near town is incredible". He also says he wanted a garden from the age of two. Here in Netherhall, where he has lived for 18 years, he has recreated an exquisite double-decker Victorian garden and restored the original conservatory.

The house, built in 1875, and shared especially at weekends with his son and daughter and their families, also has a wonderful music room, where he and Sirkka host concerts in conjunction with St John's Church in Hampstead and the Swedish Church in Marylebone. Each December they celebrate the Festival of Santa Lucia with maidens in long white dresses and crowns of lit candles.

And for those not invited, the pretty white fairy lights in his recently planted silver birch trees provided the most tasteful outdoor Christmas decorations in the neighbourhood. At least we know one of our original houses is in safe hands. *NNA*

Legacy of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry

It is now 14 years since the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the investigation of the murder of the black South London teenager. NNA member Richard Stone, who was an adviser to the judge Sir William Macpherson, explains why he felt moved to write a book about the experience*

I NEVER expected to be publishing my first book at 76 years of age. However I had two clear aims in writing it. First, I hope the book will raise the anti-racism agenda back to its high point of 14 years ago when the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report was published.

The second aim is to respond to the call from audiences who have heard me speaking about the Inquiry, and in particular to clarify what I call 'oddities'. These were puzzling incidents which needed exploring but had to be filed in the back of my mind as the Inquiry moved on apace. It was these oddities that people wanted to hear about.

They took me nearly two years to write, and finally in the third week of March 2013 they will go public.

After the end of the Inquiry in 1999, the term 'institutional racism' became familiar to and was talked about by all sorts of people. Moreover the whole range of inequalities was being discussed on chat shows and in academic journals.

Now only two equalities can truly be said to feature on the agenda: gender inequality and the gap between the poor and the very rich. There is a small corner still left for disability, but of racism there is nothing. At the last general and local elections the word racism did not appear in any of the manifestos of the three main parties.

Olympic flag

Only when Stephen's mother Doreen was seen holding the Olympic flag or receiving a Woman of the Year award did journalists even mention the Inquiry.

I naively expected that within about a year of the Inquiry most of our 70 recommendations would have been implemented. I believed that police data would show significant reductions in the

**'Hidden stories of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry' by Richard Stone, published by The Policy Press, March 2013. Richard will give a reading from the book at a special neighbourhood launch in April. Check the NNA website for details*

"disadvantage" experienced by "minority ethnic people" (in the words of our definition of 'institutional racism').

A decade later two reviews – my personal 'Independent review of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry 10 years on' and a parallel academic review by Nicola Rollock for the Runnymede Trust – found improvements in policing across the board. These had been badly needed. The Inquiry's questioning of the police officers involved in the murder investigation revealed appalling ignorance, as well as an equally appalling lack of direction by senior officers.

The Detective Chief Superintendent, who was the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) from day 3 after the murder, did not know the law on arrests and managed not to meet Mr and Mrs Lawrence for

There had been almost no improvements when it came to answering the concerns of black Britons

over a year after the murder of their son. Sixty-one of the 64 police officers interviewed by the Inquiry showed equally poor levels of professionalism.

Ten years on, training and regular supervision had transformed policing. It is almost impossible now for officers to be promoted beyond their ability, as was the SIO for Stephen's murder.

Nevertheless, there remain two areas of policing which have a negative impact on black citizens and black police officers. (Black in this article includes people from black, Asian and other minority ethnic backgrounds.)

These are 'stop and search' and the relative number of senior black officers.

Richard chaired Doreen Lawrence ► at last October's 25th anniversary of the diversity and equal opportunities in employment charity, the Wainwright Trust; the event focused on what had, or more to the point what hadn't, changed since the Trust was set up in 1987. See www.wainwrighttrust.org.uk

Sadly, despite the amount of police time and effort seemingly spent addressing these issues, both reviews found there had been almost no improvements when it came to answering black Britons' concerns about them.

Disparities in who was stopped and searched had grown significantly in 10 years: in 1998 black people were four to five times more likely to be stopped than white people, and by 2008 this had risen to six to eight times more likely.

Staggering disparities

The figures for 2013, I am told, are a staggering 28 times more likely for people from black backgrounds.

In 1999 police services accepted targets set by the Home Secretary for the recruitment, retention and progression of black officers. By 2009 these targets should have led to a wave of black officers at or above the glass ceiling, positioned at the level of promotion to commander, but nothing like that has happened.

