



Hampstead Garden Suburb
Residents Association



Fellowship House



The Suburb axis of Performing Arts

THE EDITORS

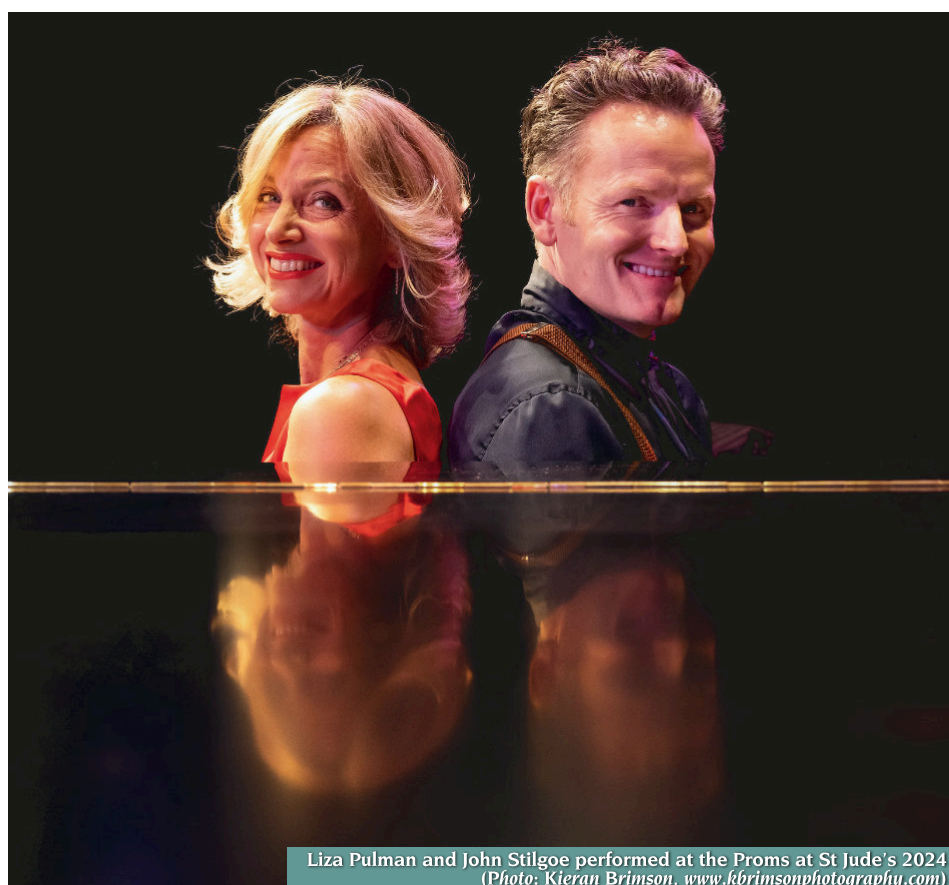
As the masthead and banner illustrate we are showcasing the Performing Arts in this issue. We are lucky enough to have more than our fair share of fabulous talent right here in the Suburb. Throughout the year we are presented with a cornucopia of high quality performances.

The talent on display at Proms at St Jude's attracts audiences from far and wide (p18) whilst Garden Suburb Theatre produces high end plays during the year at Upstairs at the Gatehouse and, in the summer, at the outdoor theatre in Little Wood (p11). Fellowship House, on Willifield Way, provides the most sublime concerts from classical to Jazz along with cabaret and more experimental works (p10). Hampstead Music Club and the North London Festival of Music Speech and Drama are featured on p11 and the Alyth Choral Society and Orchestra offerings are on p19.

You can read Francine Barsam's interviews of some of the Suburb's amazingly talented Max family on p3 and Judy Marcus treads the boards on p10. Garden Girl, Caroline Broome, tells us how to 'put on a show' in the garden this winter (p20) and even the sheep are hamming it up for the camera on p14.

The Suburb News Youth team writes about the importance of performing arts and what it means to them (pp12 and 13) and the Archives reveals the history of the Suburb's deep connection with plays and pageants over the years (p22).

Finally, the festive season is almost upon us so do check out the fizz and wine recommendations on p23 and if you over indulge during the festivities, Louie Fisher explains the current trend of intermittent fasting (also on p23). Happy Holidays!



Liza Pulman and John Stilgoe performed at the Proms at St Jude's 2024
(Photo: Kieran Brimson, www.kbrimsonphotography.com)

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8pm: Church doors and bar open offering a selection of premium alcoholic and soft drinks plus snacks available at paid bar (Electronic payment please)

9pm: Live Band Sing-a-long with Hey Jude's! Community Band

10pm: Disco with DJ G-Nutz dancing to popular hits

Midnight: Fireworks on Central Square followed by Auld Lang Syne and partying until 1am in the Church.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.
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There will be a collection towards the cost of fireworks outside and to church restoration inside. We reserve the right to restrict numbers in the church so come along early to be sure of a place.

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Photo: Shelley-Anne Salisbury

ST JUDE'S POP UP COFFEE SHOP The very enterprising Rev. Em and her husband Are have renovated an old horse trailer and created a fabulous pop up coffee shop. It proved a great success at the recent St. Jude's Autumn fair (see photo). They are hoping to offer coffees, teas, home-made cakes and waffles on a more regular basis from Spring 2025.

Shelley-Anne Salisbury

Camera Trap Follow Up

ELISABETH TACEY

In his article in Suburb News (SN159), Gary Shaw considers the new vehicle restrictions around Moss Hall School as a 'camera trap' and an 'unpleasant money-grabbing scheme'. Whilst I wholeheartedly agree with him that the signage is most peculiar (downright bizarre in fact), his assertion that a red circle with a car and motorbike inside it is 'little recognised' is baffling to me. This signage is widely used – I photographed three of these signs during a stroll in central London at the weekend (see below).

The signs around Moss Hall school cover the area around Moss Hall Grove, which is a narrow road with cars parked along it, children surging across the road or out of the school gates, parents trying to keep them safe and vehicles winding among all this mayhem, some of them being driven too fast. To remove the most dangerous of these – the vehicles – at the busiest time for pedestrians seems to me laudable and I applaud the council's efforts to do so.

We may drive, but we also walk and we are parents trying to get our children to school safely, and sons and daughters of aged parents whom we may push in wheelchairs, or even those aged parents trying to cross the road. Some of us, saints preserve us, even cycle. In this crowded city, we all need to accommodate each other in all our guises. It's about time Barnet brought in systems to restrict car driving around schools, as other boroughs have done. The signs need sorting out, but the idea is an excellent one that I urge everyone to support.

MYKE JACOBS

Nothing could be more important than saving children's lives, but is that what Barnet is doing? An Adjudicator recently quashed a £130 fine for entering the Restricted Zone in Essex Park next to Moss Hall Schools. As a result Barnet (LBB) may now have to pay back hundreds of other fines.

