

THE SEVEN DIALS TRUST

Street History Plaques

Sponsor a Street History Plaque and Illuminate the Area's History

Each plaque has the sponsor's name on the top right corner, in the same size as the body text.

The plaques for Short's Gardens and Earlham Street are available to sponsor.

There are five A3 size street history plaques, one for the Dials and one each for Earlham Street, Mercer Street, Monmouth Street and Short's Gardens, the core streets radiating off the Dials. In addition to the text and images on each plaque, the Trust's QR code leads to our website with its wealth of information on the fascinating history of this much-loved quarter of London: <http://www.sevendials.com/history> . Sponsors will be credited on the Trust's website.

Sponsors have been secured for The Dials (Shaftesbury Plc); Mercer Street (The Mercers' Company); and Monmouth Street (an anonymous donor). These plaques can be seen below. The Dials plaque is in colour as we have colour illustrations and the others are photo etched, black on silver, with historic monochrome images. The text is taken from research by Dr J.M. Robinson for the *Seven Dials Renaissance Study* and by Steve Denford for our People's Plaques (see separate brochure).

SPONSORSHIP COSTS

The cost of sponsorship is a minimum of £1,500 for companies or £1,200 for individuals with Gift Aid. Donations made with a signed consent for the Trust to claim Gift Aid (individuals) garner The Trust an additional 25% from HMRC.

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Each plaque has the 'Golden Hind', symbol of the Parish of St Giles, within a circle representing the Dials also seen on all street furniture. A project developed by the Trust in association with Camden Council.

AWARDS

The Trust has won a number of awards over the years including the London Forum of Amenity & Civic Societies Media Award for '**People's and Street History Plaques & Neighbourhood Street Name Plates**' with the citation: '*An absolutely brilliant and wider ranging scheme...*'



THE LONDON FORUM
of Amenity and Civic Societies



Category 5 : Promoting Local History
The Seven Dials Trust

Winner
for their

**"People's and Street History Plaques &
Neighbourhood Street Name Plates"**

In memory of Walter Bor, London Forum's first President
LONDON FORUM MEDIA AWARDS
2015

Presentation by Bryan Moore of the Observer

Jury
David Lamond MBE FIFP
Lady Edwina MBE FLSA
Bill Tyler RSA RAU MBI 2002

London Forum Vice President
London Forum Vice President
London Forum Vice President

November 2015

SEVEN DIALS IN COVENT GARDEN



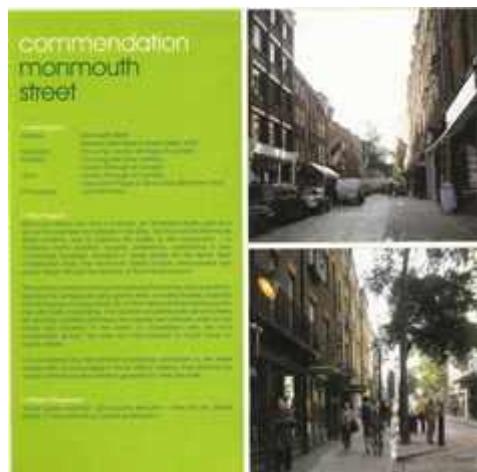
The Environmental Handbook
How to Look After an Historic Area

SEVEN DIALS RENAISSANCE PROJECT

"An extraordinary piece of work", which continues to set high standards for street improvements. Recent work includes completely rewriting the Environmental Handbook and the new base lighting to the Sundial Pillar.

Designer: Civic Design Partnership in association with Historic Buildings Consultants
Client: Seven Dials Monument Charity

Nominees: Covent Garden Area Trust and Covent Garden Community Association



THE LONDON FORUM
of Amenity and Civic Societies



Category 1 : Newsletter

The Seven Dials Trust

Winner
for their
"Newsletter"

WALTER BOR MEDIA AWARDS
2013

Judges
Peter Murray
Councillor Cllr
Lady Edwina
Bill Tyler

Director, NLB
Secretary of STATE Britain's Heritage
London Forum Vice President
London Forum Vice President

November 2013

Highway Partnership Award

Awarded to an organisation or Highway Authority that has driven or can demonstrate a collaborative approach designed to increase the benefits for society or its local community. This should be demonstrated by key performance indicators which test the robustness of the partnership and the positive outcomes.

Highly Commended



Camden



City of Westminster



Shaftesbury

**The Covent Garden Community
Lighting Partnership**

Community-led partnership project replacing post-mounted street lighting with bespoke facade-mounted lanterns combining old and new technologies throughout Seven Dials, Covent Garden, and Sundial Pillar lighting.

Judges' comment

"Led entirely by the community this totally collaborative approach shows local cooperation on a new level."