There were four black officers at chief officer rank in 1999; they have all since retired, and now there are none.

Two black women were recently promoted to commander, the first rank above the glass ceiling of chief superintendent. There were a dozen black



superintendents in the Metropolitan Police three years ago. All were passed over for promotion to the Command course, and all had retired by the end of 2012. All had won actions brought by them against their employer for discrimination on grounds wholly or partly of race. Well, not exactly won: their cases were settled out of court by the police service with pay-outs amounting to about double what the tribunal would have awarded.

These tribunals must cost the Met about £3 million a year. One cannot imagine a stronger business case for an end to discriminatory employment practices. The 1999 employment targets have all been abandoned. With no phalanx waiting in the wings there is

With no phalanx waiting in the wings there is no hope of any black chief officers in England in the next 10 years

no hope of any black chief officers in England in the next 10 years.

To explore the oddities behind my 'Hidden stories' required more material than just the report of the Inquiry. The absence of any of that material was itself one of the biggest oddities, and forms a whole chapter of the book.

For all the crucial early years after 1999 there was no academic analysis of the background to our conclusions or recommendations.

Home Office officials had assured me in 1999 that the transcripts, and our own material that we had to hand in to them at the end of the Inquiry, would be available on their website within four to five months.

How could it be that in 2010, 11 years since the Inquiry, the only part of the



◀ **“Going through the Inquiry was a reminder of the pain of losing my son - (but it) filled in the gaps of what happened the night my son was murdered and showed me the depth of racism and corruption that existed in the Metropolitan police service. To be able to read the behind-the-scenes account by Dr Richard Stone is important for the history of the Inquiry and its legacy.”**

Doreen Lawrence OBE

Photos: Nigel Shindler

archive released for public view was the transcripts? Even release of that key material late in 2005 only came four months after two written Parliamentary Questions (PQs) asking when the release would be. These PQs were put down by MPs I had approached for help out of sheer frustration.

Even now significant routine correspondence, especially internal memos and my own notes, are still in the Home Office's long-term storage.

Various other oddities were revealed when I began to explore what was released. After a while I realised that all the stories end with a conclusion that “this undermines the authority of the Inquiry”. I felt this as a common thread that ran through the book. I was uncomfortable at first with some of the facts coming my way. As more evidence came in, my doubts were dispelled by confirmation of my conclusions.

Pattern of denial

I was surprised to find that I was not just writing about curious hidden stories, but was uncovering what I believe to be a pattern of denial. My book has become something of an analysis of how denial can be used by people with power to protect their position.

Denial is, I suppose, inevitable if people are told they must give up some of their power. Curbing racism, particularly institutional racism, is very much about limiting the discretion of those with power to disad-vantage people lower down the ladder.

When the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry recommended that police officers should record the reason for every stop they perform (Recommendation 61), there was widespread criticism and undermining of the idea. The officers may not have realised it, but they were right to sense that Recommendation 61 would curb their discretion to stop anyone they fancied. Indeed it would

lead to a reduction in their power that very few of them could contemplate.

Without strong leadership from the top, however, officers who abused their power would find ways to circumvent and undermine the recommendation.

Recommendation 61 proposed that all stops made by police would end with a slip of paper given to the citizen with the name or number of the officer on it. The officer would record on it the name of the citizen, the self-defined ethnicity of the person stopped, the date and time and the reason for the stop.

Grim determination

The pads of copies would be held in local police stations. I have timed how long it takes to collect those four bits of information: 37 seconds on average. A year later the Met were piloting a form of nearly two sides of A4 which took on average 24 minutes to complete.

The only interpretation I can put on that is that it expressed point blank a grim determination to undermine Recommendation 61 and, I suspect, the whole Stephen Lawrence Inquiry agenda.

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner at the time of Stephen's murder, Sir Paul (now Lord) Condon, spent a whole morning of the Inquiry refusing to acknowledge 'institutional racism'.

It appeared that Recommendation 61 was doomed, but, if it died, down with it would go the whole authority of the Inquiry. It should surprise no one that 14 years later, having been a panel member of the original Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, I am moved to write a book that does everything a single individual can do to prevent all the hard work by hundreds of people from all backgrounds going to waste. **NNA**

Richard Stone OBE, a former GP in Notting Hill, now lives in Maresfield Gardens, He has been Chair of the Jewish Council for Racial Equality and of the Runnymede Islamophobia Commission. In 2004 he founded Alif-Aleph to bring together British Muslims and Jews. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Cambridge Centre for Muslim-Jewish Relations.