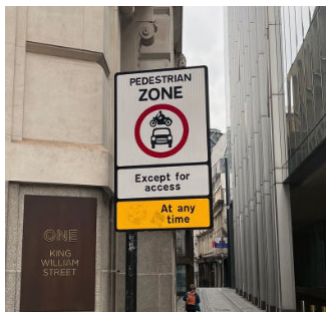
When LBB refused my appeal for allegedly committing an offence driving down Essex Park from Ballards Lane to Nether Street through a new experimental No Entry zone, which only operates between 8.15-9.15am and 3-4pm on school days, I took them to a Tribunal. There are four signs which confront a driver coming down Essex Park and making a right turn at the junction with Wentworth Avenue: a School sign with flashing yellow lights, a 20 mph sign and a No Entry sign 11 to 15 feet above the road. A Traffic Enforcement Camera sign is below that, but could equally apply to the 20 mph zone applicable when the zone is not No Entry. All this signage conflicts with the regulations. Also LBB Evidence showed that the traffic enforcement camera is not authorised.

The relevant Traffic Management Order (TMO) only came into effect on 18 April 2024, but, in a Freedom of Information response, LBB declared that the camera observing the scene had already captured 2,455 potential offenders in just over four months (including the school summer holidays). If 'offences' continue at the same rate for a full year, that would result in 7,500 offenders being fined nearly £1 million a year.

The zone was introduced in response to the death of a nine-year-old girl from pollution, but the FOI response disclosed that LBB undertook no research into the proposed zone prior to making the TMO and is keeping no records of the reduction of pollution in the zone or of the number of vehicles being turned around by the signs at the entry points.

LBB seems only to be interested in the cash it can generate from fines. So will LBB now (1) Rectify the TMO? (2) Put up signage which adequately warns drivers of the 'No Entry' zone? (3) Make sure that cameras covering the zone are authorised? (4) Begin to record information to show whether the zone is having the desired effect? (5) Pay back any fines imposed illegally?

Let's see what Barnet do now...



The new wing with Succah (Photo: Emma Ziff)



Councillor Sara Conway, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Residents Participation; Councillor Danny Rich, Deputy Mayor; Anne Clarke, London Assembly Member for Barnet & Camden; Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Tony Vourou; Sarah Sackman KC MP, Solicitor General and MP for Finchley & Golders Green; Sarah Langsford, Alyth Fundraising & Development Manager (Photo: Emma Ziff)

Alyth celebrates latest building project

ABIGAIL COX

It takes many years to build a home and it evolves as the needs of its inhabitants change and this is also true of a synagogue – a spiritual home. In the 91 years since it was founded, Alyth has been through many changes and on 19 October, a celebration commemorated the completion of the latest building project.

Expanded to include new flexible spaces for services, events, classes and meetings, the renewal was a response to the diverse and changing needs of both the Alyth family and the local community.

Over 350 members and local dignitaries, including the Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Tony Vourou; Sarah Sackman KC MP, Solicitor General and MP for Finchley & Golders Green; and Jeremiah Anderson, Bishop of Edmonton joined the Alyth Rabbinic team: Rabbi Hannah Kingston, Rabbi Elliott Karstadt, Rabbi Nicola Feuchtwang, Rabbi Colin Eimer, Rabbi Emeritus, Rabbi Josh Levy. Lay leaders from neighbouring synagogues, as well as from our communal institutions also attended the uplifting celebration.

The afternoon began with a special Mincha service with the voices of the congregation mixing joyously with those of the Alyth choir. This was followed by the official opening ceremony, including affixing the mezuzah, Havdalah – a multi-sensory experience which includes fire, spices and wine and means separation, marking the end of the holy Sabbath and the

start of the mundane week which follows – and a reception of prosecco and delicious canapés. Sarah Sackman KC MP and Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Tony Vourou both spoke, acknowledging how the revitalised building will change and benefit Alyth members and the surrounding community.

Speaking at the reception, Sarah Sackman commented: "It is a pleasure to attend and be part of such a fantastic event for the re-dedication and celebration of the Alyth building. I always love visiting Alyth, it is such a special community and a real asset to the area. I look forward to seeing it go from strength to strength."

The formalities over, the attendees filled the building for the party, enjoying the delights of a variety of food stations, musical entertainment and challenging each other to a scalextric race, table tennis or football match or throwing basketballs – some even making the hoops!

Chair of the Building Group, Noleen Cohen said, "In early 2016, we briefed architects to come up with a design which would meet the diverse communal and physical needs of our community, whilst also taking into account a new world of regulatory and environmental standards. Suffice to say, what you see today happened because of the many incredible people who have given their time and expertise, driven by their love of this community."

For further information, please contact Abigail Cox, communications@alyth.org.uk.

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GARDEN SUBURB COMMUNITY LIBRARY Summer Reading Winners



Photos: HGS Library volunteers

Ever since we became a Community Library back in 2012 we have been involved in the Summer Reading Challenge – an initiative set up by The Reading Agency to help keep children reading during the holiday period. Many of our younger members appreciate the event and eagerly sign up, others need a bit of an incentive. This year 78 children took part, with 25 completing the challenge.

Small prizes are awarded during the course of the challenge and each child completing six books by the closing date receives a medal and a certificate. They are also entered into a draw for an additional prize which we provide to make it extra special. This year it was a Rock Painting Kit and 15 children are now, hopefully, busy painting rocks!

Some of the winners are shown here.

Marc Hull

A legacy of creativity The Max family's journey in the performing arts

FRANCINE BARSAM

The Suburb's Max family has been steeped in the performing arts for many generations. Wendy Max picked up the cello aged 32 as she was keen to teach her sons an orchestral instrument. Wendy went on to become a hugely influential teacher at the Royal Academy of Music and the Guildhall school of music and helped thousands of children fall in love with music through teaching violin and cello. Her passion influenced her family deeply, providing them with the tools to make their own mark in the performing arts.

Robert Max, her son, is a professional cellist and cello teacher, leading and conducting orchestras, including the Oxford Symphony Orchestra and North London Symphony Orchestra, and has performed at the Proms at St Jude's. As the conductor of these orchestras, his passion is to enthuse and inspire his fellow musicians with challenging and interesting compositions. It's not always classical music; the Oxford Symphony Orchestra is a regular feature at the annual Truck music festival, producing light classical and rock arrangements which are extremely popular.

Robert's true love is teaching the cello to pupils of all ages and he's disappointed that music education is often left behind as schools concentrate on the 3Rs. Music lessons are often an afterthought with parents having to pay to take out private tuition in both state and private schools.

Robert's youngest son, Hugo, is a musician and artist who, when I spoke to him, was in the middle of his sold-out tour playing in UK cinemas. The violist and filmmaker improvises live soundtracks for silent horror movies on his solo viola, crafted by Luigi Azzola in 1920. Hugo started creating these improvisations around two years ago and this autumn he presented his first nationwide tour soundtracking five dark and imaginative works from the 1920s at some of the UK's oldest and most beloved cinemas. As Hugo explained, with silent classics receiving updated restorations and films which were once thought lost being rediscovered and distributed, there could be no better time to delve into silent cinema.

Hugo's work is deeply influenced by his family history and he's been exploring his maternal great-grandfather's immigration from Austria in 1939. He was interned as an 'enemy alien' on the Isle of Man during the Second World War and later settled in Belsize Park. The family's history will be published in a book in 2025 and will explore the blending of the resilient creativity of the refugee community.

Hugo's brother is Noah Max, A composer, musician and artist, he came to the notice of the wider public when his opera A Child in Striped Pyjamas, based on the book, The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas by John Boyne, premiered at the Cockpit Theatre and received glowing reviews. Noah

also premiered his String Quartet No.2 at the Thaxted Festival in the Summer of 2023/4. The Essex town is famous for its Gustav Holst connection and 2024 was Holst's 150th birthday.