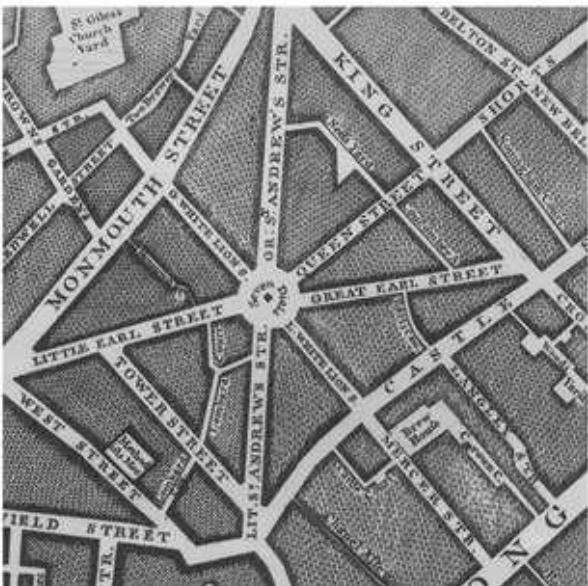


SHORT'S GARDENS

Seven Dials was one of the many creations of Thomas Neale MP (1641-1699) – ‘The Great Projector’. Neale was one of the most influential figures of late Stuart England: an MP for 30 years serving on 62 parliamentary committees; Master of the Mint and the Transfer Office and Groom Porter under three kings; gambler, entrepreneur and husband to two of England’s richest widows. William III granted him the freehold of the land, then known as Marshland or Cock and Pye Fields, in return for favours. Neale raised over £1m for the Crown via England’s first lottery.

Plans for a building licence were submitted to the Surveyor-General Sir Christopher Wren in 1692 and showed six streets, at least 316 houses and an estate church. Neale cheated by adding a street and failing to build the church. The unique star-shaped layout maximised income as rents were charged by frontage. From the outset, Neale planned for Seven Dials to be a mix of residential, retail and crafts, very different from the fashionable, purely residential London squares of his day.

Today Seven Dials stands as the only quarter of London remaining from late Stuart England – its layout remains unaltered and many of the original houses remain, mostly re-faced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. To the south, the massive buildings of the Woodyard Brewery remain, unique in London’s West End.



Rocque's Map 1745, Courtesy Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre.

Short's Gardens from The Dials to Neal Street (formerly Queen Street)

On either side of what is now Short's Gardens lay the cultivated grounds of William Short, gardener of Gray's Inn who, in 1590, purchased fields known as Newland between Drury Lane and the Marshland. The Short family were prominent parishioners of St Giles until Thomas Short sold the property around 1690 and it became part of Thomas Neale's Seven Dials development.

Today, only the part of the street nearest The Dials retains the original seventeenth-century domestic architectural scale and character, with Nos 1, 2, 4 and 6 still occupying the original building plots. Nos. 5-11 were the site of a long-standing lodging house, Tom Farmer's, better known as ‘The Kip’. Here, until the end of the nineteenth century, residents slept sitting down leaning on a rope which was united at dawn. Troublesome customers were thrown out and tied to a barrow to await a policeman to wheel them to Bow Street police station. It remained a lodging house until the 1920s. Poverty was rife in Seven Dials and the far end of Short's Gardens, crossing Endell Street, was the site of the notorious St Giles Workhouse. Opened in 1725, it housed up to 900 paupers. The establishment continued into the early twentieth century. In 1915, the buildings were converted into a Military Hospital staffed entirely by women doctors and medical staff.

The south side of the street is largely taken up by Thomas Neal's shopping centre (the final ‘e’ on Neale being optional in the variable spelling of the time). This encompasses the stable buildings of the nearby Woodyard Brewery, erected in 1880. Within Thomas Neale's is Cucumber Alley, a reconstruction of a passageway shown on Rocque's map of 1745, later known as Neal's Passage, until obliterated by warehouses in the 1870s. It was here in 1889 that the northernmost evidence of Saxon London (Lundenwic) was found: remains dating from the mid-eighth century, including traces of wattle-and-daub houses and evidence of iron-working.

Neal's Yard

Originally King's Head Court, Neal's Yard had received its present name by 1745. The Seven Dials Ragged Night School opened in the Yard in 1847 attracting 60 destitute boys on its first evening. Until the 1970s Neal's Yard was connected with the activities of Covent Garden Fruit and Vegetable Market and included premises for wheelwrights and packing-case manufacturers. Alternative entrepreneur Nicholas Saunders (1938-98) bought No 2, former banana store, in 1976 and went on to establish the Yard as a centre for specialist enterprises including a wholefood warehouse, coffee shop, bakery, dairy, therapy rooms and apothecary. In the 1980s, Monty Python's Michael Palin and Terry Gilliam had studios and a film editing suite there, bearing a provocative hanging sign, ‘Neal's Yard Abattoir’.



