

Suburb News

Hampstead Garden Suburb
Residents Association



Romy takes on Quality Control for Kids Gardening Club, page 7

Horticultural Society celebrates harvest-time, page 19



Suburb News chats to local celebrity Dame Jenni Murray, page 5



How does the future look for our young?

THE EDITORS

I love this issue's masthead photo. Two children pausing on their bikes on the brow of a hill, looking out over the Heath Extension towards the Suburb. They are literally and metaphorically on the brink. Their teenage years are perhaps not so far away. We can't see their faces (just a shadow profile of the boy) so we can only guess what they might be thinking as they gaze out towards a future of infinite possibilities.

With the deep schisms existing in the world today, we will be concerned at what the future can hold for our children. But this image also offers optimism. Look at that wonderful vista ahead of them, the blue sky and the familiar, sturdy Suburb buildings in the

distance. The image is wistful and hopeful all at once.

The closure of our local library shocked many residents and the community did what it does best – it rallied together. Now it has reopened (full story on p.2) and Suburb children, once again, have a hugely important local resource which could lead to wonderful discoveries for them (as it did for Dame Jenni Murray, who's interview you can read on p.5).

The Kids Gardening Club, part of Britain's Biggest Living Garden project, is another fantastic resource for Suburb children (read more on p.7) as are our abundant outdoor spaces. In this issue, our SNY team write about the benefits of nature on mental health (pp12 and 13).

We live on a very fragile planet with many uncertainties.



Delphy and Esme at the Kids Gardening Club, see page 7 (Photo: Tracey Halls|Oh My Butterfly)

Optimism is increasingly hard to maintain. But, when I look around at what our local community is doing for its future caretakers, I am hopeful.

We can't be the only ones striving for a better future.

Election Hustings in the Suburb

STEVEN ROWE

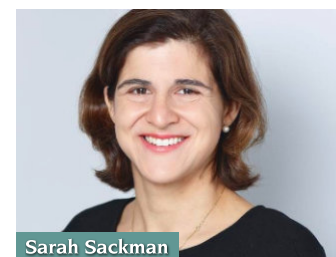
With the election looming large, congregants of St Jude's were encouraged by Revd Em to join members of Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue, the Free Church and the Central Square Minyan at an interdenominational Hustings held on 19 June at Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue.

After a warm welcome from Asst Rabbi Luis Herszaft, we heard presentations from three of the candidates standing for the Finchley & Golders Green constituency: Alex Deane (Con), Sarah Sackman (Lab) and Sarah Hoyle (Lib Dem). They all made

interesting presentations and then – before the floor was opened to questions from those attending – pre-submitted questions were put to the candidates.

All-in-all, a very lively and interesting evening.

Following the results on 5 July, Sarah Sackman was duly elected as our MP.



Sarah Sackman

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Photo: Shelley-Anne Salisbury

Urgent community action reopens the HGS library

FRANCINE BARSAM

The local community was upset to find the HGS library closed without warning on 30 May. Freshwater Property Management, the freeholders of the building, had changed the locks and posted a notice explaining that the library would remain closed until further notice.

The closure was due to Barnet Council's inadvertent failure to renew the lease. Securing a new

lease was expected to take several weeks. This was not the first time the library faced closure; in 2012 it was saved through the sheer determination of volunteers and the local community.

The HGS library, with over 3,500 members, offers popular events including a weekly children's singing and reading activity, a monthly book club, and occasional author talks. A dedicated team of 40 volunteers runs the library on an annual budget of £10k from Barnet Council.

On 22 July, after a communal effort to renew the lease and regain access, the library reopened. A small celebration took place on 30 July, just in time for the school summer holidays. The reopening coincided with the launch of Summer Reading Challenge for primary school age children and the book club will meet on 6 September.

Jeremy Clynes, chairman of the HGS library, expressed his gratitude: "It really was a communal effort to get the library reopened in such a short space of time. Thanks to Rohit Grover and Michael Mire, local councillors, Hannah Richens, Chief Librarian, LB Barnet Council, and Philip Eder, Suburb resident and solicitor, who all kindly gave the library team valuable advice throughout the process. The lease has now been renewed for 15 years and we're confident that this won't happen again."

Dame Jenni Murray, a notable HGS resident (see page 5) and attendee at last year's library anniversary party, shared her sentiments on the importance of the library: "A weekly visit to the local library was my greatest childhood pleasure. The books I borrowed led me into wonderful stories and a lifetime of never being without books. A library is a joy and an education you don't know you're getting as a child – it's too much fun to feel like you're being taught but you're learning all the time from the books you read. And it's free. Books are expensive. A library makes them available to all."

There have been so many changes in the Market Place over the years, but let's hope the library will continue to be a firm fixture on our local landscape.



HGS Library – up and running once again (Photo: Marc Hull)

Mayoral visit to Northway Gardens

JOAN EDWARDS

The Worshipful the Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Tony Vourou, joined a small group of people at the Rose Gardens in Northway Gardens on a fairly sunny June day.

I had the honour of greeting the Mayor, who was shown round the Rose Gardens by Brian Ingram, organiser of the many gardening volunteers who have worked hard to make the Rose Gardens an enjoyable space, once more, after some years of neglect. The roses are joyful beyond belief and particularly splendid this year.

The Mayor was interested in the Northway Gardens project and sat and chatted with us for a while, joining us for a cup of tea and a biscuit. Passing walkers stopped and chatted too.

A pleasant little event and an honour to have the Mayor visiting us during his busy Mayoral year.



Joan Edwards and The Worshipful the Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Tony Vourou (Photo: Brian Ingram)

Camera trap around Moss Hall school

GARY SHAW
PENALTIES@HGSRA.UK

Residents might want to be aware of a recently installed camera trap around Moss Hall school near West Finchley station. The trap operates for one hour at each end of the school day during which times entry is prohibited for non-resident vehicles. Signage for the scheme is typical of that used under the Low Traffic Neighbourhood pretext. The little recognised No Motor Vehicle traffic signs are used, rather than standard No Entry plates with a time qualification.

What is unusual about the West Finchley trap is the extremely poor advance warning signs. These are essential because by the time a motorist sees the actual entry point signs, it is too late to avoid being fined for entering the trap. The advance signs at West Finchley, positioned about 100 yards ahead of the entry points, are far too small and use different-sized lettering to denote the morning and afternoon restriction times. If these signs are seen at all, the variable-sized print makes the afternoon restriction almost

impossible to read, not least because in the brief moment a moving driver has to interpret the information, his eye is bound to be drawn to the larger script. The advance sign for northbound traffic on Wentworth Avenue is pictured here. The one on Nether Street for southbound traffic is even more deficient as it has been placed on the opposite side of the road from the motorists' direction of travel.

The inadequacy of the advance warning signs is so egregious that I would expect any challenge to a traffic ticket to succeed at independent adjudication and I would be happy to assist anyone who wants to appeal if caught by this unpleasant money-grabbing scheme. There are some indications that the prohibition does not operate during school holidays but I would advise residents to be wary, nevertheless.

Whilst schemes such as this one are still unusual in Barnet, it is not the only one and residents should anticipate that they will proliferate in the years ahead.



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Rev'd Em and her husband are volunteering at Proms at St Jude's 2024 (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)



A year in the Suburb

REV'D EM KOLLTVEIT

It's been just over a year since I became the Priest in Charge at St Jude on the Hill, the CoE Parish Church in Central Square, whose magnificent spire is a constant reminder to keep looking to the heavens for inspiration. To say that we hit the ground running may well be an underestimation of the miraculous changes that have taken place within this extraordinary community over that time.

Where do I begin to tell the tale of this transformation? Generously, many members of the Parish have congratulated me for the positivity and energy I have brought to this community. However, that congratulation needs to be given to the amazing people who have rallied around to help create this much needed radical change. As a priest in holy orders, I recognise that it has been the gift of the holy spirit

and God's freely given grace that has propelled this transformation, which was well overdue.

My intentions, as the new incumbent, were initially focused on three things: to get the building open, to change the narrative and to build a team. I'm pleased to say that we can tick all those boxes and so many more.

On my arrival, St Jude's was on the cusp of closure, operating without a treasurer and churchwardens, both key positions that within church law are essential. These are challenging positions that are deeply sacramental in their undertaking and I was over the moon when two amazing women, Jessica Farmer and Antonia Clayden, responded to this call, closely followed by the God-given Steve Morris in the role of Treasurer.

We've also been blessed by the support of Rev'd Jan Rushton, who has joined us to take a lead on bible studies and teaching. Many of you will have heard about the ordination of Elinor Delaney at St Paul's Cathedral in June, the beginning of a new journey for her, decades in the making, as she takes on the role of Assistant Curate in our growing ministry team.

Initially, I had agreed to a three-year post in the parish to explore whether, as a community, we could turn the ship around and find a way to care for our building, meet our obligations to the London Diocese and, importantly, the parish and wider community – to serve and encourage human flourishing in this place modelled by the teaching of Jesus Christ.

We now have a growing congregation which is diversifying, our music life has developed significantly with the addition of Choral Evensong, a service that brings joy and peace to all those of faith and no faith, and we are now moving towards supporting eight Choral Scholars under the leadership of our amazing director of music Nicholas Chalmers. Notably, we have gone from one church service a week, to nine.

Just a few months ago we offered a disused part of the vicarage garden as the home for a new initiative. HGS Kids Gardening Club, in partnership with the RA and HGS Horticultural Society, has quite literally bloomed! It is a visible joy to all who visit it and I am so delighted that on Tuesday afternoons the garden and vicarage are filled to the brim with children learning how to grow their own veg and encourage biodiversity in an urban setting. The garden is open to the public, so please do swing by and take a moment to rest on the new Lutyens bench and enjoy our achievements.

I must give a shout out to the amazing people who've been involved in helping to stage our events, including the New Year's Eve Party in association with the RA: my husband's alter ego DJ G-Nutz and Richard, our lighting designer, who's wedding I presided over, with his beautiful bride Izabel, in July. Without this additional support from family and friends, none of this would have been possible.

From the Hey Jude's! community singalong band to art installations, Yoga and Christian meditation, I hope the wider community now recognises that St Jude's is open for business.

In a recent meeting with the new Bishop of Edmonton, the Rev'd Canon Dr Anderson Jeremiah, he asked me whether I could imagine staying in Hampstead Garden Suburb beyond my three year term. Between you and me, I don't think I can imagine ever leaving now as it feels like home and, as a family, we've never been so happy.

St Jude's as a community stands by our slogan; whoever you are, wherever you're from, whatever you believe, you are welcome here. It is our dearest wish that you can find a home at St Jude's for whatever reason and I take seriously my commission as your parish priest to serve you in whatever way I can. As for the future of the building, that is still very much hanging in the balance. As a community we will all need to think seriously about how we respond to its needs in order to keep it standing for future generations and alongside our Fabric Lead, the legendary David White, we are exploring every opportunity and the future is looking bright.



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The Tortoise, the Emperor and Hilda, the Caretaker

ANDREW BOTTERILL

On a cool June day – more blustery South Atlantic than balmy English strawberries and cream – the Reverend Alan Walker made an emotional return to the Suburb where, to a packed Fellowship House, he gave what would surely be a final tribute to the late Hilda Williams – Fellowship’s erstwhile centenarian caretaker. There was an illustrated account of her extraordinary journey from St Helena via South Africa to the Suburb, the dedication of a new bench, her favourite songs sung by Deborah and Annalisa of the Garden Choir. The afternoon

ended with tea and cakes and personal anecdotes about Hilda.