The Max family encapsulates a unique blend of heritage,

education and the strong pursuit of creativity. They are not just artists but educators and innovators, with a strong sense of how personal history and artistic exploration intertwine. This unique family has fostered profound artistic achievements.



Above: Robert Max
Below: Noah Max
(Photos: Liz Isles)



Hugo Max (Photo: Richard Ecclestone)

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Trevor and his wife, Zippi (Photo: family friend)

Trevor Lyttleton wins National Lottery award

FRANCINE BARSAM

Winston Churchill said: "we make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give." This holds particularly true for Trevor Lyttleton MBE and his tireless work as the founder and chair of Contact the Elderly, now known as Re-Engage.

The inspiration for the charity came from a combination of forces. But the real catalyst was in 1965, when he found out from a local social worker that there were 6,000 lonely pensioners living in Marylebone.

His idea was simple: to create companionship and combat loneliness by providing regular tea party outings for pensioners without family support. It was also seen as an opportunity for the volunteers to make friends and socialise and do something good for the community. He started with a handful of volunteers and 12 elderly people. This rapidly expanded and by 2014 there were 8,000 volunteers holding 600 tea parties monthly. The charity has created over a million connections in the last 50 years.

Although the outings are considered the focal point of the charity, the volunteers have built strong connections with the elderly, giving them additional support and legal advice when needed. The charity's motto – 'never let our old people down' – still holds true today.

Trevor continues to campaign to tackle loneliness in the elderly, which he sees as a national shame that must be addressed. He has helped countless older people find companionship and hope, thanks to his idea of connecting them with volunteers – even for something as simple as a cup of tea and a slice of cake.

Trevor was recently awarded the National Lottery Community Game Changer Award for charitable causes. Portraits of the Community Game Changers, were painted on Perspex screens by renowned graffiti artist Luis Gomez De Teran and installed in St James's Park Lake in August and September this year. They appeared to float on the surface of the water, with the reflection symbolising the positive ripple effect of the Game Changers' contributions to their respective communities.

Trevor continues to be an advocate for social care and combating loneliness. This award is a true reflection of the impact of his simple idea, which has had a profound and long-lasting impact on our wider community. Long may it continue.

Navigating uncertainty new trends in collectibles

PERRY FIELD

As 2024 draws to a close, we're all left facing a lot of uncertainty both at home and abroad. Still, life goes on and many people continue to move homes or manage the possessions of loved ones. This year has been incredibly busy for me on all fronts – whether it's conducting probate valuations or clearing entire properties. I've handled everything from the selling of valuable items to the full clearing-out, making homes ready for completion. Also international and national removals and shipping.

This year has also brought an unprecedented rise in the value of silver, gold and jewellery, making these items some of the most popular to sell. But there's also been a growing interest in furniture from the 1960s and 70s, back when couples setting up their homes would shop at places like Heals, Jasper Conran, and Roche Bobois for the latest Danish and British designs. Fashions really do come full circle and all that mid-century style is now topping the lists of what's selling best in the market. Unfortunately, the antique furniture we once proudly displayed in our homes has seen a considerable drop in value. But not to worry! While brown furniture might not be in high demand, good-quality antique pieces and fine art will always find an appreciative buyer.

This year has also been wonderful for selling private collections. I had the pleasure of placing the largest Moorcroft collection in the UK, which sold in September along with over 200 gold sovereigns, important signed letters, stamps, and an impressive collection of 18th century cheques – all of which performed remarkably well at auction. Coming up in November, I'm excited to present a superb collection of over 150 miniature Indian paintings at Chiswick Auctions. Even in uncertain times, there's no shortage of collectors and buyers seeking quality pieces and I take pride in knowing how and where to place each item to maximize both its exposure and its value.

For further information or if you would like advice on any item, contact perryfield@hotmail.com.



A Meissen porcelain ewer, emblematic of fire, late 19th century, German, £4,000-6,000 (Photo: Sworders Fine Art Auctioneers)



DECEMBER 2024 ST JUDE ON-THE-HILL

01
DEC



ADVENT PROCESSION
6PM

06
DEC



DUNI & LUFT IN CONCERT
WITH SUPPORTING ARTIST
ROBERT VEL **7.30PM**

14
DEC



**DESIGNER CHRISTMAS
MARKET 10AM - 5PM**

19
DEC



**NINE LESSONS &
CAROLS 7.30PM**

24
DEC



**FAMILY CHRISTINGLE
SERVICE 4PM**

24
DEC



**MIDNIGHT MASS
11.30PM**

25
DEC



**CHRISTMAS DAY
SERVICE 10.30AM**



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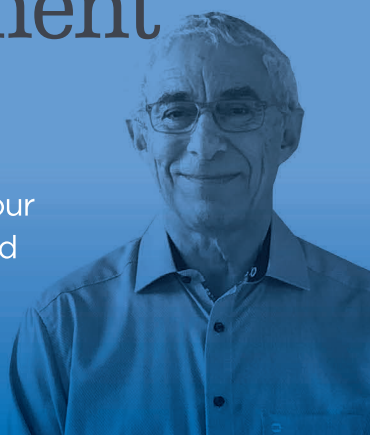
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John Whiting

1931 - 2024

MARGARET HARRIS

John Whiting, who died in August 2024, aged 93, was a well-known name not only to the many followers of his specialist subjects – current affairs, music and food – but also to followers on both the HGS and HGS2 e-discussion lists, on which he was an active, informed and witty contributor.

Born in New England and with a degree in English Literature from Berkeley, University of California, John began work in 1960 for KPFA, America's first listener-supported non-commercial radio station, where he subsequently became

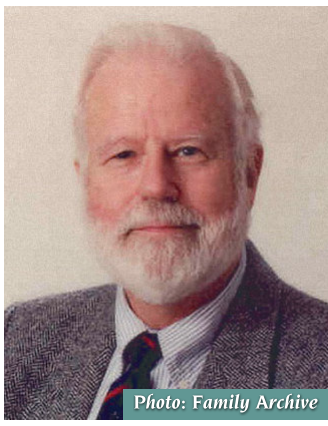


Photo: Family Archive

Production Director. When he was appointed KPFA's London correspondent, he enrolled at King's College, London and obtained an MA in American Literature and Current American Thought and Synthesis. His 'restless intellect' was grounded in deep and wide learning. A list of John's publications can be found on his website www.whittings-writings.com.

John moved to HGS in 1974 with his wife Mary. In 1978, John

and Mary set up a local gourmet society. John's interest in food matters reflected what one of his many fans has described as "his ability to snatch a good meal out of unpromising circumstance."

John was not only a man of words, he was also a musician. He was the sound designer for the electro-acoustic vocal quartet Electric Phoenix and played as part of a duo with trombonist and carnyx player, John Kenny. He was also principal sound designer with London Sinfonietta and with Glyndebourne Opera. In fact, John provided sound projection for over 30 symphony orchestras and produced pre-recorded performance tapes for professional musicians from his London studios, October Sound. His recordings have appeared on major classical labels. John also taught Ambisonic recording techniques at Morley College, London.

John is survived by his wife Mary, who runs the MTList for Suburb residents.



