



ULSARA NEWS

SPRING 2001

The Newsletter of the Upper Leeson Street Area Residents Association

A WORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is a little while since you received our last Newsletter but much has happened in the interim. Late last year we held a very well attended Seminar where, at the end of a very lively discussion, over 20 Members agreed on the way forward for the Association. Derek Griffith will report in detail at the AGM.

While we might make plans, to execute them we need your assistance and we welcome the interest and involvement of all Residents. This can be in any way and for as much or as little time as you want. Just contact any Committee member.

The new ULSARA Web site (ulsara.ie) will provide yet another opportunity for Members, Residents and others who log on, to communicate with us and vice versa. Spread the news and in particular tell the younger members of your household and their friends.

I sincerely thank all our Committee Members for all they have contributed over the last year in Planning, Membership, Website and all the other aspects of the Association. In particular I wish to acknowledge the great and consistent work, which Aileen Chapman has put in over the last twenty years as Secretary of the Wellington Road Branch. Aileen has retired from this particular hot spot but, I am glad to say, is staying on the local Committee. Thank you Aileen – Welcome Vicki

We particularly welcome new residents to this area

Robert Mooney - Chairman

AGM - Tuesday 22nd May '01 - 7.30 pm

Litton Hall, Leeson Park

Speaker –Freddie O’Dwyer on Victorian Dublin with particular reference to our area

THE ULSARA GARDEN COMPETITION 2001

Entrants should have their front gardens ready for inspection during the latter half of June when the Adjudicator will pass through the area to select a winner. Gardens may include anything from flower boxes to grass verges! To facilitate judging, entrants with mews gardens will be notified as to the time of judging. Entry forms will be available at the ULSARA AGM and from the website. Entries by post only to reach ULSARA, PO Box 8411, Dublin 4, not later than 10th June.

ULSARA IS ON THE WEB

Our WebSite is worth visiting and we intend to roll out many additional features and services during 2001. Visit ulsara.ie and tell your friends about it!

SIGNS ARE UP THE POLE

A feature of our area is the sprouting of aluminium poles on roads and junctions. The Wellington/Clyde Road junction is festooned with 11 poles while Wellington Road itself has many, many more. Is this really appropriate in a Conservation Area?

The new red signs with a reference to Parking Permits have caused some concern that the Corporation had some new plan in mind. Happily they refer to Resident Parking Permits and reflect no change in the current arrangements.

DARTMOUTH SQUARE



This rather dull photograph is Dartmouth Square as it is today. Where is our classic Victorian park? Does anyone remember the lovely colourful flowerbeds that we used to enjoy? The constant battering of unsupervised children and footballs made it impossible for them to be maintained. It is not surprising the Parks Department gave up and grassed the park over. We are now blessed with footballers of the larger and louder variety. Has anyone seen how bright and cheerful are Pearse Square and Mountjoy Square? How do they manage to keep their parks so well? Food for thought.

Northbrook Road

Many of you will have watched with interest the activities on the site of the former St. Anne's Hospital. Number 7, part of a terrace and a "protected structure" collapsed and put the whole terrace under threat. Dublin Corporation Planning Department were very quickly on the scene and initiated legal proceedings against the developers.

The case was dealt with on 5th March. By order of the High Court no work was to be carried out until the developers had complied with the original planning permission granted by An Bord Pleanála. They are to rebuild, within twelve months, Number 7 Northbrook Road under the Supervision of the Senior Planner in Dublin Corporation and to submit drawings of the internal layout of 8, 9 and 10 Northbrook Road and no further work to be allowed on these properties until this has been done.

This is a landmark case and this, at last, appears to give a tangible reality to the term "Protected Structures".

We were very impressed with the speed with which the Planning Department acted; a special appreciation should be recorded of our area Planning Enforcement Officer, Mr. Brendan Doyle.

Protected Structures

As you will have seen from the Northbrook Road saga, "Protected Structure" means just that! Under the terms of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 1999 (the "Heritage Act"), the owner of a house that has been designated a "Protected Structure" must seek planning permission for any alterations, both internally and externally. This requirement also covers any radical alteration of the garden.

Your Association has been battling for over thirty years to protect this area and preserve its architectural heritage. We believe that all our hard work has been worthwhile and that we are lucky to live with such attractive surroundings.

Rosemary and Andy Kavanagh

Rosemary and Andy have now been living in Warner's Lane for some time, but still take an enormous interest in our area. Indeed, Rosemary is the untiring watchdog of her lane! We would like to applaud their dedication to the Residents Association, particularly Dartmouth Square and surrounds. Andy's architectural expertise and measured response to issues has been invaluable. Rosemary can only be described as tenacious in her defence of our area. She has a wonderful rapport with councillors and officials; as a result so much has been achieved in the most gracious manner. We would not be enjoying such benefits to our environment had it not been for Rosemary and Andy.