Alan reminded us of her early years in 1920s St Helena, a mere hundred years after an earlier short stay resident, Napoleon Bonaparte. He mentioned another islander who has also enjoyed a measure of longevity – 194 years and still going strong – Jonathan, the giant tortoise. Must be that bracing sea air.

Hilda has enjoyed more laps of honour, memorial events and tributes than many have had hot dinners. Memorials are about time and place. Hilda’s final resting place may be in South Africa but the Suburb now has its own focal point to recall this unusual life,

summed up by the Eileen Whelan quotation etched on to Hilda’s memorial bench, situated at Fellowship House. All are welcome to come and sit awhile and ponder

on longevity, a colonial past, imperial glory, and anything else.

And the breeze rustling in the beech hedge; is that a whisper of those winds of the South Atlantic?

Famous residents of St Helena...



Jonathan, the giant tortoise (Photo: Luke McKernan)



Napoleon Bonaparte (Painter: Andrea Appiani)



Hilda Williams (Photo: Alan Walker)



Bench plaque (Photo: Andrew Botterill)

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Interview with Dame Jenni Murray

SHELLEY-ANNE SALISBURY

I'm sitting in Dame Jenni Murray's living room almost a year to the day after my first attempt at interviewing her, when she'd had to cancel due to a bad cold. My two further attempts were both scuppered by emergency admissions to the Royal Free – a haematoma in her big toe and then a broken vertebra. Both injuries caused by her pets, but more on that later.

Thankfully, all is well this time and Dame Jenni is sitting opposite me, the picture of health and eager to talk. She's also eager to wrap this up before the Euro semi-finals, England v Holland, so we meet earlier than originally planned and Jenni texts: "I'm not usually a football fan but I've been quite caught up this time!"

As we chat, two of Jenni's chihuahuas (Minnie and Madge), plus one of her two cats (Suu, a beautiful Burmese), snuggle all around her. Jenni adores animals and supports the Cinnamon Trust, a charity for older people, the terminally ill and their pets (cinnamon.org.uk).

Jenni moved into a cottage on the north side of Hampstead Garden Suburb 12 years ago. Before then she commuted from her Hampshire home to the BBC to present Woman's Hour via a basement flat in Camden (wuthering depths), where she



Photo supplied by Knight Ayton

spent her working week. It was convenient but she yearned for somewhere more peaceful. A friend introduced her to the Suburb and Jenni fell in love with it for all the reasons we would expect – a gem of a place with a village feel and verdant spaces, yet within easy reach of Central London.

Jenni presented Woman's Hour for 33 years, ending her tenure in 2020. Does she miss it? Not one bit. She absolutely loved it but it was the right time to go and she felt only relief the day after she left. Her very frank article on transgender women (The Times 2017) had led to a furore when her views were generally misunderstood and misinterpreted. Interestingly, JK Rowling's essay on the same subject in 2020 (which led to a

huge social media backlash) stated many of the exact same points Jenni had made. Dame Jenni is ahead of the curve. Does she still see herself as an activist? Absolutely. I wonder if she still listens to Woman's Hour? It seems not: "I rarely listen. Too much shouting at the radio. NO! ASK HER THIS....."

Dame Jenni has written several books, notably one about her mother, with whom she had an uneasy relationship: "I loved her and hated her – I miss her so much" (heartbreaking), a series on influential and impactful women, a book about her favourite dog (Butch) and books on the menopause and the science and psychology of size. I wonder if she has plans for more? Perhaps

fiction? Dame Jenni is very clear: "No. Writing a book is really boring." So that's that then.

I get the feeling Dame Jenni doesn't like being bored and she certainly doesn't suffer fools gladly. One disapproving stare down the bridge of her nose through those famous glasses is distinctly unnerving. Whilst we chat, one of the chihuahuas tries to sneak off with a pack of tissues. This is the chihuahua who snuggled up so close to Jenni she managed to push her out of bed, hence the broken vertebra. Jenni does 'the stare', hardly having to raise her voice in admonishment, and the dog thinks better of it, redoubles its steps and drops the tissues back at Jenni's feet. Wow. I notice Suu (the beautiful Burmese, who was responsible for the haematoma after dropping a heavy glass ashtray on her mistress's big toe) keeps her head well down.

Much of Jenni's life has been well-documented over the years (often by Jenni in her various articles and columns), so I ask about her life here in the Suburb. She loves her quiet road where she knows almost all of her neighbours and help, when needed, is always on hand. Jenni's had to spend more time in London over the past couple of years due to various health issues (also well documented by her) so has immersed herself in Suburb life. She's a regular attendee of the Proms at St. Jude's and LitFest where she's interviewed authors to the delight of both authors and audiences alike. During the recent LitFest, she interviewed Claire

Wills on her book 'Missing Persons', about her painful family history of secrets in Ireland with such sensitivity and intelligence. It was a master class in interviewing. (Readers, you may suppose I found the prospect of interviewing Dame Jenni slightly daunting.)

I ask Jenni what she'd like Suburb News residents to know about her that's not already well documented. This may surprise you, but Jenni would like you to know she's a bit of a loner. Her word not mine. Whilst she's happy to join in when asked, she doesn't actively seek out company or activities, something she attributes to being an only child and learning to be content with her own company.

I'm conscious of the time – just ten minutes to go until kick-off, so I wrap up the interview. At home, I settle down to watch the match and imagine Jenni shouting manager-style instructions at the TV. Gareth Southgate has clearly heard her and England triumphs. I bet the air in Jenni's Suburb cottage was pretty blue at the end of the Final...

Dame Jenni's favourite things:
Film: Manchester by the Sea
Meal: Rognons a la sauce Madère – eaten by Jenni in Paris on her 21st birthday
Song: Diamonds and Rust by Joan Baez (who once sang it for Jenni on Woman's Hour)
Book: Emma by Jane Austen
Possession: Her opal ring (The first opal she ever bought. It's not her birthstone but she just loves them)
Person: Her hairdresser

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5



Pond in a pot (Photo: Dominic Rose)

DOMINIC ROSE
MEMBER RA COUNCIL
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As featured in the previous issue of Suburb News, this project aims to make HGS the most biodiverse urban area in the UK and has created a national case study of how community action in private gardens and public spaces can have meaningful and measurable impact.

The project has gained support from local residents, schools and volunteer organisations, but also from local councillors, Barnet Council and MPs.

Other London and country-wide bodies, such as the Natural History Museum, are also excited about what we are doing!

This project builds on the increasing bank of evidence that domestic gardens are likely the most important wildlife habitat in the UK, given their abundance, their connected nature and the variety of plants and micro-habitats contained within them. In her seminal study, Jennifer Owen identified 2,200 insect species in her average-sized garden in Leicester. The Wildlife Gardening



Drone Fly (Photo: Egor Kamelev)

Forum offers a wealth of resources on how to have a beautiful and functional garden that is also friendly to wildlife. We can all create our own little wildlife reserve outside our back door.

The Suburb was founded with an ambition to bring nature back into the city, and the sheer quantity of gardens, uniquely connected by our famous hedges, means we have a huge head start. If everyone can do just a little, then together we can have a huge impact.

We now have a strong group of local volunteer wildlife recorders, taking part in things like the Big Butterfly Count and the Hedgehog Monitoring Project with the Zoological Society of London. The RA has funded recent professional biodiversity surveys on four sites: the RA's Henrietta Community Orchard in Lyttelton playing fields, the kids garden by St Jude's, some semi-woodland near Central Square, and three neighbouring residential gardens. Together, these will give us factual and unique baseline data on local biodiversity, and will be repeated annually to see what impact we are having as a community.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Just a few, small changes can make your garden, balcony or patio more wildlife friendly. Putting out bird food will immediately bring you welcome new visitors and introducing water is the cheapest and single most impactful thing you can do. This needn't be a full-blown pond; a simple bowl of water will make a difference or a pond in a pot is beautiful and fascinating. Plant some pollinator-friendly flowers and stop using chemicals (slug pellets, pesticides, weed-killers) and within weeks you will see a notable increase in wildlife around you.

Our thriving WhatsApp group now has over 120 local members. It's a great place to ask questions, share thoughts and get involved.

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WILDLIFE GARDEN CHALLENGE

We have partnered with the Wildlife Gardening Forum to develop 'Britain's Biggest Living Garden – Wildlife Garden Challenge.' This has been developed by leading ecologists, based on scientific evidence, and we are fortunate to be the first large scale pilot of the scheme, ahead of a planned national rollout.

There is lots of information and how-to guides and you can earn points for wildlife friendly features and practices you already have or plan to adopt in your outdoor space. Points means prizes, and you can win a bronze, silver or gold award with a certificate, a window sticker and a plaque that will be the envy of all your neighbours.

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COMMUNITY ORCHARD & WILDLIFE GARDEN IN LYTTELTON PLAYING FIELDS

Work has begun to create a community wildlife garden in the area surrounding the community orchard in Lyttelton near the bowls club and the outdoor gym. Barnet Council has passed management of this area to local residents, and has stopped cutting the grass, which has made the area more attractive to wildlife and interesting to visitors.

We have cut wavy paths through the grass, these are well used and appreciated by walkers children and dogs, and the new log circle has created a space for children to learn, gather and explore nature. The ambition is to continue to develop the area and, inspired by our community activities, Barnet Council has secured substantial funding to introduce more wildlife friendly features in the park, which we are partnering with them to deploy.

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Orchard in Lyttelton Playing Field (Photo: Dominic Rose)

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Many homes in the area are blessed with good sized gardens, and this a major factor attracting people to the area, especially those with young children. However, thick clay soil with poor drainage and a very high-water table mean that gardens become waterlogged and muddy after periods of heavy rain. Throw into the mix a child or two determined to play football in all weathers and a mud bath is often the outcome.

Given this, it is understandable that artificial lawns seem an obvious solution. BUT there are many downsides to astroturf which aren't well publicised. It's expensive to lay (and needs to be replaced every 8-10 years); will make your garden hotter as plants naturally cool the air whereas plastic retains it. And it is catastrophic for wildlife – both in your garden and more widely, given it's made from plastic that

has to be produced and transported and ultimately dumped. For wildlife, it's not that dissimilar to wrapping your garden in cling film. Insects and worms cannot survive below the surface and for families with pets, it is also a really bad surface for dogs and cats having no cool grass surface to lower their body temperature on in hot weather.

Rather than preach about its perils or repeat warnings that it's not permitted by the Trust, the RA is committed to helping residents find better, sustainable, and environmentally friendly solutions for their gardens. There are other ways to improve drainage, lay and maintain better lawns and create spaces that work for nature, as well as for footballing kids all at a lower or equivalent cost.

If you are struggling with your lawn or considering installing artificial grass, please email me at biodiversity@hgsra.co.uk for a free visit and consultation with some lawn experts to help you understand and explore alternatives!

Kids Gardening Club



Photo: Tracey Halls



Photo: Louisa Rose

Perhaps the most successful strand of the wider project has been the kids gardening club. Launched in late April, the club now has a strong community of about 50 regular children and adult members who together have transformed a lawn outside St Jude's Church into a wonderful community wildlife garden. The RA funded the greenhouse; raised beds funded by HGS Horticultural Society are now overflowing with produce. Our young helpers, aged from 1-13, love eating what they grow and discovering a taste for all kinds of new vegetables! Watering is done by volunteers and summer rains have also helped!

Possibly the most popular feature is the new pond which is already teeming with wildlife. To our knowledge, this is the only communal pond in HGS

apart from those on the Heath Extension and we hope will help to increase biodiversity in the area.