Photo: Family Archive

Ian Davidson

1940 - 2024

MARGARET HARRIS

Ian Davidson, who has died aged 84, was one of the Suburb's celebrities, although he lived quietly, participating in many aspects of Suburb life, including tending his allotment, assisting with Proms and helping with the conservation of Big Wood. Ian loved the architecture of Lutyens as expressed in HGS. Fittingly, St Jude's was the location for his funeral.

Ian was the scriptwriter behind the success of numerous performers including Ronnie Corbett, Ronnie Barker, Dave Allen, David Frost and, from 1967, Barry Humphries and his alter ego Dame Edna Everage. If you recall the Python sketch Dead Indian on a pile of

Dung, you will be amused to know that it was Ian who played the 'dead' Indian (who was not in fact dead).

After graduating in geography in 1963 from Keble College, Oxford, Ian had stints at Granada in Manchester and Second City in Chicago before relocating to the BBC in London. His interests were broad and he tried his hand at various times at stone-masonry, brewing and wood turning. He described himself not only as a scriptwriter but also as an actor, editor, director and producer. His daughters recall how Ian would script murder mysteries for their birthday parties.

Ian Davidson was quintessentially a man of words. He continued to hand-write letters to friends and family even when it became less fashionable. And he read voraciously. As one of his daughters describes, he had "a poem for every occasion, a quote for all eventualities."

Ian is survived by his wife Anthea, daughters Clemency, Grace and Hannah and grandchildren Tobias, Ella, Joshua, Honor, Henry and Arthur.

Masayuki Tayama Memorial Concert



Masayuki Tayama
(Photo: Suburb News Library)

STEVEN ROWE

On Sunday 22 September a large number of people came together in the Free Church to celebrate the life of Masayuki Tayama, an incredible, much-loved and much-missed musician and to raise money for 'Music on the Water', the charity that was close to his heart.

Masa was born in 1974 and lived on the Suburb for more than half his life. He was a regular at the concert series in the Free Church, where his performances were always eagerly anticipated, and also, as a member of Hampstead Music Club, at Fellowship House.

Masa was a pianist and musician of the highest calibre and brought audiences to their feet with the sensitivity, power and perfect architecture of his playing. By the age of ten, he was already performing to large audiences and had given his radio debut. He went on to win international competitions and to perform in many of the UK and Japan's major concert venues.

An equally exceptional teacher, he was proud to work with the next generation of young pianists at Chetham's School of Music and became Director of The Piano Teachers' Course UK in 2019, delivering professional development to piano teachers worldwide.

The concert was given by friends, colleagues and Masa's

wife Rhiana and featured music from a number of composers but particularly Sergei Rachmaninov – one of Masa's most loved composers. As well as Rhiana, the musicians were Beverly Preece, Anete Graudina, Hiroko Yamamoto, Barry Solomon, Anna Slavina and Graham Caskie.

One of Masa's most beloved endeavours was the creation of 'The Piano Boat' to bring music to the UK's inland waterways, where he loved to spend his time. 'Music on the Water' will provide educational opportunities in this context, such as master-classes, talks and workshops in the beautiful setting of this specially-designed floating concert hall.



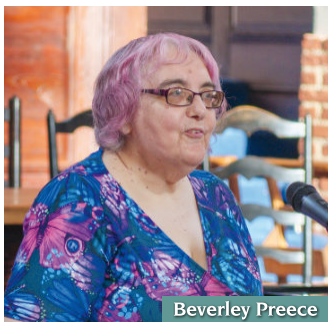
Anna Slavina



Anete Graudina



Graham Caskie



Beverley Preece



Barry Solomon



Rhiana Tayama
(All photos: Peter McCluskie)

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Surveying for wildlife (Photo: Dominic Rose)

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It has been another busy few months, with continuing strong progress being made towards our ambition to establish the Suburb as the most biodiverse urban area in the UK. Critical to achieving this is rigorous and regular measurement of our biodiversity levels to both establish a baseline level (which can then be compared to other areas) and track our progress over coming years, as we strive to make the area even more wildlife friendly.

We now have a thriving local wildlife monitoring team of volunteer enthusiasts who are participating in citizen scientist surveys like the big butterfly watch, and also logging everything they spot locally using the easy to use app, iNaturalist. In fewer than six months, over 225 species have been spotted and identified in the Suburb, and the app uses a combination of smart AI and verification by experts to help you identify what you snap. It's really fun, interesting, educational and addictive and I would encourage everyone to get involved.

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INATURALIST
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There are plenty of 'how-to' guides on their website.

In August the RA generously funded our first ever ecologist-led biodiversity surveys across four sites in the Suburb:

- Kids' Garden by St Jude's Church
- Semi-woodland area next to the Church rooms, off Central Square
- Community Orchard in Lyttelton Playing Fields
- Three adjacent residential Suburb gardens.

The findings were extremely positive, with hundreds of species identified in good abundance

across all the sites, even though observations were only made by eye in a single two-hour visit to each location. In particular, the levels of biodiversity found in the residential gardens were incredibly impressive, in large part owing to our famous hedging. Even a simple garden with only hedges and lawn had a good mix of species, and the neighbouring garden, planted and maintained in line with the principles of wildlife gardening, had over double these already high levels. This shows how simple steps we can all make deliver meaningful and measurable change. We can all create a wildlife reserve in our outdoor space.

For simple tips on how to make your garden more wildlife friendly, please see the website or get in touch.

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KIDS GARDENING CLUB

The Club continues to go from strength to strength, with over 50 children, carers and volunteers playing an active role in the development of a beautiful, productive and wildlife friendly community garden next to St Jude's Church.

We meet every Tuesday at 4pm, and new members and volunteers are always welcome. Ages range from 6 months up to 87-years-old and it has been truly heart-warming to see new inter-generational friendships being formed and how much joy the children take from planting, digging, snipping, harvesting and spotting in the garden, as well as from the tea breaks in the vicarage and the regular bonfires and roasted marshmallows.

The newly installed wildlife pond has been a particular highlight – it's now home to newts and frogs, and many hours have

been spent by kids and adults alike trying to spot the life that has made this garden home.

In October we were lucky to welcome a visit by Heath Hands who ran a hedgehog workshop. In an incredible coincidence, at that precise time Rev Em was notified about a trapped hedgehog which needed rescuing nearby and the trained volunteers from Heath Hands were able to do a full health check and release it into the garden, much to the amazement and delight of all those at the club, many of whom had never seen a live hedgehog up close.

The kids garden has become a focal point in the Suburb and most days there are scores of visitors dropping in to enjoy the space and commenting on how beautiful and peaceful it is.

A wonderful video has been made about the club, which we hope will be shown on Gardeners' World next year.

YOU CAN
VIEW THE
VIDEO OF
THE CLUB
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The Kids Garden and Gardening Club is generously funded by grants and donations, and always welcomes any spare tools or plants, that can be dropped off any time by the greenhouse.

LYTTELTON PLAYING FIELDS: HENRIETTA BARNETT COMMUNITY ORCHARD AND WILDLIFE GARDEN

Barnet Council have now fully given over management of the new orchard area, in the corner of Lyttelton Playing fields in front of the bowls club, to us, with the ambition of making it a wildlife friendly area of use and interest to the local community and nature.

For the past few months mowing has ceased, allowing the grass to grow longer, with newly created curved paths getting regular use from locals and visitors alike. A log circle has also been installed, using logs from a fallen hornbeam donated to us from Highgate Woods.