LITTER

Waterloo Road has four public litter bins — two at each end.

Upper Baggot Street, between the bridge and Eastmoreland, also has 4 - 2 at each end. The difference is that Baggot Street has 10 food takeaways out of 41 businesses.

No wonder the area is awash with LITTER!

We hope to do a more detailed survey and report the results to the local traders and the Corporation on the ULSARA Web Site shortly

MEMORIAL LECTURE.

On 22nd Feb. 2001, the Rathmines, Ranelagh and Rathgar Historical Society presented a Memorial Lecture at Rathmines Town Hall in honour of the late Deirdre Kelly. Deirdre sadly died a year ago. The Chairman of our Dartmouth Branch, Professor Kevin B. Nowlan, chaired the meeting and Frank McDonald, Environment Correspondent of the "Irish Times" was the speaker. The subject of the lecture was "The Irish Urban Crisis" a subject dear to Deirdre's heart.

There was a very large attendance, reflecting the love and esteem in which Deirdre was held.

WATERLOO ROAD

Not much to report this year. There has been a welcome improvement in the parking situation and in the level of activity by enforcement section by the planning department. The litter problem will be improved by the introduction of the wheelie bins, but the problem with general litter arising from the fast food outlets in Upper Baggot Street remains. We are actively pressing the Corporation to deal with this.

HOME SECURITY

So many of us are out at work during the day and homes are left unattended. In spite of the very obvious presence of burglar alarms we are still have the problems of break-ins, especially during the day. There is an even greater need for those of us who are around during the day to be extra vigilant. Don't worry about being accused of being nosy!

Many people who are in the process of renovating their homes are very aware of the greatly increased price of architectural salvage. Houses that are vacant due to change of ownership are very vulnerable to theft of artefacts, such as fireplaces. It is amazing how quickly these items are removed from under the neighbour's noses. Please watch out for unusual activity in an empty house near you.

Personal security is very much in people's minds these days. Please be wary of callers to the door and keep an eye out for your older neighbours, who are living alone. If we look after each other, we will find life a bit easier.

WELLINGTON ROAD BRANCH

All the roads and lanes, except Pembroke Lane in our area have Disc Parking and parking has slightly improved. Ramps have slowed speeding traffic in most areas and application has been made for yellow boxes to be placed at each end of Wellington Lane and also at the entrance from Pembroke Lane to Waterloo Road. Residents of Clyde Lane find that the ramps are not high enough, but are better than nothing.

THE GROVE (Wellington Place and Morehampton Road)

Unightly traffic signs at the entrance have been removed after many demands from our Chairman and residents of Wellington Place

HEYTESBURY LANE

Parking for residents is still acute, and is not helped by builders using spaces for their building material and skips. Residents with parking discs are seeking to use the Disc Parking area in Wellington Road due to so few boxes in the lane. The condition of the lane not been improved by heavy machinery

RAGLAN ROAD

Disc parking on both sides and the lengthened double lines are found to be favourable. The 'squatters' in the derelict house, No. 7, now moved on.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Pat Moylan, our Community Guard reports that there has been no serious crime or burglaries. Long may it last.

FOXES CHASING

Many people are anti-fox-hunting in rural areas, however things have changed. Foxes have now moved into suburbs and I now relate an incident which happened in Heytesbury Lane returning late one night (bin night). Harry a 'half Persian character of a cat', who saunters around the lane, with no fear of traffic and who lies around underneath the parked cars, darted out from under a car and rushed up to me, refusing to move from my side. I looked about and saw a young fox emerge from under the same car and he darted up to Wellington lane on seeing me. Two days later neighbour in Wellington Lane related a sad story about being wakened in the middle of the night by a terrible wailing. On investigation they saw a young fox dragging a half dead cat along. The fox jumped a high wall and took the cat as well. So take let your daughters out but lock up your cats!

RECYCLING "BRING CENTRE"

Are you aware that there is a "Bring Centre" at the Corporation Depot at Gulistan Cottages (off Upper Mount Pleasant Avenue).

Bring your paper/s, plastic bottles and plastic wrappings, beverage cans, glass bottles and good clothing (for charities) to the Depot for recycling.

OPEN: Mon-Fri. 08.00 -17.00. Sat & Sun.08.00 - 16.00.

Alternative at Londonbridge Road Similar opening times.

NEW MEMBERS AND SOCIAL EVENTS

NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AND IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ASSIST – EVEN OCCASIONALLY – ON ONE OF OUR COMMITTEES PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SECRETARY.