The garden is a true communal space and visitors drop in to enjoy it almost every hour of every day. Plenty of seating is available and, if you haven't already done so, do come and visit. Any spare plants or tools are always appreciated and can be dropped off at any time or email me for collection.

The Club meets every Tuesday 4-6pm, and all are welcome to join whatever age and whatever experience. It has been truly heart-warming to see the bonds that have been formed between children of all backgrounds, and between the generations, who all take a huge amount of value from the group's knowledge, energy and enthusiasm.

KIDS GARDENING QUOTATIONS

"I love picking the blackberries": Zoya

"Painting chairs is the best": Sabeen

"It's great planting seeds, learning their names and then seeing if they grow": Mishal

"I love gardening club because I get a break": Joshua



Delphy

KIDS GARDENING ARTWORKS



Esme



Joshua



Emi

The Free Church

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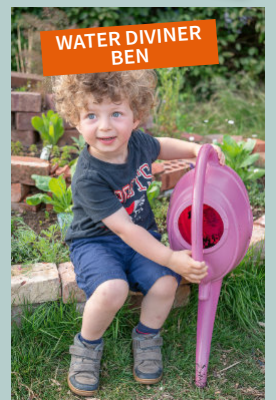
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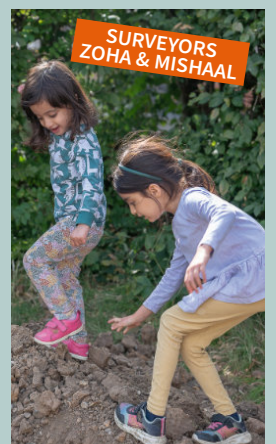
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Photos: Tracey Halls | Oh My Butterfly

RA REVIEW

A great success for the RA Summer Fair (that's the way to do it!)

PATRICIA MAJOR, RA EVENTS COMMITTEE — EVENTS@HGSRA.UK

Flanked on three sides by magnificent Lutyens buildings, the two Churches and Henrietta Barnett School, where better than the grand and wonderful space of Central Square to erect a large marquee and many gazebos in order to stage the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association's 2024 Summer Fair?

The day started with a wonderful dog show organised by local charity All Dogs Matter; their show is always a huge draw to the day. Lots of local dogs entered and came away with well-deserved prizes. This year the Horticultural Society joined the RA Fair with its 293rd Flower Show taking place in a large marquee and teas being served in the Free Church. This was a welcome addition to the Fair which, along with donkey rides, Professor James' Punch & Judy, a coconut shy, yoga, table tennis and the much loved Grimsdyke Brass band, helped to give this annual community event a nostalgic air – something like a village fête from the past.

The St Jude's outside bar run by Revd Em and Are was never without a queue and was literally drunk dry. Lola's generously donated their amazing cakes and cupcakes to the HGS Infant School PTA to sell and they were snapped up like ...hot cakes! The Children's Games stall run by the Girl Guides was very popular and a member of Garden Suburb Theatre in scary make-up and costume engaged with the crowd. My plant stall was cleared of stock, many children's faces were painted, artwork created, and there were tours of the inspiring new Kids Gardening Club's garden in the grounds of St. Jude's Vicarage.

The sun shone on us all and, not only did it power Next Day Solar's many ingenious gadgets, but it encouraged people to engage, with neighbours chatting and children running about. The future is indeed bright in our beloved Suburb.

The RA Events Team would like to thank the RA for financial support, the community organisations that ran stalls and everyone who attended on the day for making the Fair a huge success. If you would like to join our merry team and help organise and run the 2025 Summer Fair, please get in touch with us via events@hgsra.uk.

To sum up, not only was much fun had by all, but £4,000 was raised for the local community. As Mr Punch – perhaps the star of the Summer Fair – would say: "That's the way to do it!"



Photo: Ramon Barolet

All other photos (additional pictures back page): Michael Eleftheriades



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Publications distributor party says farewell to Lorna Page

EMMA HOWARD
CHAIR@HGSRA.UK

On 1 July, the Publications Committee of the RA hosted a party by way of a thank you to the many people involved in counting, sorting, distributing and delivering the quarterly Suburb News to some 5,000 homes and shops in the Suburb. Fellowship House was filled with a throng of the many volunteers involved with this, some of whom have been involved for

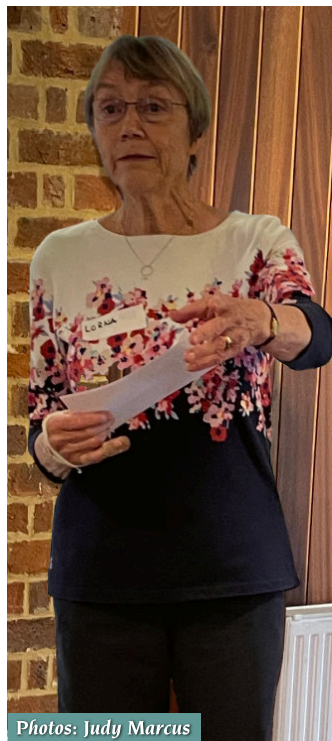
over 27 years! The food and drinks were excellent and many thanks to people who helped make this such a memorable event.

Local resident Lorna Page has managed all aspects of the distribution for over 27 years; no mean feat as it involves communicating with and co-ordinating well over 120 volunteers. Lorna has devised a series of distribution rounds in this time, which are broken down into smaller more manageable door to door deliveries. Lorna has been ably assisted by husband Chris Page during this time, and more recently their son has helped them with the heavy lifting of bags and boxes of copies for delivery into the distributors' cars. However, she has decided it's time to hand over the baton and I will be taking it over in the interim to try to ensure we stay on track. If you are

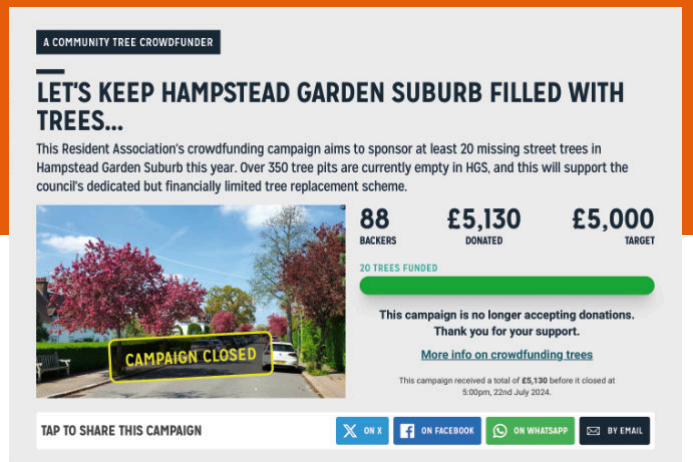
reading this, it means it's more or less worked despite the challenge of handover combined with a late August distribution round!

Of course, we always need more volunteers to help with this. We encourage your teenage children also to get involved (as mine did until recently) as it's a good volunteering role to grind their teeth on. Some of the deliverers are keen to step down after many years of involvement, so if you think you could help, please drop me an email with your address and contact details to chair@hgsra.uk. I am really keen to keep this as a volunteer-based activity as we are about to celebrate 40 years of Suburb News with the forthcoming Issue 160!

Many thanks on behalf of the RA and its Publications Committee to Lorna, Chris and the many other volunteers.



Photos: Judy Marcus



More street trees following fundraiser

STEVEN ROWE, CHAIR – TREES & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
TREES@HGSRA.UK

Hampstead Garden Suburb was designed to create a sense of harmony between the built and the natural environment. The RA is committed to keeping it that way and funds the planting of street trees every year. Despite big efforts on behalf of the RA, LB Barnet and some residents who contribute themselves to funding additional tree planting, we continue to suffer an overall loss in tree numbers, especially as many of them are now over 100 years old, and many have not survived the recent long dry summers. Trees are a vital factor in combating climate change as well as making our streets look attractive and providing wildlife habitat.

This year, Maria Schlatter (of the RA's Trees & Open Spaces Committee), organised our first Community Tree Crowdfunder. This was publicised on social media platforms as well as in Suburb News and was supported by donations from an amazing 88 HGS residents. Over £5,000 was raised, enabling an extra 20 trees to be funded this year.

Building on this success, we will start a new campaign with an even more ambitious target in January 2025 but, in the meantime, please visit our website at www.hgsra.uk/trees/index.html to find out how you can participate in many other activities carried out by our committee or if you would like to fund a street tree, maybe in your road.



Join us on the RA Family Fun Run

RA Volunteers are organising a Family 3km run around Lyttelton Playing Fields on Sunday 29 September at 10:30am. Free entry. Dogs and children very welcome. Also, a short fun run in fancy dress for the little ones: children aged 7 and under only please. Prizes for the fastest runners and the best fancy dress.

See <https://hgsra.uk/> for more details and to sign up, or scan the QR code.

Runs will start from the café. Non runners, come and join in the fun and bring your litter picking stick and bags to help clear the park of litter.



Can you spare just £15 a year to help keep our Suburb special?

We hope that your answer is YES because, with your support, this 110 year-old, volunteer-run, organisation can continue to:



Bring the community together with social events like the amazing New Year's Eve Fireworks & Party and the Summer Fair



Support biodiversity via the very popular Kids Gardening Club and Henrietta's Orchard and promote Net Zero projects



Fund street tree planting and defend our green spaces and at-risk heritage trees



Liaise with LB Barnet to keep the Suburb clean and beautiful and run a litter picking volunteer team



Produce Suburb News (and, as an RA member, you'll also get Suburb eNews monthly and access to our recommended traders' database)



Support local charities and community groups including equipment in HGS playgrounds and grants to local primary schools

Just £15 per annum enables you to join over 1,700 other Suburb households that are already members of the Residents Association. You can join online at hgsra.uk/join or call 020 3488 9131. Please contact chair@hgsra.uk if you would like to volunteer to support our many activities and have fun with others in fostering a strong community.





Pride & Prejudice (Photo: Ruben Cohen)

Autumn at Fellowship House

ANDREW BOTTERILL

As the season of mists approaches, it's perhaps time to take a look at the mellow fruitfulness of some of Fellowship's offerings of words and music after the summer lull.

The Tuesday talks programme restarts on 10 September with a talk on the American Election by Simon Marks, the LBC Washington correspondent (Simon is Suburb born and bred). In their present form, these talks have been arranged every week from 2009. That's between 600 and 700 talks by speakers from far and wide on a multitude of topics.

'Pride and Prejudice' is coming to the Suburb: on Tuesday 13 October at 7.30pm there will be a performance at Fellowship House of excerpts read by Sophie Max, accompanied by a Carl Davis score for violin (Leora Cohen) and piano (Paul Wingfield). Davis wrote the soundtrack for the BBC 1995 mini-series which many will remember (was it Mr Darcy's shirt or his trousers?). The show was performed to great acclaim this summer at

Highgate and Cambridge. The Fellowship complimentary bar will hopefully be serving something a little stronger than a well-mannered cup of tea.

Barry Millington's twice monthly Friday afternoon Music Appreciation sessions resume, covering the many facets of music making. These have proved to be enormously popular.



Barry Millington (Photo: Andrew Botterill)

Finally, Autumn wouldn't be Autumn without Fellowship's Chamber Concert Series, now in its 14th year – 'The Wigmore Hall Around The Corner'. This runs over six consecutive Sunday afternoons from 20 October to 24 November inclusive. This year's magnificent programme of music by top professional talent is sure to make these concerts sell-outs once again, so do book early. We're particularly keen this



Waddesdon Manor (Photo: Andrew Botterill)

year to attract those who have not yet experienced the intensity of chamber music being played as it was intended to be, at close quarters in intimate surroundings. It's a low cost and convenient way of giving it a try. Thanks to support from our two faithful sponsors and Fellowship's subsidy, the price can be held at an astonishing £12 for the fourth year running. If you think that's too low, then you have the chance to increase your outlay by contributing to the Ukrainian Red Cross for which we'll be collecting again at the concerts on a matched funding basis.