The site will continue to develop over the coming months and years with support from the Council and other grant making bodies, as well as dozens of volunteers. By the time this article is published 2,000 bulbs will have been planted, which should look wonderful in the spring, and providing much needed pollen for insects. Wildflower meadows will have also been seeded which should look wonderful throughout summer 2025 and beyond.

FREE LAWN CONSULTATIONS

A reminder that the RA has now launched a free lawn consultation service. At this time of year, residents often complain about muddy and flooded lawns, which are especially challenging with

RA Bulletin Board

HGSRA IS LOOKING TO RENT A DRY SPACE
FOR USE AS A COMMUNITY WORKSHOP. IDEALLY IT WILL HAVE AN ELECTRIC FEED. MINIMUM SIZE: A GARAGE. RA MEMBERS WILL BE ABLE TO USE IT AND TOOLS, WORKBENCHES ETC WILL BE PROVIDED. ACCESS REQUIRED 7 DAYS A WEEK. Does anyone own or know of such a space? Rent would be paid.

ADVANCE NOTICE OF A FAMILY CARNIVAL PARTY
ON SUNDAY 9 FEBRUARY. ENTERTAINERS AND FANCY DRESS PARADE. MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW NEARER THE TIME ON HGSRA WEBSITE. FREE TO RA MEMBERS.

small kids who like to play outside at all times of year.

It's easy and common to think that astroturf is the only solution - but it's one that comes at a huge financial and environmental cost (as well as being prohibited by the Trust). There is always another way - and the lawn consultation service will help you identify wildlife friendly and cost effective ways to improve your lawn. To get in touch and arrange a free visit, please email biodiversity@hgsra.uk.

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY
Nearly 150 local residents have joined our WhatsApp group to find out more about the Britain's Biggest Living Garden project and share information about how you can help wildlife and nature in your garden.

YOU CAN
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WHATSAPP
GROUP
USING THIS
QR CODE ►



Releasing the healthy hedgehog (Photo: Dominic Rose)



Hallowe'en in the Kids Garden (Photo: Dominic Rose)

Annual General Meeting 2025

(RA members only)

Hampstead Garden Suburb
Residents Association

The meeting
(incorporating a Special General Meeting)
will take place at 8pm on Monday 31 March

Henrietta Barnett School, Bigwood Hall, Bigwood Road, NW11
(Doors open at 7.30pm - light refreshments will be available before the meeting)

Nomination procedure for the RA Council:

www.hgsra.uk/docs/agm2025-nomination-procedure.pdf

The meeting agenda will be available on the RA website from 24 March 2025.

Let's have more defibrillators on the Suburb

GREN MANUEL
MEMBER OF HGSRA COUNCIL
HGSDEFIBS@GMAIL.COM

Defibrillators can save lives. So isn't it time the Suburb had a proper network of these devices?

First, it's essential to understand what these gadgets can do. These laptop-sized devices deliver a shock of energy to restart a heart that has stopped beating. The medical term is 'sudden cardiac arrest' and, according to the British Heart Foundation (BHF), there are more than 30,000 incidents of 'out-of-hospital' cardiac arrests a year in England, many of them suffered by people with no previously diagnosed heart condition and two-thirds occur in males.

Arithmetic indicates that about seven Suburb residents suffer cardiac arrest a year. In reality, that figure may be considerably higher as we have more people aged over 70 than the national average and risk rises sharply with age. Unfortunately, the outlook after sudden cardiac arrest is poor. The BHF says the survival rate in England is less than one in ten.

Ambulance services in the UK treat cardiac arrest as the very highest priority (higher than, for instance, a stroke). BHF say that early CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and defibrillation can more than double the chances of survival, underlining the urgency of treatment with a defibrillator. The NHS says that, in patients with shockable cardiac arrest, there is approximately a 10% reduction in survival for every minute's delay.

This is where a community defibrillator network can make a

difference. Eighty per cent of cardiac arrests happen at home.

When someone rings 999 and describes the symptoms, the London Ambulance Service will tell them the location

of the nearest defibrillator so that they can run and get it to start treatment before the ambulance arrives. Once retrieved, the device will electronically talk through how you use it, and only deliver a shock if it has analysed the heart and is sure that shock would be safe and would help.

A network of perhaps a dozen defibrillators would mean that possibly 95% of Suburb residents would be within 200m of a device. Some could go in BT phone boxes. Others could go on the walls of community buildings, and devices that are currently locked inside could perhaps be moved to an external weatherproof cabinet. And they're not so expensive – perhaps £1,400 for one defibrillator and weatherproof cabinet.

But it's important not to focus on the device. I spoke to one local group that has had a unit in a public location for six years, which has never been used. To save lives, defibrillators must be combined with a community awareness and a training programme.

Awareness: People need to know the exact location of their nearest device. They need to think about the practicalities of getting it, for instance having the phone number of a neighbour who can run to get it (someone with cardiac arrest shouldn't be left alone).

Training: Whether someone is using a community defibrillator or waiting for the paramedics, people



The Suburb's only public defibrillator on Lyttelton Playing Fields (Photo: Gren Manuel)

need to feel comfortable doing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to keep oxygen flowing to the brain. This life-saving procedure can be learned in as little as 15 minutes and there is even an online training programme on the BHF website: <https://shorturl.at/YPcAH>.

The best way to fund the equipment and deliver awareness and training is for the many community organisations across the Suburb to cooperate. Churches, synagogues, Fellowship House, the Community Library, sports clubs and other community groups all have a role in spreading awareness and potentially hosting devices. As a side benefit, it would be good to have a project that brings together the many community organisations in the Suburb with a common goal.

To kick-start the project, we will be hosting a meeting in Fellowship House in late January where all community groups can hear more. We've already reached out to many, but if you haven't yet been contacted, please get in touch. Also, we're interested to hear from anyone else who feels they can help with this life-saving project. Email HGSdefibs@gmail.com.



Photo: Peter McCluskie

HGSRA Volunteer Supper

It has become a lovely RA tradition to organise an evening for our most active volunteers every two years. On 11 September we held the third such supper, hosted for us yet again by the local Hampstead Golf Club in their beautiful Arts & Crafts clubhouse. It also seems a tradition that it rains on the evening of our event and we were not disappointed!

Following drinks and a delicious supper cooked by the Club's excellent chef, we had the chance to thank Lorna Page for her many years of running Suburb News distribution for the whole Suburb from the central HQ at the HGS Free Church! She has done this with the help of her family and many friends for over 27 years and will be greatly missed!

Emma Howard, Chair HGSRA • chair@hgsra.uk

The Free Church

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB

Christmas Services

11am Sunday 15 December	Nine Lessons and Carols
6pm Monday 16 December	Carol Singing around the Suburb
11am Sunday 22 December	Family service
11am Wednesday 25 December	Christmas Day Service
11am Sunday 29 December	Family Service
11.30pm Tuesday 31 December	Watchnight Service followed by Fireworks on the Square
3pm Wednesday 1 January	Piano Recital followed by seasonal refreshments

Minister: Rev Aled Jones

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RA REVIEW

Trees & Open Spaces Committee

MARIA SCHLATTER
TREES@HGSRA.UK

The life-enhancing natural setting, historic tree cover and green spaces are a big part of what makes Hampstead Garden Suburb such a desirable place to live, but we cannot take their integrity for granted. That's where the Trees & Open Spaces Committee volunteers come in.

