

**DUKE'S DUTY**



**CENTENARY** celebrations in Hampstead Garden Suburb have been given the royal seal of approval.

To mark the area's 100th birthday His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester visited Henrietta Barnett school where he unveiled a commemorative stone.

The stone is positioned next to those unveiled by Princess Margaret in 1957 and Queen Mary in 1928.

During his visit this month HRH also took part in an International Garden Cities Symposium, which was organised by the Centenary Committee and the Town and Country Planning Association.

Picture by Nigel Sutton

# Flood of cheap tat is 'destroying' Camden Market

Traders rebel against bland, mass produced goods

Yang Jiao

TRADERS fear the arts and craft charm of Camden Town's markets is being destroyed by cheap low quality imports.

Although afraid to give their names for fear of losing their pitches, long established stallholders say the market is going downhill fast.

One trader who has sold jewellery at Camden Lock for 14 years pointed the finger at "clone after clone of the same products flooding in, diluting the quality of the market".

He said: "The products are squeezing out older traders in arts and crafts who just can't survive on their business anymore."

"Camden is now filled with tourists who pass through while in London. They see it as the cool place they have to visit, but they don't buy. Serious buyers are being put off," he said.

He said drugs and knife crime in the area had also discouraged families from coming to the markets.

"Families and older buyers are reluctant to visit which encourages more low quality stalls selling cheap fashion products."

Another trader, who has been selling handmade clothing at the Lock for 28 years, said: "It's the end, 70 per cent of the market is now filled with such stalls, everything is the same



Camden Market: "Clone after clone of the same products".

now, no originality. They are destroying the soul of Camden Market."

Traders are also afraid for their futures because of the upcoming £12million redevelopment of the Stables Market. The revamp will see the diverse stalls in the arches replaced with a two-storey glass shopping complex hosting boutique shops, restaurants and bars. Around 60 businesses will be kicked off their current pitches with six weeks notice.

Others are concerned the expansion will inflate rents and drive out businesses already struggling to compete with mass produced goods.

But Camden Lock manager Will Fulford defended the quality of the markets. He said: "The Lock continues to promote traders who make or design their own products and produce ethical or fair trade labels and protects the market from being infiltrated by high-street brands and cheap imports."

And Ray Bathke who owns Village Games in the Lock said: "Camden's image is definitely changing, but it is a response to people's taste. It's just the trend at the moment, and there's no point fighting it. Plus I do think the speciality shops will continue to trade as before."

## Beanstalk is a growing concern

GREEN-fingered youngsters are shooting off to Hampstead today for a horticultural holiday event.

The Great Beanstalk Race is taking place at Heath Library in Keats Grove from 2pm to 3pm today.

Children will listen to the story Jim and the Beanstalk before being given their own beans to plant.

At the end of the summer holidays the owner of the tallest beanstalk will be awarded a special prize for their green fingers.

The race is part of the Big Wild Read events at the library this summer which include a bag painting session next Thursday aimed at encouraging artistic flair and recycling.

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