Details of all of the above are available at fellowshiphouse.co.uk, as is information on all the other activities happening at Fellowship House for the benefit of residents. Alternatively do feel free to call me on 07973 186729.

DROPPING IN ON THE ROTHSCHILDS

Sometimes life throws up some unexpected surprises. A full-on Renaissance French Chateau on a Chiltern hilltop just 45 miles from the Suburb. This is Waddesdon Manor which was the destination for 50 residents on the annual freebie organised by Fellowship for club members on a warm end of July day. It was built just 150 years ago by the young widower, Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, for entertainment purposes and to showcase his collection of English paintings, French furniture and decor. Other collections were added later. In the cellars, seemingly a sizeable chunk of the best vintages from the Rothschild French vineyards could be found. A wonderful day, enjoyed by all.

CROQUET

How many know about the Suburb's truly hidden gem – Fellowship's croquet lawn and allotments? If anyone is interested in playing, we'd be glad to hear from them. Call Chris Page on 8455 2785

NEW FH TREASURER

Fellowship is delighted to announce that Martin Webster is joining the Management Committee as Treasurer to replace Neil Smith, who has retired to the country. Martin is very well qualified for the post. Among his attributes is the fact that he is married to Kate Webster, Chair of Proms at St Jude's.



Croquet (Photo: Andrew Botterill)

A PORT IN THE STORM?

Part of the remit of HGS Fellowship has always been to make, at its sole discretion, limited welfare grants to those Suburb residents needing some help to weather temporary difficulties. Should you know of anyone in this situation, please contact Lorna Jones on 07891 112365.



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Trio Arisonto, appearing at the Autumn Concerts (Photo: Ian Rowson)

Garden Suburb Theatre's Autumn season

COLIN GREGORY

After the romping success of Robin Hood in the Wood the Garden Suburb Theatre moves to its regular indoor venue at Upstairs at the Gatehouse for an Autumn season of plays touching on our complex relationship with health, humanity, life and death. But lest you think this all sounds a bit serious, there will be plenty of humour thrown in along the way.

From 3-6 October, GST is staging Brian Clark's *Whose Life is it Anyway?* The play revolves around Claire, a sculptor, who has been paralysed from the neck down in a car accident and is determined to be allowed to die. This highly topical issue is explored from the perspective of an intelligent woman with whom the audience can readily identify. Do patients have a right to die? Should the government be able to interfere?

From 21-24 November, GST will be staging *Holding the Man*.

Tommy Murphy's adaptation of Timothy Conigrave's memoir is a fast-paced, hilarious, warm and heart-breaking masterpiece. In a 1970s Melbourne High School, young Tim falls in love with none other than the captain of the football team, beginning an unconventional love story that runs over the course of the next 15 years, until they finally encounter an obstacle that even love, sadly, can't conquer. The two central characters play among a small ensemble portraying over 40 other roles.

Tickets are available from: <https://upstairsatthegatehouse.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/show>.



Whose Life is it Anyway? rehearsal with Vicki Browning as Claire, Clare Janew as Sister Anderson and Rachel Sondheim as Nurse Kay Sadler (Photo: Tim Colmans)



Photo: Diana Iwi

HGS u3a Open Day An invitation to Lifelong Learning

MYKE JACOBS

Mark your calendars for an enriching experience! HGS u3a is hosting an Open Day on Thursday, 12th September 2024, at the Free Church, Central Square. This event will run from 10.30am to 12.30pm, offering a perfect opportunity to explore the diverse range of activities designed for those retired or no longer in full-time employment.

HGS u3a is renowned for fostering a community of enthusiasts who share passions for knowledge, creativity and social interaction. Whether you're interested in arts, sciences, languages or physical activities, the Open Day will showcase an array of groups and activities led by experienced volunteers. It's a chance to meet current members, ask questions and find out how you can join this brilliant organisation.

Highlights of the event will include the opportunity to meet group leaders and to discuss current groups, so you can get a feel for the activities on offer. From painting and photography to bridge and tai chi, there's something to pique every interest. In addition, visitors will have the opportunity to join HGS u3a for a whole new year (only £30 for an individual or £50 per couple) and/or sign up for interest groups, and also (if they so wish) to volunteer their time and expertise.

Refreshments will be provided, creating a welcoming atmosphere for all visitors. Whether you're a long-time resident or new to the area, the HGS u3a Open Day is an excellent way to engage with your community, make new friends, and discover the joys of lifelong learning and activities. Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to enrich your life and connect with like-minded individuals.

Join us at the Free Church on 12th September and take the first step towards a more fulfilling and active life. We look forward to seeing you there.



Photo: Judy Marcus

HGS U3A Photography Exhibition

JUDY MARCUS

Last month it was interesting to meet up with Myke Jacobs founder and co-leader of the HGS u3a Photography Group, to look around the group's current photography exhibition at Fellowship House, admire the photographs in this setting and to hear about the group's origins.

Myke told me: "I was a photographer since I was a child. When u3a was founded in HGS, I thought it was a good idea to run a Photography Group. The group goes once a month to locations in London to take photographs. They share the photos with each other and then meet on Zoom to discuss them, giving their feedback in positive and constructive terms. The group find it a joy – sharing techniques and learning from each other. I think it is a social activity as well as an artistic and technical activity."

The Fellowship House u3a photography exhibition was made up of 36 photographs from 14 members, including Myke. The photographs were varied and the exhibition well-curated. A lot of thought has gone into it. Myke talked about the team effort and costs involved. The group received two grants, one from the Third Age Trust and another from HGS u3a. The members paid the rest. Framing the photographs cost £800. Exhibiting at Fellowship House was free. "We enjoy good relations with Fellowship House. We use their rooms for activities there. It's a great benefit to us, and the area. We are very grateful to Fellowship House. It's a good local organisation and deserves a tribute."

Looking round the very professional-looking exhibition with Myke, I could see he was clearly proud of the photography group's achievement: "It's [our] first exhibition anywhere!" When I

asked Myke if he saw this as the first of a series of annual events, he did not take much time to conclude: "Annual events? It's a lot of effort but we would love to!"

Unfortunately, the exhibition is no longer showing, having finished on 31 August. However, Fellowship House has regular exhibitions. If you would like to find out about future exhibitions, please contact Fellowship House at art@fellowshiphouse.co.uk or look at their website: <https://fellowshiphouse.co.uk/contact/>. To find out more about the photography club, Myke Jacobs can be contacted on: 07802 187505; and the large range of u3a local groups can be found out about by contacting HGS u3a on: groupsorg@hgsu3a.uk or on their website: <https://hgsu3a.uk/>.



Richmond Park (Photo: Diana Iwi)



St Paul's (Photo: Stroma Leith)

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The SNY teams write about getting close-up and personal with nature.

Research indicates that spending time in natural environments can improve mood, reduce stress and foster social connections. Nature promotes emotional resilience, lowers anxiety and depression and encourages physical activity.

Do the teams agree?

Nature: the key to good mental health

From forests and rivers, to beaches and gardens, to small bird-houses and potted plants, we can find nature wherever we are. Interacting and exploring nature can be not just enjoyable, or relaxing, but also invaluable for our mental health and well being.

Nature has a calming and enchanting effect. Hiking in the woods, smelling the fresh forest air, lying in a meadow, sitting on a rock watching the ocean waves, hearing the seagulls as they hunt for fish. Or even smaller, simpler things such as spending time gardening and watering plants, admiring the local birdsong in the early morning, showing affection towards your pet and simply relaxing with a book in the shade of a tree can have the most profound effect on your everyday mental and physical well being.

Exposure to nature has been linked to many benefits, including improved attention, lower stress levels, better mood and reduced risk of psychiatric disorders. For instance, researchers have reported that green spaces near children's homes promote self-control behaviours, whilst experiments have

found that being exposed to natural environments improves working memory, cognitive flexibility and attentional control.

An example of a place in nature that I felt was calming and reassuring is Saanyakta's favourite place. This sanctuary was a little stream with stepping stones in the town where I grew up – a place that has surely and steadily become a city. This serene stream, nestled conveniently away from the commotion, was a haven of tranquility. The gentle trickle of water around the stones, the streaks of sunlight filtering through the leaves, casting the whole scene in a luminous nostalgic tone, and the simple, child-like pleasure of hopping from one stone to another all provided a sense of grounding and clarity.

We were meant to explore this earth like children do, propelled by curiosity and a sense of discovery. Allow yourself to see the world through new eyes and know there are amazing places that await. So, what is that special place in nature for you?

Vaishni Jeyananthan and Saanyakta Kumar
The Henrietta Barnett School

Happiness in nature

Happiness in humans peaks amongst swaying trees, fragrant flowers and the cacophony of chirping birds. In other words, immersing ourselves in nature. There's something about sitting outside in the quiet calm of nature that is contagious; it possesses a sense of tranquility that envelops our minds. Being amidst the soft-spoken breeze blows our worries away into the wind and captures the true essence of living in the moment, improving our mental health immensely. Scientifically, being outside coexists with spending time in sunlight, thus increasing the amount of serotonin released by our bodies, which is considered as a 'feel-good' hormone. Even science claims nature and mental health are directly correlated!

Although it is a widely known fact that spending time in nature nurtures the well-being of humans, not many people take full advantage of this easily available opportunity. Therefore we are here to reiterate the wonders and significance of nature in calming our minds by sharing a place both of us have been to: the beaches in the Isle of Wight,

Despite only going there once, the visit to the beach was the highlight of the trip for many of us. And why is that? In times that we as students and people find ourselves dominated by external factors that leave us stressing, the ocean allows our minds to heal and relieves us from our stressful lives.



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Nature and mental health

Everyone loves a holiday on the beach. Sunbathing and splashing about in one of the all-inclusive resorts' many pools sounds like the perfect way to relax, wind down and sort yourself out. But if we step away from mass tourism for one second – something I find easy to do because the coast for me is not a holiday destination but home – we can see that the real magic is the sea. Who wants chlorine when there is salt water?

Swimming in the Aegean for me comes with the knowledge that, bikini aside, I could be the girl who was doing the same thing two, 20, 200 or 200,000 years ago – I feel absolutely insignificant in the best way possible because I am seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling and touching what a girl did millennia ago. If I need to put my thoughts into perspective, or just remember that someone, some time out there felt the exact same things as me, I know where to look. When you swim in the sea, you partake in a human experience that is at once intimately personal and overwhelmingly universal: it is when I am alone with the water that I know it's never been just me against the world. Being alone in the sea, smelling and tasting its raw power and danger, just reminds me that we are part of the universe, too.

I slide into the water, it buoys me up and lifts me and parts for me as I slice it open and right there, for a second, I think the water is sentient. There is endless security in knowing that you are not the first to feel this instinctive pleasure at the tang of salt. Humans sought comfort the way we do thousands of years ago; and for me that's just a little piece of magic.

Swimming also has the added benefit of working perfectly as both a communal and individual activity. Racing cousins and aunts, attempting handstands in the water and 'being water nymphs' are some of my fondest memories and there have also been days where I've found myself slipping into a rhythm and swimming for an hour or two, so that it's just me and I find the tension which I didn't even realise I had being released. The summer sea in Greece is perfect, whether the sun or the hundreds of stars are shining above; but what I found out visiting Devon in October, is that the sea is always the sea wherever you are.