We work with the HGS Trust and Barnet Council on an active policy to protect trees and the green environment. Our volunteers

actively monitor tree cover in the Suburb, both street trees and significant veteran trees, and we keep an eye on the condition of our green spaces. We also continue to work with the City Corporation and English Heritage on issues relating to Hampstead Heath, the Heath Extension and Kenwood.

As part of the City of London's adaptive conservation strategy, for example, we once again welcomed sheep to the Heath Extension for a period in September. This grazing brings many benefits in ecologically

sensitive areas and has a lot of public appeal.

We are hugely grateful for the generous contributions residents made to our Trees for Streets fund-raising campaign this year which added an amazing £5,000 to the much-needed new street tree planting and replacement in the winter. There will be a new campaign next year, so watch this space!

If the health of the Suburb's trees and green spaces is of concern to you and you would like to make a positive difference, please get in touch: trees@hgsra.uk.



Photo: Colin Gregory

Suburb litter picking

HELEN NAFTALIN, RA LITTER PICKING CO-ORDINATOR
LITTER@HGSRA.UK

Thank you litter-pickers for the great work you do collecting and disposing of the seemingly endless assortment of rubbish left on our roads, pavements, pathways and in our wonderful green spaces. A community litter-pick was held in Lyttelton Playing Field on Sunday 29 September and it was dispiriting to have to pick up so much rubbish that had been dropped without any consideration for others who use this green space, or indeed the wildlife that lives here. The litter caused by cigarette-smoking and rolling is almost impossible to pick up with



the small bits of paper, foam, plastic wrapping and then the cigarette butts as the final gesture.

How we can encourage people of all ages to be more considerate and to take their litter home, hopefully to be recycled, or at least to put it in the numerous Council dustbins in our streets and parks? Is that so hard? Ideas gratefully received but there really seems little excuse for the amount of litter left around.

We have been given litter-picking sticks by Barnet Council, including smaller ones for children, and if you are interested in helping, then please contact me with your address and telephone number and I will be pleased to deliver equipment to you.

RA Family Fun Run

The first family fun run organised by RA Volunteers took place at Lyttelton Playing Fields on Sunday 29 September. It was a mild, still day and the rain held off. There were two possible runs: three laps of the park totalling three km for the more dedicated runners, or a 300-metre run for the younger ones and the late-comers. Over 20 runners participated, and a good time was had by all.

At the same time, a cohort of volunteer litter-pickers cleared the park of dropped litter and had a productive session getting the park clean.

Look out for further runs to be advertised in Suburb News and eNews (available to RA members only). You can join via the HGSRA website: <https://hgsra.uk/about/join.html> and any membership fees received this December will be treated as 2025 subscriptions.

Asher Budwig, Chair HGSRA REACH committee • reach@hgsra.uk



Some of the Family Run participants (Photo: Emma Howard)



Winner of the first RA Family Run, Sam Dörger (Photo: Emma Howard)

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.



Community bulb planting

in Lyttelton Playing Fields

DOMINIC ROSE, KEITH COLE & EMMA HOWARD

On a mild, dry afternoon on Sunday 17 November, a hugely successful clearing and planting session took place at the Henrietta Community Orchard area in Lyttelton Playing Fields involving some 70 volunteers of all ages. Organisers were joined by volunteers from the adjacent Bishopswood Bowling Club, HGS Horticultural Society, the Kids' Gardening Project, Community Orchard volunteers and others. Passers-by with their dogs and children as well as girls from Henrietta Barnett School joined in the fun.

Dominic Rose, founder of Britain's Biggest Living Garden, and Maria Schlatter, who set up the Community Orchard, organised the planting event including procuring the bulbs and bushes and organising the logistics. Huge support was received from kind bowls club members who hosted a magnificent tea in their clubhouse with home-made cakes plus cupcakes donated by Lola's as well as lending their tools to the effort. I expect the Clubhouse had rarely been so full of enthusiastic people greatly enjoying this satisfying community event. Finn, one of our Kids Gardening Project volunteers, raised £60 from selling home-made cookies in aid of Children in Need.

"The community spirit was overwhelming" said Keith Cole, president of the bowling club "Bishopswood has its own lovely garden surrounding the bowling green. Come the spring we hope more women and children will join the club." Contact keith@colespenco.com if you are interested in finding out more.

Thanks also to Barnet Council who had arranged for the area to be rotovated and to Harriet Duffield, their Biodiversity and Conservation Officer, who came to help on the day. Thanks to Barnet Council and the RA for funding the cost of the bulbs.

"This is yet another project to establish HGS as the most biodiverse urban area in the UK," said Dominic. "I used to play in Lyttelton when I was a child," said local MP Sarah Sackman, who joined in with her father and daughter. "Our children and their children will reap the benefits of biodiversity," she added. She followed up with a thank you note confirming how much she'd enjoyed this fabulous community event.



Everybody's mucking in
(Photo: Richard Rose)



Dominic Rose, Maria Schlatter, Sarah Sackman
& Emma Howard (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)



Dominic Rose tutors captivated Kids Club
volunteers (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)



Community service with a smile
(Photo: Richard Rose)



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*Trust permitting



Photo: Ruben Cohen

Pride & Prejudice at Fellowship House

SHELLEY-ANNE SALISBURY

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.' Thus begins the galloping romcom penned by Jane Austen, which lends itself so well to dramatisation and, as it turns out, a musical score.



Portrait of Jane Austen based on one drawn by her sister Cassandra (Photo: Public domain)

Particularly so when the composer is one Carl Davis.

Having studied Pride and Prejudice at school (and clearly at an impressionable age), I was amazed at just how much I recalled of this work; the nuanced allusions, witty quips and keen observations on class. I was delighted to find it was still relevant and highly amusing.

The three performers, Sophie Max, Leora Cohen and Paul Wingfield, each with impressive bios, were certainly in possession of talent and didn't want for a more appreciative audience.

A delight from start to finish. Sophie Max beautifully narrating Gill Hornby's abridged version of the original text – an inspired piece of storytelling – distilling it down to its marvellous bare bones. Sophie was accompanied by Leora and Paul expertly playing Carl Davis' score on violin and piano respectively. An inspired coming together of the performing arts. The Regency costumes and mini-staging (Regency chairs and table to boot) were an extra bonus.

Fellowship House offers top-notch entertainment and at fantastic value for money. Plus it's a hop, skip and a jump for HGS residents. Who needs Pemberley?



Whose Life Is It Anyway with Clare Janew, Vickie Browning, Rachel Sondhelm (Photo: Tim Colmans)

Anyone for... Treading the Boards?

JUDY MARCUS

I was invited last month by the HGS Theatre group to see the lighting set-up process and the dress rehearsal of their most recent play, Whose Life Is It Anyway, at the local theatre Upstairs at the Gatehouse.

It is a sombre piece: a woman hospitalised, kept alive after a car accident despite only being able to talk and move her head. She does not want to remain alive under the circumstances and is questioning the processes and thinking behind the medical decisions relating to her care.

It was an interesting, wry adaptation of a difficult subject, with some comedic moments and, despite the serious subject of the play, I particularly liked the acting of the younger doctor and the mastery of the lead actor who had to remain pretty much motionless in bed throughout. I was impressed by the professionalism of the GST cast and crew. Everyone is a volunteer.

