

Jericho Echo



No. 36, October, 1996

Published by the Jericho Community Association

Blanc's neighbours see red



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Cartoon that appeared in The Guardian

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The noise comes not so much from the clientele (a fairly select bunch) as from the frenzy of cooking activity required to satisfy their sensitive palates. The original kitchen was far too small so food has to be prepared in the basement and then transferred across the back garden, with all the attendant din of banging doors. Added to this is the noise from the kitchen extractor fan and the air conditioners, as well as an early morning wake-up call when the noisy trucks come to empty the refuse bins.

Newspaper reports suggested that residents were also being overpowered with delicious aromas. But as one local resident says: "It's the smell from the filth at the back we object to. And when the bins are emptied in the morning the road is absolutely covered in broken glass." Even the smell of frying bacon is hard on the nostrils first thing in the morning because the extraction filters are not very effective.

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The furore surrounding the restaurant's opening stirred local residents into action and they have had a series of meetings with the management. As a result there have been some improvements. New General Manager Olivier Delaunoy (who seems to be more receptive to local concerns) responds that they have now enclosed one of the noisiest fans, and that they will build a wall to enclose the yard. As for parking, every diner now gets a map indicating where they can park legally. The restaurant has been investigating other possibilities that might include, say, using the school car park at night. But they will have to do something if the new system for more rigorous residents' parking enforcement happens in December.

M. Blanc has certainly raised Jericho's profile and many people are happy to welcome him. Even those living next door say that they do not object to their illustrious new neighbour, but that he still has a long way to go to deal with the problems of noise, pollution, and parking.

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What was that?

AN OCCASIONAL GUIDE TO
JERICO'S DISTINCTIVE BUILDINGS



Number 1 King Street, on the corner with Jericho Street, is one of half a dozen that used to stand in this short street. Originally the building was a grain store for the miller who lived opposite. The original chutes are still there but are buried beneath the road. After the store fell into disuse the house became a warehouse – mainly for broken pianos. The people who lived in the Victorian houses where Grantham House now stands used to collect pieces of piano to burn in their open fires.

Around 16 years ago the building was converted to a house. Since it was a one-story building an additional floor was inserted. However because of the positioning of the large window on one side of the building this floor actually cuts across it – another unusual feature of this unique house. At the back there is a beautifully kept garden with a lily pond surrounded by a high wall.

Jenny Barsley, Grantham House

Out of luck – The Community Centre's application for National Lottery Funds for its alterations failed. Now we have to rely on a £90,000 request to the City Council's capital fund – another long shot.

You are invited to our
Parent and Toddler Group

Family Lunch

Thursdays, 12 pm – 3 pm
at the Community Centre

BABIES WELCOME!
FREE SUPERVISED PLAYROOM.
LOTS OF ACTIVITIES
SAND, SINGING, PLAYDOUGH

Hot lunch available – cost price

Caring for the canal

British Waterways is certainly doing much more to take canal users into account – and has set up a Canal Consultative Forum for representatives of various community and other interest groups.

In August there was a workshop at St. Bamabas School. The majority of participants came from outside Jericho – from lands as distant as Walton Manor and Upper Wovercote – but almost all the issues were of concern to Jericho people.

British Waterways and the City Council want to develop the canal as, among other things, one of Oxford's tourist attractions. Some local residents, however, see a danger of the canal becoming too neat and 'yuppified'. Instead they want it to keep its semi-rural character and to enjoy 'benign neglect' – saying that British Waterways should concentrate on basic maintenance.

One of the most contentious issues was the conflict between cyclists (sometimes even motor cyclists) and pedestrians. Many people argued that the towpath was just too narrow and that

bikes of all kinds should be banned. At present, the legal position is a bit hazy. Theoretically, cyclists need a permit from British Waterways but almost no-one has one. This scheme is apparently to be replaced with some kind of registration but this does not seem any more likely to be used (or supervised). So for the time being pedestrians have no option but to jump out of the way.

The meeting also discussed issues like the surfacing of the towpath. Few people had a good word to say for the tarmac surface from Isis Lock down to Hythe Bridge Street. The preferred alternative is some kind of gravel, even if this eventually sinks into the mud and has to be replaced.

Most people wanted to see another bridge with better wheeled access – for wheelchairs as well as bikes. At present Jericho cyclists have to carry their bikes over the bridge at Whitworth Place, and there is no access for the disabled. This could change as a result of the new housing development that will appear between the canal and the station. This includes plans for a new bridge with a ramp, though there are no plans to link the road through the development with the bridge – something which cyclists would like to see since it would offer a cycle path from the station to Jericho.

Crimewatch

Concern about crime continues. Philip Williams, Warden of Grantham House, has reported a number of cases of thieves conning old people in Jericho into letting them in, saying that the flat upstairs is flooding – and then burgling them. There have also been further attacks on old people in the street. One problem is that for a long time now we have had no community beat officer. At the September Area Committee meeting, however, Inspector Peter Shepherd from St. Aldates said that Jericho and surrounding districts should have a new Officer by mid-October. He

also gave some crime statistics for the combined Jericho/Walton Manor area. In the previous three months there were 10 assaults, 40 burglaries, 22 cars stolen, and 53 thefts from cars. This might seem a lot, but at least compared with other areas in Oxford Jericho is somewhat safer. He also reported that the computerized Neighbourhood Watch scheme was now fully operational, and that there are people answering the phones. If you want to set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme you can now call 266237. If you have any general comments about policing in Jericho you can contact Inspector Shepherd on 266233. Other police numbers are on the Noticeboard on page 4.