*Sofia Kountouri and Rakshiha Chandrajit
The Henrietta Barnett School*

The 'blue mind' effect refers to the tranquil and meditative state that people frequently experience by being immersed in or even just near a large body of water. Researchers link the ocean's distinctive yet soothing stimuli to feelings of joy, happiness, and contentment. The rhythmic sounds of the waves and mere sight of the water lowers the body's stress levels. The vastness and beauty of the ocean can inspire feelings of awe which recent psychological research associates with overall life satisfaction, and even the pure air surrounding us improves our mental well being.

Santa Monica resident, Emma Taylor, describes her walks along the ocean as a daily 'mental reset button' and believes that no matter how stressful her day, the ocean always makes it more bearable. Her experience is echoed by many others, who find comfort and solace in the presence of the sea. By embracing the ocean's therapeutic benefits, we can all learn to live a happier and healthier life. So next time you find yourselves feeling overwhelmed, consider taking a trip the shore!

*Labdhi Ostwal and Rushda Zafar
The Henrietta Barnett School*

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Records broken at hugely enjoyable Proms at St Jude's festival

RON FINLAY

Proms at St Jude's Chair, Kate Webster, is tired but very happy. "We enjoyed a truly magical nine days of music, literature, walks, comedy and fun for all the family at this year's festival. Thanks to the support and generosity of our audience, Friends, sponsors and advertisers, we raised a record-breaking £75,000 for the North London Hospice and Toynbee Hall and were able to boost music education in local schools."

The sublime performances of three members of the talented Kanneh-Mason family – Isata, Sheku and Braimah – and friends represented one of the week's big highs and was a sell-out concert. Another treat – entirely different – was the Motown night, where Wayne Hernandez and his Band had everyone in the groove and dancing in the aisles, plus large numbers enjoying the music – with a pizza and a drink – on the sunny lawns of Central Square, where speakers broadcast the concert from the church.

Audiences also loved Noah Max conducting an evening of Mostly Mozart, with his father Robert on cello and internationally famous Felix Klier on horn; and Tom Fetherstonhaugh conducting the Fantasia Orchestra with a fabulous celebration of Gershwin and other American favourites.

Liza Pulman and Joe Stilgoe provided great entertainment as

'A Couple of Swells', while there was more dancing to the London Tango Quintet. The Yehudi Menuhin School Orchestra demonstrated first-class performances from young players, as did the National Youth Chamber Choir with Fauré's Requiem. Rainer Hersch and his Orchestra, ably assisted by Gareth Malone, rounded off the evening concerts. And throughout the nine days of events, the hospitality and refreshments tents were busy, with a wonderful buzz about them.

Four free lunchtime performances gave audiences a chance to see brilliant young musicians at the start of their careers. As part of its educational outreach mission, Proms was delighted also to put on the Schools' Prom, where almost 400 enthusiastic local schoolchildren from 10 local schools sang a whole variety of songs on the theme of chocolate.

Irish and American folk music band, the Thumping Tommys, got the audience tapping their feet as a warm-up to the Motown concert, and that Saturday evening was rounded off by three very funny stand-up comedians. This late-night event reached record numbers and sold out for the first time.

The Proms Literary Festival saw hundreds of book lovers attending events with renowned authors. Among others, comedian and screenwriter David Baddiel revealed a lot about his upbringing; journalist Sathnam Sanghera provided his unique perspective on the British Empire; and historian Robert Hardman gave a fascinating insight on the Royal Family. A wonderful pre-Festival author talk with conductor Sir Antonio Pappano in Fellowship House, was another great sell-out event.

The guided Heritage Walks to fascinating and secret places around the Suburb and beyond were again hugely popular and almost entirely sold out.

In its second year, the Family Festival was a huge success with

plenty of music, games, face painting, pizza and ice cream!

As Kate Webster said, "Proms has finished for this year but we will only put our feet up for a little while before our marvellous volunteers start to plan and prepare for another exhilarating festival next year."

She added: "Put 21st-29th June 2025 in your diary now.

Subscribe to our e-mailing list to get news updates and if you'd like to be part of making this very special local event happen, just go to our website (www.promsatstjudes.org.uk) and sign up as a volunteer."



Photos from the top down:

Audience enjoying Thumping Tommys (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)

Sir Antonio Pappano (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)

David Baddiel (Photo: David White)

Drumming workshop (Photo: David White)

Wayne Hernandez (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)

Kanneh-Masons and Friends with sponsors Michael and Jacqueline Gee (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)



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Craft in the main hall (Photo: Malcolm Brahams)

Art Fair joins voting frenzy

MALCOLM BRAHAMS

In this year of elections, HGS Art invited visitors to their 2024 Art Fair to vote for their favourite artist. Held over two days in May, more than 20 artists displayed a wide range of paintings, jewellery, photography and ceramics. After a slow start on a dull Saturday morning, both the weather and attendance picked up and by Sunday evening the numbers and sales were comparable with previous years.

Barbara Jackson, a founder member of the group and an experienced art teacher, won the vote for Favourite Artist. Simone Halfen presented the award, named in honour of her late husband Alex Halfen, who was secretary of HGS Art from its formation until his untimely death in 2017.

The large number of visitors were able to enjoy (and if they

were so inclined to purchase) the art and also to meet friends and relatives in the grounds of Fellowship House. For the second year, Finchley Womens' Institute

provided tea, sandwiches and cakes which they sold in aid of their nominated charities Finchley Foodbank and Barnet Borough Sight Impaired.



Simone Halfen and Barbara Jackson (Photo: Malcolm Brahams)

Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue celebrates 90 years

MARIE-HÉLÈNE OSTERWEIL

It is not easy to come up with an event which encapsulates the 90th year of a community and yet a dedicated committee worked hard on doing just that. Over 220 people at Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue, founded in 1934, celebrated in style on Friday 5 July with a communal dinner. Just 24 hours before, the country was gripped through the night with general election results, including a new MP for Finchley and Golders Green, Sarah Sackman, who grew up in the community. Some of the guests at the Friday night dinner looked a bit bleary-eyed. But spirits were high, a combination perhaps of excitement around new beginnings and possibilities, as well as an opportunity to feast and reflect on a remarkable history. The function Hall was decorated with bunting, photos and historical recollections. Keynote guest Rabbi Joseph Dweck spoke beautifully about the diverse nature of communities and how we need to be open to our differences and respect each other's individuality. Songs and games fuelled the entertainment. We chatted, circulated and greeted each other. It was a wonderful and very special evening.

The celebrations were capped off by a visit the next day from the Chief Rabbi, Sir Ephraim Mirvis, and our outgoing MP, Mike Freer. The community were also lucky enough to celebrate a dear congregant's 90th birthday.

The weekend was a lovely way to recognise and thank many people who have built our community and to look forward to the next 90 years



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Photo: Wilfred Francis

THE JOY OF SINGING

Our recent Summer Concert at the Free Church in Central Square raised £1,900! These Joy of Singing concerts, organised and directed by the highly talented Linda Perillo, have raised £40,087.19 in aid of the North London Hospice

over the years. We hold two concerts each year, July and December.

Linda holds many classes on a weekly basis: Folk, Madrigals, Broadway, Ensemble, General and more. She is holding a Singing for Health and Wellbeing Workshop on 6 November in North Finchley this

year. Singing beats stress, releases tension, invigorates, is great for lung health and gives a natural high! It improves memory and concentration.

For more information, contact the Joy of Singing at lindasoprano@yahoo.com.

Marilyn Grossman

Professor György Pauk gives masterclasses at the Youth Music Centre

MARINA SOLAREK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, YOUTH MUSIC CENTRE

Students and Junior teachers of the Youth Music Centre have the unique opportunity to take part in a masterclass with the distinguished violinist Professor György Pauk. The event will take place in Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church on 19 October from 2-7pm. Students will be taken on a passionate journey through major violin concertos and sonatas by Mendelssohn, Mozart, Bach and more.

Going to a masterclass can be more exciting than going to a concert. Similar to a performance, the student will play a large chunk if not an entire movement of a work, uninterrupted, followed by applause. The artist will address the student as well as the

attendees, with comments about style, technique and information about the composer that will involve and inform everyone present, engaging the audience as well as the individual playing. Entry is free for the audience, who can join any time during the afternoon between 2-7pm. This is a rare opportunity to see how Pauk's excellence and expertise inspires young performers.

Over the course of more than 50 years, György Pauk became an internationally acclaimed concert violinist, appearing worldwide with the greatest orchestras and conductors and making countless broadcasts and recordings. He performed on all five Continents giving an average of 90 concerts a year with most of the major orchestras, collaborating with conductors like Haitink, Dorati, Barbirolli, Solti, Kondrashin, Boulez, Rattle, Dutoit, Rozdestvensky, Dohnanyi and Colin Davis.

György Pauk is professor at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he conducts a 'Performers Class' with selected young talents from all over the world.

2-7pm, 19 October (break 5-6pm)
HGS Free Church, Central Square
Free entry. No booking required.



György Pauk (Photo: Family Archive)



Photo: Michael Eleftheriades

An Interfaith Celebration

EDWARD GLEDHILL, SENIOR CHORAL SCHOLAR, ST JUDE ON THE HILL

On Wednesday, 5 June, St Jude's was filled with the melodious sounds of the North London choirs participating in the Faithful Voices Interfaith Concert 2024. As part of this celebration of music from all faiths and none, a large audience heard performances from The Zemel Choir, Barnet SACRE Interfaith Choir, The Choir of St Jude's, Mohamed Grab, Divyanand Caird and Prathap Ramachandra as well as The Mixed-Up Chorus. Performers were supported by Hamsa Mount (voice), Franklin Gellnick on piano, and conductors Nicholas Chalmers, Jeremy Haney, Alan Shaw and Benjamin Wolf.

This important event, having first taken place in 2022, forms part of an annual festival dedicated to the celebration of the diversity of London and our shared cultures. It represents not only a chance to perform but also a chance to hear music ranging across the Jewish, Christian, Hindu and Muslim traditions from the Renaissance to the present day. To open the concert, performers and audience members alike were introduced to a four-part song including elements and languages from all the faiths represented, getting everyone up and singing. The Choir of St Jude's, consisting of our adult volunteers and choral scholars, sang Goodall's setting of Psalm 23, 'The Lord is My Shepherd', alongside the Zemel Choir, conducted by Nicholas Chalmers, before singing Tallis' 'If Ye Love Me', 'Ave Verum Corpus' by Mozart, and Rutter's beloved 'The Lord Bless You and Keep You' which formed the Christian element of the musical programme. Alongside other performers playing traditional instruments including the oud, The Mixed-Up Chorus and their song 'Harbour' which everyone joined in with, highlighted the important messages of welcome and belonging at the heart of the festival.

St Jude's, led by Revd Em Kolltveit (Priest-in-Charge) and Nicholas Chalmers (Director of Music), was delighted to host this important ecumenical event. With the Mayor of Barnet also in attendance, we were so pleased to be joined by such a diverse range of performers from the local community.



Photo: Michael Eleftheriades

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Despite the appalling weather forecast, the opening went ahead and proved very successful. Unfortunately, as the gate opened, so did the heavens but visitors were not deterred and huddled under a tent eating delicious cakes. When the sun finally appeared, the garden glistened from the rainfall and Michael Berg's sculptures looked fabulous. Over £3,000 was raised for the North London Hospice.

