

= 34 Montagu Square , Marylebone =

34 Montagu Square is the address of a London ground floor and basement flat once leased by Beatles member Ringo Starr during the mid @-@ 1960s . Its location is 1 @.@ 3 miles (2 @.@ 09 km) from the Abbey Road Studios , where The Beatles recorded . Many well @-@ known people have lived at the address , including a British Member of Parliament , Richard @-@ Hanbury Gurney , and the daughter of the Marquess of Sligo , Lady Emily Charlotte Browne . The square was named after Elizabeth Montagu , who was highly regarded by London society in the late 18th century .

Paul McCartney recorded demo songs there , such as " I 'm Looking Through You " , and worked on various compositions , including " Eleanor Rigby " . With the help of Ian Sommerville he converted the flat to a studio for Apple Corps ' avant @-@ garde Zapple label , recording William S. Burroughs for spoken @-@ word Zapple albums . Jimi Hendrix and his manager , Chas Chandler , later lived there with their girlfriends . Whilst living there , Hendrix composed " The Wind Cries Mary " .

For three months , John Lennon and Yoko Ono rented the flat , taking a photograph that would become the cover of their Two Virgins album . After the police raided the flat looking for drugs , the landlord of the property sought an injunction against Starr to prevent it from being used for anything untoward or illegal . Starr sold the lease in February 1969 . In 2010 , Ono unveiled a blue marker plaque at the site , making it an English Heritage " building of historical interest " .

= = History and occupants = =

Joseph T. Parkinson designed and built the houses in Montagu Square as part of the Portman Estate , between 1810 and 1815 . It was named after the Yorkshire @-@ born Elizabeth Montagu : a social reformer , patron of the arts , salonist , literary critic , and writer . She had lived nearby , in Montagu House , Portman Square , until her death on 25 August 1800 . The square is an example of Regency terrace residential architecture that was popular in the 19th century , with a communal garden located in the centre ; surrounded by iron railings and padlocked so its use would be limited to residents . No. 34 was built as one of the square 's many tall buildings which were originally intended for use as whole family homes instead of apartments . A Victorian writer was especially caustic when talking about the architecture : " Montagu Square and Bryanston Square are twin deformities , [which were built by] economical modern builders ... [to] dispose of with profit to those who wish to live near the great " .

Richard @-@ Hanbury Gurney , a banker and M.P. for Norwich , lived at No. 34 in 1830 . He was the father of Hudson Gurney , who became an M.P. for Newtown , Isle of Wight in 1816 . In the book , A local index to the list of proprietors of East India stock , John White was cited as living there in 1848 , and according to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society 's journals , one Thomas Hopkins , a pharmacist , was living in the house in 1849 . Aged 86 , Lady Emily Charlotte Browne died at the address on 14 March 1916 . She was the 5th daughter of Peter Howe , the Marquess of Sligo , and of royal blood . The English model and actress , Chrissie Shrimpton (Mick Jagger 's girlfriend from 1963 to 1966) , lived close to No. 34 in the 1960s .

= = = Starr 's lease = = =

Starr leased Flat 1 in 1965 , shortly before his marriage to Maureen Cox . It consisted of the ground floor and lower @-@ ground floor (the cellar / basement in the original house) , and entrance was gained by walking down the steps leading to the lower @-@ ground floor door , or the front door at ground level . The ground floor had an en @-@ suite bathroom (with a pink bath sunk into the floor) a bedroom and a sitting room . Downstairs was a kitchen , a bathroom and a bedroom / sitting room , which had its original fireplace . A resident of the square , Lord Mancroft , welcomed Starr , saying to a journalist , " We 're a very distinguished square , and I 'm sure we 'll welcome such a distinguished gentleman and his lady . "

The Swiss Embassy was , and is , located at the back of the house at 16 @-@ 18 Montagu Place , but in August 1965 , an embassy spokesperson complained that Beatles ' fans were defacing their back wall (in Bryanston Mews) , with messages meant for Starr : " Our back wall is now very unsightly and we shall have to redecorate . Our chauffeur , who is French and took part in the first World War , says the language some of these young people use is worse than anything he ever heard in the trenches " .

The Starrs lived there until Epstein 's accountant suggested that the group members should move to houses near his , in Esher . On 24 July 1965 , Starr bought Sunny Heights for £ 30 @,@ 000 (\$ 72 @,@ 000) , on South Road , St George 's Hill , but retained the lease on the flat . He rented the flat to The Fool , who were employed by Apple for various endeavours , such as painting the Apple Boutique in Baker Street , London , and designing psychedelic clothes for all four Beatles , as well as The Hollies , Marianne Faithfull , Procol Harum , Donovan , and Cream .

= = McCartney and Hendrix = =

McCartney rented the flat from Starr in 1965 , and asked Sommerville to install recording equipment (including two Revox reel @-@ to @-@ reel tape machines) ; planning to use it as a demo studio , and for recordings of spoken @-@ word albums . The house was not far from the Abbey Road studio where The Beatles recorded , and Jane Asher 's parents ' house at 57 Wimpole Street , London , where McCartney was living at the time . He recorded a demo version of " I 'm Looking Through You " at Montagu Square in late March 1965 , and worked on the composition of " Eleanor Rigby " . Sommerville moved into the flat , even though it was supposed to only be used as a studio , but defended the move by stating that he had to be " on call at all times " . Sommerville recorded Burroughs there , for Apple 's Zapple label offshoot , but discouraged other people who were interested , believing he was working for McCartney exclusively . During the time Sommerville was recording Burroughs , a friend of McCartney , Barry Miles , visited the apartment :

Ian [Sommerville] was in the strange position of playing host in Ringo 's expensive apartment , fixing everyone drinks , fussing about , cautioning everyone not to lean against the green watermarked silk wallpaper in the sitting room .