EVENTS

Anthony Coles reports:

SINCE THE publication of our last newsletter NNA members have enjoyed concerts at Netherhall House; an Open Garden and tea party hosted by Linda and Stephen Williams; the Netherhall street party organised by Andy Wilkins, David Caden and Giorgio Broetz; Malcolm Gluck's wine tasting and quiz hosted by Palle Pedersen of the Danish YWCA; various events and exhibitions at the Freud Museum; knitwear and jewellery sales; and the YWCA bazaar.

In addition, we were invited to share in the 60th anniversary celebrations for the Anna Freud Centre, various 2012 Hampstead Arts Festival events and productions from the Hampstead Players at Hampstead Parish Church.

Forthcoming

Monday 11 March: 7pm. NNA 30th anniversary reception and AGM, Speaker: journalist Victoria Brittain on 'Shadow lives: the forgotten women of the war on terror'. 12 Maresfield Gdns

Saturday 11 May: 8pm. NNA 30th anniversary concert – in collaboration with Netherhall House. Guest pianist Bruno Ferrari (*pictured above*) was born in Mexico in 1991 and began piano studies aged six as therapy for his arm injury. He won prizes in the US before coming to London's Royal Academy of Music in 2009, since when he has won prestigious prizes here and in France.



The programme will include pieces by Rachmaninov and Chopin. Tickets £5 on the door. Netherhall House, Nutley Terrace
Sunday 16 June: Linda and Stephen Williams' Open Garden in aid of

the National Gardens Scheme. Tea and cakes. Free admission to NNA members. 16A Maresfield Gdns.

September: Netherhall street party (*tbc*)

SITS VAC

Volunteers are sought for the following positions on the NNA Committee:

Hon Sec: to prepare agendas for, attend and minute meetings (average four to six *pa*); notify committee of meetings and distribute minutes incorporating members' written reports. Current Hon Sec Ruth Stone is happy to discuss the role with anyone who might be interested: ruthstone@gmail.com
Newsletter editor: encompassing planning, commissioning and subediting or writing news and features; laying out using Adobe Indesign (or similar). Current editor Susanne Lawrence would consider sharing duties with someone not yet in position to take on whole job.

Licensing: to attend and comment on local licensing applications and appeals
For all positions in first instance contact NNA Chair: linda@osbandpress.co.uk

► 30th anniversary

continued from front page

The newsletter has remained a constant, though the series on 'Notable Neighbours' in the late 1980s featured only dead people – Dr Culver Barker, a Jungian analyst, Cecil Sharp, founder of the English Folk Dance Society, Elgar, the Webbs and the Freuds (though not Asquith, for some reason).

In 2006, when the newsletter was redesigned, a new 'Netherhall Notables' series started featuring current residents, including actor Richard Wilson and our 30th AGM speaker Victoria Brittain.

Close links have been formed over the years with the various institutions within the neighbourhood, the histories of all of which have been written about in the newsletter at one time or another – Ames House and Southwell House (both since sold), Netherhall House and the Anna Freud Centre (both of which celebrated their 60th anniversaries last year), the St Thomas More Church, the Danish YWCA (Princess Benedikte of Denmark came over for that centenary in 2007), Otto Schiff House (recently sold) and the Freud Museum, which opened in 1986.

Battles have been won and lost but, whether we are trying to stop three-plus storey basements (*see planning news, p 3*) or putting up a statue to commemorate Elgar's years here, the very special history and nature of our two and a half roads will ensure a lively, thriving neighbourhood for many years to come.

NNA MEMBERSHIP 2013

IF YOU HAVE NOT yet renewed your NNA membership, or are new to the area, please join now. It only costs £8 per person for a year or £10 for a family. The association works to maintain and/or improve the character of the environment, runs social events and provides a 'good neighbours' service. Please fill in this form and return it with your payment to the address below. And if you have a new neighbour, or there are other flats in your building, please spread the word and encourage them to join or notify Patricia Whitehouse: tel 020 7435 0798 or email patricia.whitehouse@hotmail.co.uk

Title: Forename: Surname:

Title: Forename: Surname:

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Tel no: Mobile: Email:

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Please send form and payment to the NNA Membership Secretary, Flat 1, 36 Netherhall Gardens NW3 5TP