Lorraine Wilder



Photos: Einav Sitton

Suburb Harvesting



Photo: Steven Rowe

STEVEN ROWE

The HGS Resident Association's 2024 Community Harvesting programme has started with an excellent early pick of Damsons (many, many more on the trees which we'll return for when they're a little riper) in Woodside, NW11. With the apple and pear season ahead of us, we're looking forward to an excellent 2024 to make up for the very poor crop in 2023, and to taking the majority of the fruit to LBB Barnet-based Food

Banks and Community Kitchens. Volunteer pickers get to take home plenty of fruit and tree-owners keep as much as they want. If you want to be:

- One of our merry band of pickers (it's lots of fun!) or,
- have surplus fruit that you want to donate or,
- want us to come and pick your fruit when it's ripe and ready (please send us a photo if you can) – and for some people it will be all three options – please let us know via harvesting@hgsra.uk.



A nice meet-up for Northway Gardens Tea Party folks on a hot summer day. This was at Café Gaya in Lyttelton Playing Fields in July, but also happen by the Shed in Northway Gardens and at Romeo & Juliet Café – watch for notice or on Facebook (Photo: Jane Ingram)

Please take your litter home!

Surely we all want our streets and open spaces to be kept litter-free so what better way than taking a walk with a litter-picker stick? If you have a litter-picker stick *thank you* for using it. If you'd like a litter-picker, please contact me and I'll deliver one to you. Contact me on 07734 681945 or email me at Helenmnaft@gmail.com.

Thank you in anticipation!

Helen Naftalin



In this series Suburb News spotlights the independent shopkeepers of Market Place

SIMONE HALFIN

L & D Foods was established in Market Place in 1936 and has gone from strength to strength. The original owner, Frank Myers, born in the East End of London, was 33 then, and lived to the ripe old age of 103. Myers Stores, as it was known, was the only one in this area selling groceries and deli. It lasted forty years. His motto was 'everything in moderation'. Frank enjoyed his drink and also his food. Obviously, the ingredients for a long life!

The present owner, Kiri Lingam came to London from Sri Lanka in 1995, looking for work, and got a job with Mr and Mrs Pine, who had by then taken over Myers Stores and renamed it L & D after their children, Lisa and David. It was subsequently briefly taken over by Mr and Mrs Peters, but in 2002 Kiri got a chance to buy it and snapped it up, he laughingly recalled the exact date as 12 September, the date of the Jewish New Year that year. He learned a huge amount from the Pine family about the trade and what the customers wanted. I asked him what he liked most about working in the shop, to which his answer was: "the hours, 8.30am–5.30pm Monday to Friday, Saturday we are closed and Sunday we are open 7am to 1pm." Sounds quite hard work to me! There are three full-time staff and two part-time staff. There is also a free local delivery service but, as a result of having to cut back after the pandemic, the driver is only part-time now.

One of the best things about this shop is, of course, its fantastic smoked salmon. Kiri said he started carving over 25 years ago. I mentioned my friend likes it cut very thinly and medium oily and I like it very oily. He laughed and said he had so many customers asking for their particular requirements! He wouldn't give away the secret of where he bought it though. He said it was both farmed and organic.

Kiri said he knows most of his customers and loves it when they come in and chat. Particularly on Fridays and Sundays there's usually a lot of talk about what people are doing, what parties they are attending and where they are going away to. He loves all that!

When asked if he was thinking of retiring, he shook his head and said absolutely not, in fact he is planning to refurbish the shop in August.

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Gardening is good for you

Hever Castle Church Walk (Photo: Caroline Broome)

THE GARDEN GIRL

CAROLINE BROOME

Which physical exercise requires mind-body coordination, promotes mindfulness and feeds the soul? Yoga? Well yes, but I'm talking about gardening. It's official: gardening is good for you, both in terms of your physical and mental well-being.

When working on your plot you are constantly moving about, so you're getting a good physical workout. Reaching into the borders involves stretching and balancing. My late father, a GP, once told me that slips, trips and falls were invariably the injury of choice of young boys and old ladies, so balance exercise is vital as we get older. Just being in the fresh air is invigorating. Who hasn't felt bright-eyed and bushy-tailed after a session of rose pruning on a crisp February day? And during spring and summer, most people should be able to make all the vitamin D they need from direct sunlight on the skin. The Woodland Trust tells us: "Woods and trees can improve our health and well-being in many ways, including reducing stress, improving mood, and boosting the immune system" (www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/). With Big Wood on your doorstep, you can rack up

a good few thousand steps into the bargain!

Growing your own food ticks all the boxes. As well as the physical advantages, you might be learning a new skill. Watching something grow from seed that you have sown is nurturing and rewarding. From plot to plate is a mere hop and a skip and your crop will be pesticide free. Okay, so by the time your strawberries are cropping you can buy them in the shops for pennies, but there's nothing quite like picking and eating a strawberry that you've grown yourself in your own back garden. I only grow things that I like to eat and that are simple and trouble free. In the greenhouse it's cucumbers, strawberries, sweet peppers and tomatoes. On the allotment it's blackberries and grapes and then there's next door's damson tree that crops on my roof terrace. The deal is, I get to pick the berries if I share my home-made jam with my neighbours. I always thought that jam-making was akin to alchemy, but a glut of berries one year galvanised me into giving it a go and d'you know what, it's really easy!

If perhaps you crave company, then there is nothing quite like sharing your love of gardening with like-minded people. Whether you get involved in community projects, have an allotment or join a gardening club, sharing this common interest prevents social

isolation. Studies have proved that it reduces stress, anxiety and depression and prevents cognitive decline. To find out where your nearest community project is just Google Community Gardens Near Me. The RHS website tells us: "an increasing number of GPs are prescribing gardening not only for rehabilitation but also as a preventative mechanism."

You don't even need to have your own garden: Just being in nature is good for you. Visit a local Open Garden, through the National Gardens Scheme (<https://ngs.org.uk/>) and you will invariably bump into someone you know. You may chat to like-minded visitors and perhaps make new friends. There's tea and cake too, so very comforting and quintessentially English, and usually plants for sale.

It's widely recognised that even a short period of outdoor activity can enrich the lives of our children. Just being in nature creates a calming environment for them, which enhances their learning experiences, improves mood and arouses curiosity. Look what Suburb resident Dominic

Rose has already achieved with his Kids Gardening Club, still only in its first year. (<https://www.britainsbiggestlivinggarden.org/discover/kids-gardening-club>).

My garden is my Happy Place. I enjoy the solitude. I'm completely free of constraints. When I'm gardening, I am living in the moment. The chitter chatter in my mind quietsens, replaced by an intense focus on hand-eye coordination. Never mind the roses, dead-heading rhododendrons is guaranteed to lower my blood pressure: It's such a delicate job; you have to pinch off the dead flower heads without damaging the emerging buds of next year's flowers. Give it a go!

In my garden there's no-one there to judge me, so I experiment without fear of failure, which in itself, stimulates creativity. It's just me and the birds. I highly recommend installing the Merlin app on your phone: <https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/> Sound ID listens to the birds around you and shows real-time suggestions for who's singing. I surround myself with my own version of beauty. Balm for the soul.

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Romantic Scotney Castle calming water (Photo: Caroline Broome)

Allotment Heaven and Hell

LIZ HALL

As I write this at the end of July, we are enjoying a period of warm sunshine and gentle summer winds.

There's something deeply satisfying about tending your own patch of land, watching your plants grow, and eventually enjoying the fruits (and veggies) of your labour. But, as any seasoned allotment holder will tell you, it's not all sunshine and roses – especially when those slugs and snails join the party.

The warning flags went up in early spring when all the daffodil flowers vanished overnight! Who would have expected that? The slimy creatures then rampaged through any juicy-leaved plant they could access while it was small. Snails can climb surprisingly high and detect food by smell. Slugs actually have two noses – on the head for smelling and on the tail for breathing!

Plot-holders lucky enough to have access to a garden can raise replacement seedlings under cover but these young plants had very little chance of survival in the constant rain and cold of spring this year. And as soon as they were planted, they lost all their leaves to the molluscs and had to be replaced...ad nauseam.

Slugs and snails play an important part in keeping our gardens and allotments clear of dead and dying vegetation, but this was carnage! There are many folk remedies to deter them (beer in a saucer, anyone?) but most gardeners rely on slug pellets for control. The sale of the distinctive blue ones was, however, banned two-three years ago because they contained metaldehyde which was so poisonous to other creatures – many of them natural predators of slugs and snails.

The newer brands seem to be far less effective but, as a result of the ban of the blue pellets, there has been a recent significant rise in hedgehog sightings in the Suburb, encouraged by shelter and food provided by allotment holders. The hedgehogs seem to be effective at controlling the molluscs and, now that the sunshine is speeding up the rate of plant growth, we are beginning to see a significant number of vegetables at last!



Photo: Annette Meyer

Horticultural Society to celebrate harvest-time

MARJORIE HARRIS
HGS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

As the year winds down after a summer that was hardly a summer at all, so the Horticultural Society season will celebrate harvest-time at the Autumn Flower Show from 3-5pm on Saturday 7 September. There will be no charge for exhibiting or entry to the show, a successful innovation. Exhibitors can bring their entry forms (from the hand-book) to Fellowship House between 7-8pm on Tuesday 3 September, email them to events@hortsoc.co.uk or deliver or post them to 48 Erskine Hill, NW11 6HG, by 6pm on the same date.

It was good to be let loose in a marquee for the summer show in June, in the surroundings of what felt like a village fête on Central Square, with so many visitors who had not experienced a flower show before. For our second show of the year we will be back in the Free Church Hall in Northway. Grimsdyke Brass will play in the garden all afternoon, and our famous home-made teas will be served in the small hall. The raffle in June raised £275 for three good causes, and there will be another raffle for charity at the September show.

Everyone will be welcome at 7pm, before the Horticultural

Society's AGM in Fellowship House on Tuesday 12 November, when Dominic Rose will bring us all up to date on his 'Britain's Biggest Living Garden' project, which has made such strides in its very first year. The year will end with The HortSoc Christmas Quiz Night on Saturday 7 December at 7.30pm.

Many of the current HortSoc committee members will be retiring at the AGM. Despite an appeal in Suburb News, after which a few people did come forward and join the committee, come November there will not be sufficient 'person power' to keep the Suburb's oldest society going in its present form if more of you



Lorna Page's prize winning foliage display
(Photo: Shelley-Anne Salisbury)



do not come to the rescue. The Society has changed with the times whenever it has had to since 1909, and now it needs a new, younger, team to take it forward in what may be a completely new, less formal, direction. New members, new style. Nothing is set in stone.

We are already promoting gardens suitable for wildlife, encouraging organic principles without the use of pesticides and peat, looking after one of Barnet's flowerbeds in Willifield Way, opening members' gardens, supporting Dominic's children's garden at the Vicarage and providing events and entertainment throughout the year that the local community can enjoy. Our neighbouring horticultural society, Hampstead, has already closed. Don't let one of Dame Henrietta Barnett's earliest projects go the same way.

We're trying something new this year!

2024 AGM and Members Meeting Monday 23 September, 6.30pm, Free Church Hall



We want to give our Members a better opportunity to meet the trustees and discuss matters of interest than the present format of the AGM allows.

We will therefore be holding a Members' Meeting immediately before this year's AGM, starting at 6.30pm.

This will showcase our new Retrofit Guidance, as well as giving good time for Members questions.

The formal business of the AGM will then follow at 7.30pm, and we hope to complete by around 8pm.