McCartney later gave up the flat , and it remained empty until Starr sub @-@ let it to Hendrix with Kathy Etchingham , and Chandler with Lotta Null , in December 1966 , for £ 30 (\$ 63) a month (£ 265 @.@ 12 ? \$ 459 @.@ 48 today) . Hendrix and Etchingham lived on the lower @-@ ground floor , and Hendrix composed " The Wind Cries Mary " there , after an argument with Etchingham about her cooking skills . For three months , between 1966 ? 67 , Hendrix shared the apartment with Gordon Haskell , a bassist who played with the psychedelic band Les Fleur de Lys . Unfortunately , when Hendrix was under the effects of LSD , he threw whitewash over the walls , forcing Starr to evict him . Starr also lent the flat to other pop stars and friends over the next few years , when they needed a place to stay in London . Lennon 's mother @-@ in @-@ law , Lillian Powell , stayed at Montagu Square rather than at the Lennons ' home , Kenwood , in Weybridge , when she visited her daughter , Cynthia Lennon .

= = Lennon and Ono = = =

When Lennon started a relationship with Ono in 1968 , his wife and son moved into the flat on 21 June 1968 , living there for three months , before returning to Kenwood , as Lennon and Ono preferred to live at Montagu Square , rather than in isolated Weybridge . The two lived in the Montagu Square flat for several months , as the White Album was being recorded . Visitors remembered that the flat was in a state of squalor , with dirty plates , cups , clothes , newspapers and magazines littering the floor , with the couple living on " a diet of champagne , caviar , and heroin " . Lennon and Ono 's experimental Two Virgins album had been recorded at Kenwood , but its notorious nude cover photos were taken at 34 Montagu Square . An Apple employee , Tony Bramwell , set up the camera so Lennon could take the photograph after Bramwell had left . Ono was pregnant during their stay , and they were also in the throes of heroin addiction .

At 11 : 30 am on 18 October 1968 , the flat was raided by Sgt. Norman Pilcher , of Scotland Yard 's Drugs Squad . In 1974 , Lennon remembered that Ono answered the front door as a female voice had said (over the intercom) , that there was a message from the Apple office . Ono opened the door and saw the female with five men , who were all dressed in plain @-@ clothes . She panicked and closed the door , thinking they were Beatles ' fans . Meanwhile , at the back window , another person was banging on the window and holding up a search warrant for Lennon to read . As Lennon was also panicking ? not knowing at that point that they were all police officers ? the raid consisted of seven police officers and two police dogs ? he played for time and refused to open the window . Because of this , Pilcher later accused Lennon of obstruction of justice , which was a crime . Inside the flat , the police searched every room thoroughly , even though Lennon was supposed to accompany them whilst they did so , according to the law . Pilcher then summoned Lennon and pointed to a binocular case on a mantelpiece , asking him , " Is this yours ? " Lennon replied in the affirmative , and was then shown 219 grams of hashish , which was in the case .

Lennon :

Don Shorter [a Daily Express reporter] had told us , ' They 're coming to get you ' , three weeks before . So , believe me , I 'd cleaned the house out , because Jimi Hendrix had lived there in the apartment , and I 'm not stupid . I went through the whole damn house .

Both were arrested , with Lennon pleading guilty to hashish possession , absolving Ono , who miscarried not long after . Lennon was fined £ 150 (\$ 360) . Note : in November 1973 , Pilcher was arrested for conspiracy to pervert the course of justice after it was alleged he had committed perjury . He was convicted and sentenced to four years imprisonment . After the raid , the landlord sought an injunction against Starr on 19 February 1969 , forbidding anyone but Starr or his family to live there , and allowing no music or instruments to be played . Starr appealed , and a compromise was offered ; only Starr or a family member would live in the flat . To finally settle the case , Starr sold the lease on 28 February 1969 .

= = Legacy = =

A music label owner , Reynold D ? Silva , bought the flat for £ 550 @, @ 000 in 2002 , beating a rival bid from Noel Gallagher . D ? Silva considered opening it as a music museum , but decided to rent it instead , for £ 795 per week . Author Miles contended that 34 Montagu Square " clearly qualifies as a candidate for one of the blue marker plaques that the City of Westminster fixes to buildings of historical interest " . On Saturday 23 October 2010 , in front of 100 people , Ono unveiled a Blue Plaque at 34 Montagu Square : " John Lennon , 1940 ? 1980 , Musician and songwriter , lived here in 1968 " . Beatles ' biographer , Hunter Davies , started the unveiling ceremony , with Rod Davis , from Lennon 's first group , The Quarrymen , in the gathering . Ono said :

I am very honoured to unveil this blue plaque and thank English Heritage for honouring John in this way . This particular flat has many memories for me and is a very interesting part of our history . In what would have been John 's 70th year , I am grateful to you all for commemorating John and this particular part of his London life , one which spawned so much of his great music and great art .

Davis also commented :

He [Lennon] would think it highly amusing that they 've put up a plaque here , considering what happened here . If only they 'd mentioned the drugs bust on the bottom of the plaque . Wherever he is , he would have a great chuckle about this one .