The Suburb Theatre Group puts on five productions a year and new members are encouraged. There are revolving roles (from back stage to front of house) and anyone who wants to take on an acting role must audition first.

I spoke with David Lane, the group's Treasurer and the lighting director for this production. He handled the equipment with proficiency despite being precariously perched on a high ladder manoeuvring ceiling lights and programming the lighting board.

Rehearsals take place on Tuesday and Thursday nights and Sunday afternoons. There is a pool of 120 members making up production teams and the actors chosen for each play. The producers rotate. The group generally work from pre-existing scripts of established plays. The plays are performed at Upstairs at The Gatehouse (where the current show was being staged) and the Outdoor Theatre in Little Wood for Summer shows. The group used to do a musical show during February (that must have helped subdue the winter blues), sometimes with 100 strong cast (including children) but currently, and sadly, they now have nowhere big enough to put this on.

There is clearly a lot of work and dedication involved by a large group of people but it's not all hard graft: there are socials on a Wednesday, ably organised by member Colin Gregory, one of the pool of producers. The socials help bond the group members for the times when they will be working together on a project.

I am appreciative of the fact this enterprise takes a lot of commitment (and talent). Would I want to have a go at treading the boards? The current production with a very small cast might be a bit daunting for me, but a bit part in the old-style musicals might be more up my street.

To find out more contact Colin Gregory at colingregory@talk21.com.

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Photo: Anna Slavina

Garden Suburb Theatre

COLIN GREGORY

The Garden Suburb Theatre's season started in October with Brian Clark's *Whose Life is it Anyway?* Holding the Man, adapted by Tommy Murphy and based on Timothy Conigrave's award-winning memoir followed in November. Next year's programme begins with *Writing from Within 2*. Following the first programme of monologues in 2022, the company will be giving ten new monologues from Wednesday 22 to Friday 24 January at Upstairs at the Gatehouse.

The next auditions – open to all – will be on Tuesday 7 and Sunday 12 January at 7pm at the Free Church Hall for Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, which will be staged in May. The season will close with an open-air Shakespeare in Little Wood.

If you are interested in the group but don't necessarily want to act or direct, you can join as a Friend. This entitles you to a free ticket for each production, to attend social events and receive a regular newsletter. Contact membership@gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk.



Clare Janew, Libby Curley and Debbie Lane in the Garden Suburb Theatre's production of *A Woman of No Importance* in April 2018 (Photo: David Lane)

Hampstead Music Club

ANNA SLAVINA

Founded in 1946, Hampstead Music Club is possibly unique in that, unlike many music clubs, it doesn't hold auditions and everyone is welcome to perform whatever their instrument, voice, experience or ability. Most of its main activities take place once a month at Fellowship House on Tuesday evenings between September and July at 7.30pm.

Music from all genres is performed and members often form ensembles to play together at members' evenings. The club

has an accompanist member who can be booked – at no charge – by instrumentalists and singers and HMC is therefore the ideal place to meet like-minded musicians. The club also organises master classes and hosts Invitation Concerts by professional musicians.

Fast becoming a key member of the many Suburb institutions dedicated to the performing arts, the club is a great favourite with Suburb residents. Hampstead Music Club is a charitable organisation of amateur and professional musicians dedicated to promoting the performance,

appreciation and enjoyment of music in a milieu of enthusiasm and friendliness. Recently members of the club were invited to perform in the splendid space of Swiss Cottage Music Library. The concert was a success and we are hoping to stage another performance there soon to promote local talents beyond the boundaries of the Suburb.

New members are always welcome and the fees are very modest so, whether you want to perform or just want to come to listen and enjoy, contact us via hampsteadmusicclub@gmail.com.



woodwind and brass – some grouped by age and some grouped by standard. Everyone receives a certificate and feedback from an eminent adjudicator. Class winners receive medals and may receive cash prize vouchers from one of the Festival's sponsors or the opportunity to play in the End of Festival Concert. Audiences are always welcome, particularly to our elite competitions for conservatoire-level students.

We need help when the Festival is taking place to staff the reception desk, direct performers and their parents/teachers and to help manage the back-stage practice rooms. If we have enough helpers, everyone will have the opportunity to spend some time watching as well as hearing the performances.

If you can help or would like more information please do call me on 07966 934186 or email enquiriesnlf@outlook.com.

Rosemary Cook

Do you have some time available to help support emerging musical talent? The music side of the North London Festival of Music, Speech & Drama (northlondonfestival.org.uk) takes place in the Free Church, North Square, from mid-March to mid-May every year and nurtures young musicians at all levels from five upwards. Performance opportunities are vital to help these musicians develop.

In 2024 there were 747 entries to classes for piano, strings, singing, harp, chamber music, recorder,

BOOK REVIEW BY ALAN WALKER

LIFEBOAT 5

by Susan Hood
Published by:
Simon & Schuster

In *Lifeboat 5* children's author Susan Hood revisits the story of the sinking of the SS City of Benares by a German U-boat on 17 September 1940. The ship was conveying 90 children to Canada to escape the Blitz. Michael Rennie, the 23-year-old son of the Vicar of St Jude's, Hampstead Garden Suburb, had volunteered to accompany them. Only 13 of the children survived. Rennie himself died of exposure and exhaustion after repeatedly diving from a lifeboat into the stormy Atlantic in rescue attempts.

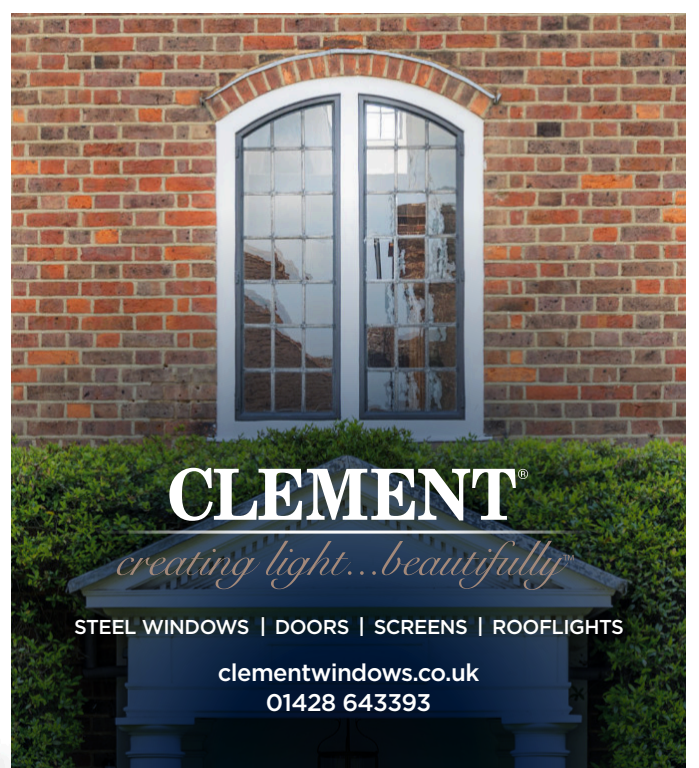
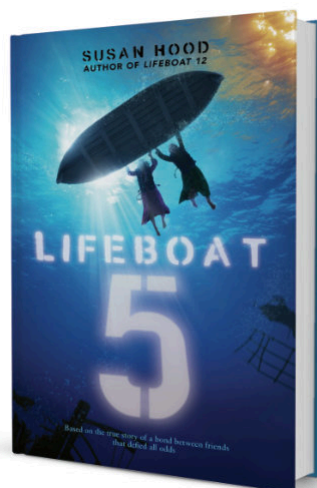
He is commemorated in a painting of the event in St Jude's (reproduced in the book). Louis Walder, one of the survivors, posed for the painting.