We very much look forward to meeting you on the 23rd September at the Free Church Hall. If you are not already a Member, you can easily join on-line via the Trust's website at www.hgstrust.org/membership



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FEATURES

Anyone for ... jam-making?

JUDY MARCUS

Avid jam enthusiast Sandra Wagner, a long-standing Suburb resident, has been making jam for many years. I was keen to learn from her as I'd heard she applies spontaneity to this exacting craft.

Sandra kindly invited me to her home to sample a variety of her home-made preserves with coffee and challah toast. Sandra's kitchen was very cosy, with a view of the garden, the source of the fruit she uses for her jam. Apart from oranges, she uses the fruit she grows. For her most recent batch she used plums picked from her garden by her grandchildren.

In addition to plums, she grows apples, blackcurrants, redcurrants, damsons, raspberries, strawberries, grapes and rhubarb. Sandra's garden has several varieties of apple trees; not all the apples translate well to her jam-making. "Peasegood Nonesuch makes for a very nice tree" she says, "but the apples don't keep." She prefers Hellgate Wonder, an Isle of Wight variety. It's a big blousy cooking apple. She thinks she

might have originally chosen the tree for its name. She uses these apples for apple compôte.

Sandra's jam-making is usually seasonal, using the available fruits, but she does freeze many fruits to keep handy for jam-making when the mood takes her. Having had some less than optimal experiences freezing soft food, I asked Sandra for tips on freezing fruit. She just uses plastic bags, which she labels.

For jam-making, Sandra swears by her Aga, which takes up one side of the kitchen: "It's a great thing to cook on." Sandra's jam is cooked in her special 'jam pan', a bespoke metal pot which she keeps underneath her kitchen table bench – understandably so, as the jam pan is huge.

Sandra describes her basic method for jam-making: "you boil the fruit until it softens and then add sugar – 1:1 usually. Wait until the sugar fully dissolves and the mixture comes to a rolling boil (or measures 212 degrees Fahrenheit on a jam thermometer). If you overcook the jam, it becomes too dark or too runny. Next, you have to use a saucer or small glass dish to test it." Sandra advises chilling

it in the freezer for a few minutes as the jam will cool faster on a cold dish: As you ease it round the dish, if it wrinkles it's done. If not, go back a stage. If it's ready for potting, use a properly clean and preferably warm glass jar (she puts hers in the bottom of her Aga). The jam must be potted when still hot. Close the jar immediately, wipe it and label it. Put it somewhere cool. Once opened, keep it in the fridge as there are no preservatives.

I asked Sandra how long the process takes. She finds raspberry jam takes an hour but warns there are variations on cooking times for different fruits. Marmalades have a technique of their own. For marmalade, Sandra advocates buying Seville oranges (she buys hers from the local Waitrose) and that the sugar to fruit balance is 2:1.

Sandra told me she developed an interest in jam-making as a young girl: "I had a friend whose mother made jam and I used to watch her make it." Sandra got her first jam pan in 1978 as a leaving present from a job.

How long can you keep jam? Sandra told me if the jar remains unopened the jam keeps for ages.



Photo: Judy Marcus

She still has a jar she made in the 1980s! According to Sandra, the jam gets a deeper, stronger flavour the older it gets.

Jam making is a craft and a clearly addictive one. But it looked a bit technical and complicated. However, on seeing a box of raspberries sitting forlornly in my fridge, I decided to make a

raspberry compote. I added some mint from my garden. It was a huge success and was polished off by my family. But making the more complex jam? Perhaps that's a stage too far and I should just leave it to the expert... Having said that, I might possibly try making raspberry jam. Sandra does say: raspberry jam – it's fun!

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WHAT'S NEW IN THE VIRTUAL MUSEUM?

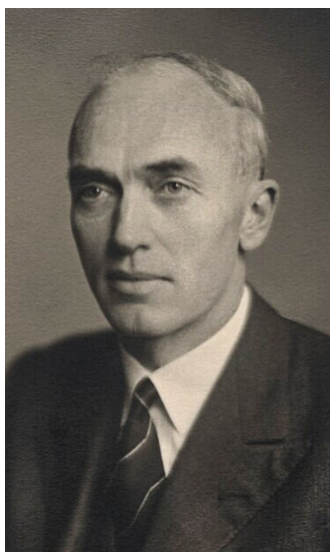
The Suburb and the Secret War

ALAN WALKER

The Virtual Museum has visitors exploring its extensive corridors from all over the world. We were recently contacted by Pete Goodeve from California. He entitled his email 'Missing Person'. The missing person was his father, Charles Goodeve, who had a remarkable life. We are pleased that one of the Museum's Trustees, Alan Walker, was able to bring this amazing 'missing person' to life and put him into the Virtual Museum of HGS.

HGS Heritage Virtual Museum was delighted to hear from Pete Goodeve, now a resident of California, but who grew up on the Suburb. Pete's father, Charles Goodeve, the Canadian-born son of an Anglican clergyman, came to London to study in 1927. At the outbreak of the Second World War he was teaching at University College London and had brought his family to live in Middleway. As a lieutenant-commander in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, Charles was soon charged with finding ways of protecting ships from magnetic mines. Not only did he succeed in this, he also provided the language with a new word to describe it. 'De-gaussing' (the 'gauss' was a German unit of magnetic strength) referred to several methods whereby the magnetic field around a vessel was reversed or wiped to escape the mines. It was successfully employed on more than four hundred ships involved in the Dunkirk evacuations of 1940. The term is now used for eradicating data from computer hard drives.

Goodeve was subsequently given a free hand by the Admiralty to gather a team to work on ways to protect shipping from air attack. Among those recruited were the novelist Nevil Shute, who was an aeronautical engineer by training,



Sir Charles Frederick Goodeve
(Photo: Walter Stoneman
© National Portrait Gallery,
London)

and the future dam-buster, Barnes Wallis. The 'Inspectorate of Anti-Aircraft Weapons and Devices' – which soon became known as the 'Instigator of Anti-Aircraft Wheezes and Dodges' – was officially renamed from 1941 the 'Department of Miscellaneous Weapons Development.' Its offices, at first in the Admiralty Arch, then over a restaurant in Lower Regent Street and finally in the AA headquarters in Leicester Square, were said to resemble a monstrous Wellesian workshop, with parts of aircraft wings resting against walls, drawers crammed with explosives and bomb parts in use as ashtrays.

The job of the 'wheezers and dodgers' was to develop their own ideas and assess those submitted by others who believed they had discovered ingenious ways to

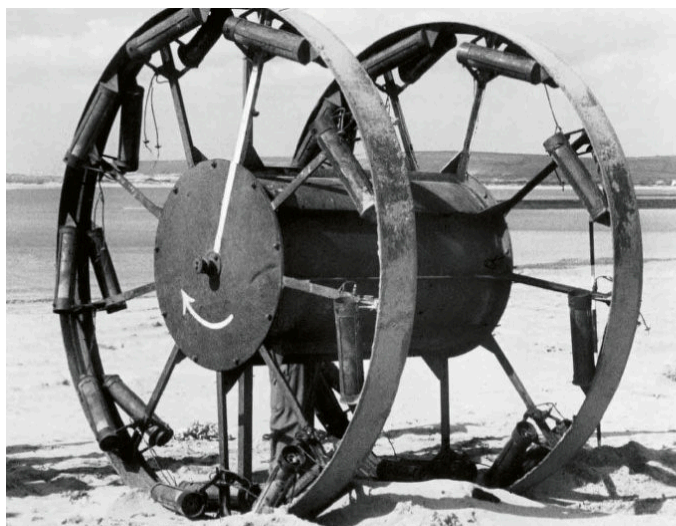
hinder the enemy. The Department was shrewdly set up with Goodeve officially assistant to a colleague skilled in dealing with naval bureaucracy and jealousies. Later he gave up his naval rank but continued in post as a civilian with greater freedom of operation.

Successful projects included 'plastic armour' (granite-filled mastic sheeting) for protecting ships' bridges and gun positions, the 'Swiss Roll' (a floating bridge for unloading vehicles from landing craft), the Lily Island (a floating runway), the 'Grasshopper' (a landing craft loaded with multiple rocket launchers), and the 'Bombardon' (a floating wall or breakwater to protect temporary harbours). Nevil Shute developed a powerful 'rocket spear' to impale German U-boats. Less successful were a 'minefield in the sky' of miniature balloon bombs (they tended to fall to earth), and a plan to hide the Thames from bombers using a mixture of oil and coal dust (it made a bit of a mess).

One department secret weapon that didn't remain secret was the 'Great Panjandrum', a giant explosive-laden wheel designed to roll over and destroy enemy beach fortifications. The story of how it ran out of control and hurtled towards top-brass gathered for a demonstration inspired an episode of Dad's Army.

Charles Goodeve was knighted for his wartime service in 1945. He was director of the British Iron and Steel Research Association until his retirement in 1969 and remained in Middleway until his death in 1980.

To visit the Virtual Museum go to hgsheritage.org.uk.



The Great Panjandrum at Westward Ho!, an abortive attempt at beach clearing (Photo: Imperial War Museum – Public Domain)

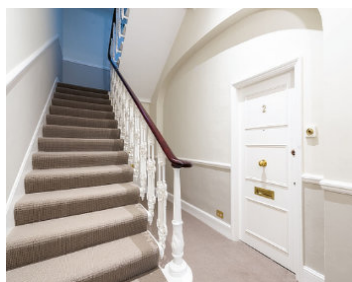


Royal Navy Officer Charles Frederick Goodeve
(Photo: Family Archive)

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A parachute deployed, German magnetic mine, which appears to have landed on the grounds of the Woolwich, Arsenal. The mine is intact and is partially buried nose first in the soft ground. The top section above the flange, contained the parachute.
(Photo: Public Domain)

Henrietta's new suburb – with a little help from her friends

COLIN GREGORY

Henrietta Barnett's plan to save what became the Hampstead Heath Extension from development is well known. On the back of that campaign, she took forward her plan to build Hampstead Garden Suburb, despite being 'only a woman', as the representative of the Eton College Trustees put it when she asked about buying the land. Hampstead Garden Suburb was to be the antidote to the terrible housing conditions of the East End, where Henrietta worked alongside her husband Samuel, Vicar of St Jude's Church, Whitechapel. The relationship between the buildings and the green environment, was crucial. Modern research has confirmed the benefits for physical and mental health of spending time out-of-doors, of visiting parks, woods and open spaces, and of gardening.

Henrietta and Samuel did not need research to know this. Samuel wrote how "in Whitechapel they had turned a piece of waste ground into a garden... an open railing has been substituted for the wall, soil has been spread and a few trees planted. The people... are showing great interest in the work, and we look hopefully forward to the effect of one bright spot on this very dark neighbourhood."

Henrietta Barnett's principles for her new Suburb included that every house should have a garden, that the streets should be lined with trees – preserving existing ones where possible – and that there should be plentiful open space for healthy recreation. A letter from her to the Hampstead and Highgate Express in November 1903 setting out these ideas received nationwide publicity.

Although people tend to associate the National Trust with country houses, it owes its origins

to the preservation of open space. Henrietta and Samuel had close associations with its founders, Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley. Octavia had recruited Henrietta to help with her housing work in Marylebone as part of a scheme financed by John Ruskin. Another recruit was Rawnsley, who had been taught by Ruskin at Oxford and, having decided to go into the church, worked at a hostel for vagrants. After a year he moved to the Lake District. Once there he began to campaign on a range of issues: railways, rights of way and reservoir schemes. He was assisted in his campaign against the railway by Robert Hunter, a solicitor who was secretary of the open spaces committee of the Kyrle Society, a society based in London dedicated to improving quality of life for the poor. As Octavia Hill put it, the aim of the committee was to provide, "small open spaces for outdoor sitting rooms for people in various parts of London."