St Giles 'Crawler' on the steps of the Workhouse 1877, by John Thomson. Courtesy Museum of London.



The Seven Dials Trust has used the golden bird, symbol of the ancient Parish of St Giles in the Fields, in a circle representing the Dials as a motif on all street furniture



To find out more about Seven Dials and the work of The Seven Dials Trust please visit: www.sevendials.com

EARLHAM STREET

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Earlham Street Market c.1900. Courtesy Historic England.

Earlham Street from The Dials to Shaftesbury Avenue (formerly Little Earl Street)

The western section of Earlham Street was for many years largely given over to food shops and those serving domestic needs. In the 1890s there were two butchers, three grocers, a pastrycook, a dairy and an ironmonger. Portwines Butcher (founded in 1820s) and F.W. Collins & Sons, ironmonger (founded in 1835), both continued trading into the new millennium. No. 14 still bears the Collins’ advertising sign which proudly hails the first Fred’s invention of ‘elastic glue’. There were also two public houses. In the 1860s there were thirteen pubs in Seven Dials, of which only four remain. Earlham Street also housed a thriving street market until the early twentieth century. Markets began in Seven Dials in the early nineteenth century and were famously documented in Dickens’ *Sketches by Boz* (1836). As with many London street markets, they served a densely populated, low income area. Their gradual disappearance followed the decline of the population, which reached its nadir in the early 1970s.

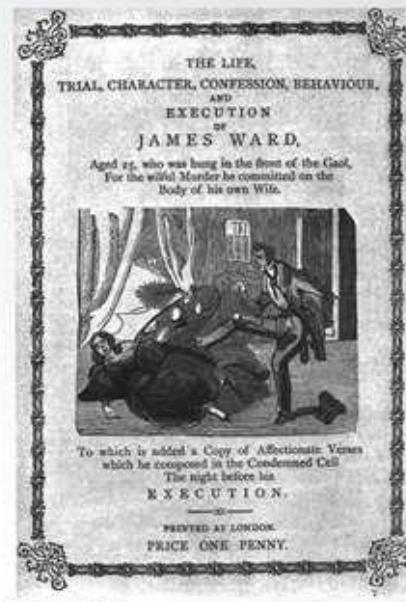
In a now-vanished alley, Monmouth Court, which ran between present day Shaftesbury Avenue and Earlham Street, Jenamy Catnach (1792-1841) plied his trade. Catnach was Seven Dials’ most famous and successful seller of pamphlets, tracts, almanacs, broadsides and ballads. He paid writers a shilling for words which were then set to a well-known tune. The lyric, illustrated with a woodcut, was sold in the streets, usually for a penny, by ‘putters’. A more recent wordsmith and musician of Earlham Street was the eccentric front man of Pink Floyd, Syd Barrett, who lived in a flat on the site of No. 2 (1966-7).

From The Dials to Neal Street (formerly Great Earl Street)

The building of The Dials with the attractive green-tiled facade was until 1919 The Bunch of Grapes public house. From 1927-28 it housed the Cave of Harmony club, owned by actress Elsa Lanchester (later famous as the Bride of Frankenstein). It was a popular meeting place for London intellectuals including H. G. Wells, Aldous Huxley and Evelyn Waugh. The neighbouring Cambridge Theatre was built in 1930. Designed by Wimperis and Simpson, it is a rare complete and early example of a London theatre adopting the modern expressionist style pioneered in Germany during the 1920s, a reaction to the design excesses of the music hall and contemporary cinemas. It has an Art Deco interior by Serge Chermayeff.

The Woodyard Brewery

By the nineteenth century Seven Dials had taken on a predominantly commercial and industrial character. The brewing industry became established here in 1740. The Woodyard Brewery eventually filled the whole area between Long Acre and Short’s Gardens with large, handsome brick buildings linked by high-level cast iron bridges, built between 1796 and the 1880s. It had three wells of its own, bored 522 feet deep into the chalk. By the late nineteenth century, the Brewery employed 450 people and produced 500,000 barrels of beer a year. Nos 29-43 Earlham Street were rebuilt in 1880-86 as stables for 121 horses arranged on two levels around a stone-paved inner yard. Something of this can still be seen in the Thomas Neal’s development completed in 1992. Next door, what was the Brewery’s vat room and hop warehouse is now occupied by the Donmar Theatre. The Brewery moved out in 1905 and its premises were largely converted to warehouses serving Covent Garden Market.



Catnach Broadsheet.



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