The social side, of the Association, so far very limited, needs to expand but we require people to assist. Contact any Committee Member.

THE ULSARA FEATURES PAGE



DUNNES FUEL AND GARDEN CENTRE A FAMILY BUSINESS

Dunnes Fuel and Garden Centre at 50 Percy Place near Baggot Street Bridge has been in existence for approximately 100 years. According to Dermot Dunne, the present owner, the business originally belonged to his grand uncle, a member of the local Balfe family. When he died, the fuel yard passed to Dermot's grandmother Catherine who brought it into the Dunne family early in the twentieth century when she married Dermot's grandfather, a member of the RIC. Catherine Dunne ran the fuel yard on the bank of the Grand Canal for many years before handing the business on to her son Paddy who was born in a cottage which then stood in the yard. When he passed away 7 years ago, his son Dermot took over running the business, always known locally as the Turf Bank.

Until the 1940s, horses were kept stabled on the property. From the tow path which runs alongside the canal, they pulled barges owned by the Dunnes up and down the canal. When they left the city, the barges were loaded with Guinness or other goods. They returned to Dublin filled with turf from the bogs in Kildare. Once unloaded in the yard, the turf was bought by weight and then delivered around the neighbourhood in horse-drawn carts. Customers also came on a daily basis with baskets to buy smaller amounts of turf or coal which the Dunnes also supplied. By the 1950s, the barges had been motorised, but in any case trucks were replacing them as a means of transport. The family's last remaining barge was stripped and sunk in the canal in 1960.

During the Troubles, the Turf Bank saw its share of action. Although the Dunne family was not directly involved, shooting took place in the yard and Dermot's grandfather and uncles were taken to Wakefield for internment. No one knew where they were and the story goes that when Dermot's grandmother went to Kilmainhaim Jail to look for her relatives, she witnessed the execution of James Connolly. Her husband eventually returned from England but the family's tribulations were not over. Most of his siblings died of TB, leaving only him and one surviving sister.

The Dunnes' business flourished during the war years. Since coal was unavailable, turf was the only ready source of fuel and the yard was kept going full time meeting the demands of local customers. Again in the 1970s, the yard was particularly busy supplying solid fuel to customers who could not get oil for their central heating. Every day queues of people waited outside the yard for a delivery of briquettes, but the Dunnes could get only one load per week. On the day of delivery, all the briquettes were gone by lunchtime.

While coal is the main solid fuel product sold by the fuel yard today, the advent of central heating radically changed the needs of the consumer. Until the 1970s, the sale and supply of turf and coal provided a steady business for 9 or 10 months of the year. During August and September customers took delivery of large supplies of fuel for the winter. Nowadays, for the most part solid fuel is only required for 6 months of the year, typically as a secondary fuel, and Dermot notes that people have a more casual attitude to keeping the coalhouse well stocked. In fact, many customers look for fuel to be delivered on the spur of the moment, usually during a cold spell.

In keeping with the changing times and needs of local residents, the Dunnes have now changed the focus of their business for part of the year. In the winter months they sell fuel, including logs and gas cylinders; from the end of March the fuel yard is transformed into a garden centre providing not only plants and seeds but also bags of manure, compost, bark, railway sleepers and other gardening requirements. This seasonal arrangement overlaps well with the fuel business.

As other yards have closed down in recent years, the Dunnes have noticed an increased demand in their own fuel business. Although neighbourhood deliveries are still the core of this business, at present one of the challenges faced by Dunnes is the congested traffic of Dublin. Dermot says traffic delays make it increasingly difficult to maintain the tradition of service associated with his family's business.

The regular customers who have enjoyed this courteous and convenient service for many years hope that Dunnes Fuel and Garden Centre will remain in business near Baggot Street Bridge for many years to come.

REBUILDING OF 1887 ORGAN FOR ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

St Bartholomew's Church, which celebrates a fine musical tradition, is restoring the Victorian organ built in 1887 by Gray & Davison. The original Victorian sound boards are being replaced and the specifications refined. This is a very exciting project for the modern day Parishioners. Meanwhile the singing is accompanied by a piano. Guide to Music in St Bartholomew's can be found in 'The Irish Times' and the Choir web page: <http://www.bannister.org/choir/>

An auction of antiques and dreams will be held on Saturday 19 May in the Knights of Malta hall, 32 Clyde Road to raise funds for this project. Viewing 4-6 pm, Doors open 7 pm, auction at 8 pm. Catalogue and refreshments £5.

The first CD recorded by the St Bartholomew's Choir, founded 130 years ago, was launched by Alexander Anissimov, principal conductor of the RTE Symphony Orchestra in November 1998.

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