In 1895 Hunter became chairman of the newly founded National Trust. He was one of Henrietta's leading helpers in the campaign to save the Heath Extension and was a founding director of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust. He described the campaign to save the Extension as "more difficult, long-drawn out, and discouraging than any other of a similar nature of which I have had experience." Their aim, he said,

was "preserving natural beauty." And this aim was extended to the new Suburb: "Our object", he wrote, "is to so lay out the ground that every tree may be kept, hedgerows duly considered, and the foreground of the distant view preserved, if not as open fields, yet as a garden district, the buildings kept in harmony with

the surroundings." All of this was seen as quite radical in 1907. Today we are fortunate to live in one of the first examples of a way of life that has served as a model around the globe. The founders' ideals continue to inspire us to find ways in which the built and natural environments can flourish together in the twenty-first century.



Sir Robert Hunter with his daughter and fellow National Trust founder Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley in the Lake District around 1900 (Photo: © National Trust Images)



Octavia Hill painted by John Singer Sargent (Photo: National Portrait Gallery – Public Domain)



Canon and Mrs Barnett, with Mrs Barnett's invalid sister, Fanny Rowland, and Miss Gale. They are standing among Turner's Pines with St Jude's Cottage and Erskine Convalescent Home visible through the trees. October 1913 (Photo: Suburb Archives)

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The crucial link nutrition and mental health

LOUIE FISHER, NUTRITION COACH

As a nutrition coach, I've witnessed first-hand from clients (and myself!) how the foods we eat can influence not just our physical health, but also our mental well-being. It's increasingly clear that what we consume plays a critical role in our mood, cognitive function, and overall mental health. Scientific research continues to unveil the profound connection between nutrition and mental health, shedding light on how diet can either bolster or hinder our mental well-being.

The gut-brain axis – a relatively recently-discovered link between our guts and our brains – is a complex communication network that links the emotional and cognitive centres of the brain with peripheral intestinal functions. Essentially, our gut and brain talk to each other. This relationship is largely mediated by the gut microbiome – the trillions of bacteria living in our intestines.

A balanced diet rich in fibre, fruits, vegetables, and fermented foods promotes a healthy gut microbiome, which in turn supports optimal brain function. Conversely, diets high in refined sugars and unhealthy fats can lead to dysbiosis, an imbalance in the gut microbiota, which is associated with conditions like depression and anxiety.

SO WHAT SHOULD WE EAT TO SUPPORT OUR MENTAL HEALTH? Several nutrients are particularly vital for maintaining mental health. Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fatty fish, flax seeds, and walnuts, are renowned for their anti-inflammatory properties and have been linked to reduced symptoms of depression. Studies indicate that individuals with higher intakes of omega-3s have a lower risk of developing depression and anxiety disorders.

B vitamins, including folate, B12 and B6, are essential for brain health. They play a crucial role in the production of neurotransmitters such as serotonin, dopamine, and gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), which regulate mood and anxiety levels. Deficiencies in these vitamins have been linked to an increased risk of depression.

Magnesium, found in leafy greens, nuts, seeds, and whole grains, is another critical nutrient for mental health. It supports numerous biochemical reactions in the brain and has a calming effect on the nervous system. Low magnesium levels have been associated with increased anxiety and depression.

THE ROLE OF A BALANCED DIET

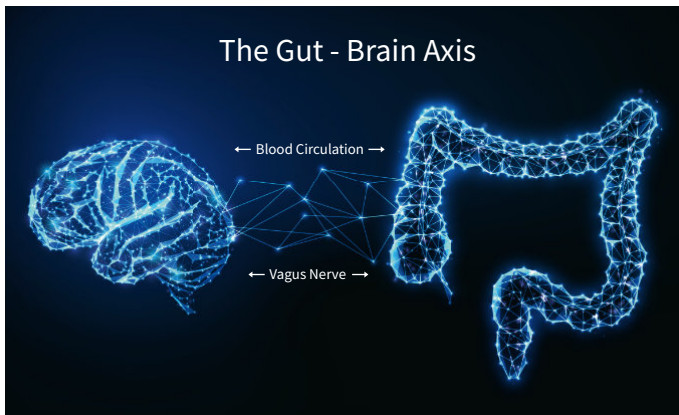
A well-rounded diet that emphasises whole foods over ultra-processed options can significantly impact mental health. The Mediterranean diet, rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats, has been extensively studied for its mental health benefits. Research shows that individuals adhering to this diet are less likely to experience depression compared to those consuming a Western diet high in processed foods and sugars.

Furthermore, the SMILES trial, a ground-breaking study, provided compelling evidence that dietary intervention can be an effective treatment for major depressive episodes. Participants who followed a Mediterranean-style diet experienced significant improvements in their depression symptoms compared to those receiving social support.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH NUTRITION

1. Prioritise Whole Foods: Aim to fill your plate with a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats.
2. Include Omega-3 Rich Foods: Incorporate fatty fish, flax seeds, and walnuts into your diet to support brain health.
3. Ensure adequate B Vitamins: Consume leafy greens, legumes, and lean meats to maintain healthy levels of B vitamins.
4. Boost Magnesium Intake: Snack on nuts and seeds, and include plenty of green leafy vegetables and whole grains in your meals.
5. Limit processed Foods and Sugars: Reducing intake of sugary and processed foods can help maintain a healthy gut microbiome and stable mood.

The intricate relationship between nutrition and mental health underscores the importance of a balanced diet for our overall well-being. By making mindful food choices, we can support both our physical and mental health, enhancing our quality of life.



The Gut - Brain Axis



Wine in a warm climate

JOANNA DABROWSKA,
WINE JOURNALIST

I am writing this article during a heatwave on 30 July; it really should be much cooler than 32 degrees in July! I am blaming climate change. I am watching the Alcaraz and Nadal doubles match in the Olympics and, to enjoy the evening to its fullest, I am accompanied by a glass of rosé. Alas, it is not your southern French Whispering Angel (which this author wouldn't say no to) but a rosé from an island much further south in the Mediterranean area. This rosé is made with one of the most important indigenous grape varieties of Sicily, Nero d'Avola. These grapes yield a diverse array of wines and, because of their adaptability, result in wines suited to various tastes from fruity rosé to gorgeous full-bodied red wines and it is one of my favourite grapes.

You see, the trouble with predicting which wine will land best during a different climate is thoroughly enjoying the present moment. One might call it mindfulness, yet I still need to write my recommendations. I'll return to the grape I mentioned above, and therefore will start with:

Tenuta Fenice 2023 – Nero d'Avola – £14.99 at Laithwaites.

This is a still wine, a red version of this grape, and it has a special place in my heart because the producer, Dino, took a chance against all odds and resurrected the vineyard that became a victim of an earthquake in Sicily in 1968. Lots of black cherry and black plum, topped with hints of spices, will become your favourite with Pasta alla Norma. Leave it in your cellar for five more years and

revisit it with ragù. You definitely won't be disappointed.

Chateau du Moulin-à-Vent, Moulin-à-Vent 2020 – £27.95 at The Fine Wine Company.

I feel that the closest to Christmas you could get in the wine world is a Beaujolais Nouveau. I must admit I do love this event, and please do check Noble Rot to see how to celebrate it in style. This wine, however, should not be taken lightly as mere marketing hype. Moulin-à-Vent is quite close to Burgundy and offers fantastic impressions of Gamay capable of ageing for many years (I have tried a 1989 and, dare I say, it was still fresh). They have applied for a Premier Cru appellation this year and they have the quality to prove it. So why not give it a try with all

the richer dishes and soups you plan to nourish yourself with during the autumn season?

Oastbrook Estate Vineyard – White Pinot Noir 2023 – £22.50 at Oastbrook online shop.

I mentioned Blanc de Noirs before, but did you know that you can find one on English soil? I tried it during a summer party and was absolutely mesmerised by the freshness, body, aromas of blossom, red cherries, and beautiful flavours of crisp acidity, chalk minerality, and gorgeous cherry fruit. One can wait or one can drink it now, preferably with creamy pastas or leek quiches.

Let me know what you think and check my Instagram, @wine_world_wonders, for more of my wine recommendations.



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2024 RA Summer Fair Pictorial

(see page 8 for full article)



All photos: Michael Eleftheriades



Photo: AI generated

The Art of Letter-Writing

MARIE-CHRISTINE O'CALLAGHAN

I recently watched a film called *The Postman* (1997). It is set in a post-apocalyptic world where an unspecified disaster, followed by a plague, has destroyed all technologies and has left a reduced population living in small scattered communities. The film follows a lone wanderer who trades performances of Shakespeare plays for food and water. He is forced to join a neo-feudalist militia and, when he does escape, he finds refuge in the mail truck of a long-deceased postman. His possessions gone and his clothes in tatters, he puts on the postman's uniform and decides to take the mail bag. When he arrives at a settlement, he claims to be a postman from the 'Restored United States of America', and is allowed in when one of the letters in his bag is found to be addressed to one of the settlers. His lie eventually leads to the re-introduction of postal services and ultimately to the restoration of the United States.

I enjoyed the film; OK, it is Hollywood, but it got me thinking about the importance of written communication and of an efficient and reliable postal service. Recent events have severely shaken our trust in our Post Office and this was not helped by the discovery that the Post Office, a public utility supposed to provide mail and government services to communities, decided to prioritise profit over people.

The General Post Office was introduced in 1635 under King Charles I. By the 1850s the postal system was described as having become 'universal'. No village, however insignificant, was without its Receiving-House (inn, blacksmith, shop, etc, used for receiving mail). By 1914, the Post Office was said to have been 'the biggest economic enterprise in Britain and the largest single employer of labour in the world' (www.postal.museum.org/collections/ww1/).

But those were the days when we wrote letters, often by hand. Today, most of us seem to be

glued to our phones, typing short texts and enjoying instantaneous communication with the rest of the world; and yet... I remember the joy and excitement of receiving a letter from a friend, a letter that said 'I am thinking of you and this is what happened to me since I last wrote.' You then replied, first by finding pen and paper, then composing a narrative that had a beginning, a middle and an end, you signed it and then folded the paper, put it in an envelope which you sealed, addressed and stamped before going to your nearest post box to send it on its merry way. Of course, you did not just write to friends, you also had to write formal letters which started: 'Dear Sir (or Madam)...', and ended: '...Yours faithfully', to deal with banks, lawyers and businesses. If you were lucky you wrote and received, letters starting with: 'Dearest love...', and ending with: '...Yours for ever.' Such letters were kept and treasured as a tangible proof that someone really cared.

Letters were powerful things; you need only think of Emile Zola's 'J'accuse' (13 January 1898), which led to the exoneration of Captain Alfred Dreyfus; or to the letter written by Bertha Brewster to the *Daily Telegraph* published on 26 February 1913 which read:

'Everyone seems to agree upon the necessity of putting a stop to Suffragist outrages, but no-one seems certain how to do so. There are two, only two ways in which this can be done. Both will be effectual. Kill every woman in the United Kingdom. Give women the vote. Yours truly.'

But letters can also be entertaining and fun, like the letter H G Wells wrote to the Mayor of Cambridge in October 1938:

'My dear Mayor, I stole your hat. I like your hat. I shall keep your hat. Whenever I look inside it I shall think of you and your excellent sherry, and of the town of Cambridge. I take off your hat to you. H G Wells.'

Shall we revive the lost art of letter-writing?



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