WALTON STREET POST OFFICE

Open for your convenience for:-



POST OFFICE - CARDS & STATIONERY
SANDWICHES - CHILLED & FRESH FOOD
TOBACCO - SOFT DRINKS - FRUIT & VEG
CONFECTIONARY - GROCERY - NATIONAL LOTTERY
Mon-Sat: 8am-10pm – Sun: 9am-10pm

Post Office: Mo/Tu/Th/Fr: 9am-1pm, 2pm-5.30pm – Wed: 9am-1pm – Sat: 9am-12.30pm

Jericho by numbers

Figures from the 1991 Census paint an interesting picture of Jericho. Compared with the rest of Oxford we have more adults living on their own, a smaller proportion of children and fewer cars.

These statistics were gleaned from the census data by the City Leisure Services Department.

•Household size – We have a much higher proportion of single-person households – just under half compared with less than one-third for the city as a whole. The following figures compare Jericho with (in brackets) the city as a whole. The proportion of households with one person is 46% (31%); with two people, 29% (32%); with three people, 13% (15%); with four people, 7% (13%); and with five or more, 4% (9%).

•Household composition – Looking more closely at households, the smaller size is also reflected in fewer children. The proportion of Jericho households consisting of lone adults under 65 years is 19% (16%); lone adults 65 or older, 28% (15%); two or more adults with no children, 35% (43%); two or more adults with one or more children, 14% (22%).

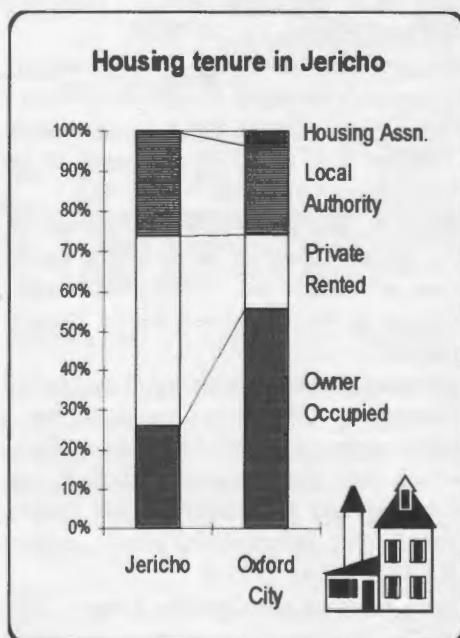
•Age groups – Viewed in terms of age we have fewer children, a higher proportion of younger adults, but a fairly typical proportion of older people. In Jericho 15% of

people are under 16, 69% are between 17 and 64, and 16% are 65 years or older. For Oxford the figures are 19%, 65%, and 16% respectively.

•Ethnic groups – In overall terms we are fairly typical. The population is 90% white, compared with 91% for Oxford. We have a typical proportion from the Indian sub-continent (3.4%), but our other minorities are less likely to be black (1.6%), classifying themselves as 'other groups' (4.6%).

•Car availability – Less than half of Jericho households, 47%, have a car, compared with 63% for Oxford.

•Housing – Almost half of Jericho residents are tenants of private landlords – much higher than average. See chart below.



Church Tower presents a fresh face

You may have noticed that the scaffolding has been removed from the top of the Church Tower – revealing the recent work of repair and restoration. The contractors, E W Beard of Swindon, have taken a great deal of trouble to match the old rendering. This was described in Pevsner as 'Roman concrete' and compared with modern rendering has much more aggregate (pebbles) in the mix. The original rendering was probably not lime-washed though it had become so grimy over the years that it was difficult to tell. Nevertheless the architect recommended protecting the rendering with a faintly pinkish wash that so far has earned universal approval.

The restoration also involved installing a new anti-pigeon net and wires and replacing the deteriorated brick and

stonework – though much of this carefully crafted work is not visible from the ground. The clock faces have also been put back and I hope we can eventually restore the striking mechanism. As a result, the Tower will be safe and splendid for the next generation of Jerichoites.

So far £170,000 has been raised towards our target of £250,000 and I am extremely grateful to all who have contributed. In order to reach the target there will be a number of events over the next few months which I hope the people of Jericho will support.

Fr. Michael Wright

Our thanks again to Oxford University Press for printing this issue of the Jericho Echo

Living memories

Jericho recalls ... St. Giles Fair.

"I can remember my uncle taking us from Jericho to see the 'Drawing In'. It was in the middle of the night almost, and these huge machines were moving into St. Giles."

"The railway used to run trips from as far afield as London to St. Giles Fair. And all round the rural areas. They'd have fairs of their own, but nothing like St. Giles."

"In the menagerie up by St. Giles Church they had all sorts of things: lions, tigers and elephants. There was a whale there one year I remember, just on a lorry, and it smelt awful – 'the Huge Monster of the Deep'. The flea circus was quite funny because you couldn't see them. The chap would give a commentary. He'd say: 'Watch this one now, he'll JUMP – and he's over', but you couldn't see anything. And you'd be paralysed in case you brought a flea away with you."

"For years and years there was a family of cowboys. All ginger-haired. And there was a chap dressed as a Red Indian who would throw big axes. The old man had a gun. He used to shoot clay pipes out of the girl's mouth."

"During the fair all the steam engines would be going, fired up with coal and water. The rides would cost 1d, 2d, nothing more. We used to save up through the five weeks holiday. Summer holidays were always five weeks – and two days for the fair."

"We'd always buy a 'fairing' for our mother. If we couldn't win it we had to buy it. My fairing would always be banbury cakes. She loved them, they were the genuine ones from Banbury."

These reminiscences were recorded as part of an adult education class in Jericho. Further details from Margaret Bonfiglioli, NAWOCEC, Tel: 552295.

**Jude the
Obscure**
Visual and
performance
arts pub

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Food served daily
54 Walton Street. Tel: 557309

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