Lifeboat 5 tells how Louis's sister Bess (15) and her friend

Beth Cummings (14) surfaced on either side of their overturned lifeboat and managed to hold hands across the keel for nearly nineteen hours until rescue came. Bess couldn't see without her glasses and Beth couldn't swim, so each depended on the other for survival. They went on to become lifelong friends and then sisters-in-law when Bess married Beth's brother. Each emerged from the catastrophe with a strong sense of power and purpose realising, as Hood says, we all have two hands: one to help ourselves and the second to help others.

Intended for eight to 12-year-olds (I think it will be appreciated more by those of a slightly older age than the girls themselves) *Lifeboat 5* is a harrowing but uplifting account told in free verse from the perspectives of Bess, Louis and of the sea itself. The poetic rendering transforms the story into an epic tale of courage and friendship, which not only informs but inspires.

Extensive appendices explain the technique and verse forms employed (haiku, triolet, tanka), fill out the story and its wider significance (in bringing the United States into the war), and lament the lack of information about the many 'Lascar' sailors of Asian origin who served and perished on the Benares.



YOUTH



Purbasha Datta
I am an avid reader of mystery and adventure novels. In my free time, I like to write poetry and sketch. My favourite subjects are Physics and Music. I also really enjoy playing football, chess and the piano and guitar. I'm extremely excited to be part of the Suburb News Youth team this year and I look forward to sharing my perspective with the community.



Saanvi Dwivedi
I love studying history, geography and English and my hobbies include writing short stories, dancing, playing the piano and reading mystery novels. I enjoy going on walks around HGS and cherish the tranquillity and nourishment that the natural beauty brings to the area. I look forward to bringing a fresh perspective to Suburb News!



Tanishka Gavade
I'm excited about the chance to contribute to SNY. I've had a keen interest in writing since childhood, fueled by my passion for reading across diverse genres. One of my favourite hobbies is playing badminton, which I represent at county level. I'm eager to share my insights while gaining valuable new skills through this experience.



Zella Kendall
I am 14 and I love reading, writing and music. I particularly enjoy murder mysteries, a fair share of classics (Jane Austen, the Brontë sisters, George Orwell) and modern fiction and non-fiction. I am very involved with music: I sing and play the violin and Eb Horn in ensembles and orchestras. I am very excited to write for Suburb News!



Emaan Sherwani
From a young age, I've been drawn to reading and writing. As an aspiring journalist-in-the-making, I particularly enjoy crime and science fiction novels. My other hobbies are playing netball, painting, and listening to podcasts and music. My favourite subjects are Art, French, English, and History. I'm so excited to join the SNY team this year!



Honorée Wallis
I've been in love with words since I could utter "more." My passion led me first to the tales of Mr. Men before transporting me to the worlds of Narnia, Hogwarts and beyond. In short, words beguile me. I hope my words will amuse, inform and captivate you, the reader, when writing the most trivial or consequential of articles for SNY.

TUNED TO JOY

A melody touches every person in a different way. For some, it strokes them as tenderly as a mother's touch, for others it dances and skips around their hearts. The gentle and harmonious notes have the capacity to elevate an entire congregation. As the tune swirls around the room, it leads you on a journey down memory lane so profound it conjures emotion that lingers long after the music has faded. It's beyond dispute that music has the ability to stir sentiment, provoke memories and elicit joy.

Music serves as a universal language, transcending cultures and communities. Its unifying power is evidenced by the captivated audiences at concerts, be they held in a vast stadium or small intimate venue. It's equally present in the humiliating yet hilarious moments shared during karaoke and kitchen discos, where the boundary between listener and performer is blurred. No matter where you are in the world, what your beliefs or circumstances, we have all experienced and adored the vibrant, emotional tapestry of sound that is music.

The pleasure derived from listening to music is paralleled only by the delight in performing it. The preparation, the excitement, the last-minute nerves that give way to a rush of adrenaline as the conductor brings in each section. Each term at HBS we are introduced to stunning pieces of music, written for a quartet, choir, or full orchestra. We work hard, practise, rehearse, prepare and it all leads to the big day: the concert. Everything we work towards is on full display, but the greatest pleasure is being able to share our skills

and the beautiful music made with our friends, family and strangers, whose ears are treated to the wonderful sounds our instruments can make. As performers, the thrill never diminishes. Whether you're at the back of your section or have a solo, the music brings the ensemble together as one entity driven to make majestic music.

Participating in musical activities is a brilliant way to connect with others who share a passion for music. Each member contributes their unique talents to collectively create a symphonic story that is more than the sum of its parts. The conversation between the notes creates harmony among the instruments and their masters. With each rehearsal, not only does the piece grow more cohesive, but the players themselves form a stronger sense of community and camaraderie. Participating in orchestras and choirs has enriched our appreciation of the joy of music and the community that brings it to life.

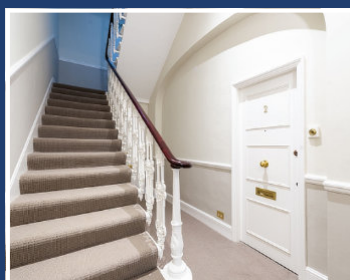
The connection, inspiration and expression we have experienced from our music-making is in no way off limits. The beauty of music is in its accessibility. Anyone can listen to it, anyone can make it, including you. Whatever level or ability, there is a way to get involved, in your local orchestra or choir. Seize any opportunity to share the language of music with others. The experiences we have playing music shapes us as people and the melodies and harmonies never leave us.

*Zella Kendall and Honorée Wallis
The Henrietta Barnett School*

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THE POWER OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

WHAT DOES PERFORMING ARTS MEAN TO ME?

Whether it's vibing to music or dancing to the latest trends, the performing arts are embodied within us, breathing life into imagination, giving us the courage to express, to connect and to inspire. Despite the many memorable performances we've experienced, two stood out in particular: our school trips to see *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Romeo & Juliet*. These plays brought themes of justice, love and human struggle vividly to life, leaving a lasting impact on all of us.

Being able to watch *To Kill a Mockingbird* has certainly been a once-in-a-lifetime experience that has left us reflecting on the moral nature of humanity, challenging us to consider whether people are essentially good or evil. Seeing the plot through the eyes of Scout has opened our eyes to a new perspective, where we witness her painful transition from childhood innocence to a more complex understanding of the world.

Throughout the performance, the characters grapple with issues of social inequality and racism that left us questioning the fairness of this system. This performance not only engaged us as an audience but it also illustrates the importance of maintaining faith in humanity amidst the overwhelming darkness. Ultimately, this style of performing arts not only reminded us but reinforced the idea that the performing arts can spark vital messages to audiences, allowing us to confront undeniable truths and consider new perspectives.

Watching *Romeo and Juliet* at the Globe theatre was an unforgettable experience. The production infused the timeless tragedy with modern elements, making it accessible and exciting for us young students. Instead of traditional costumes, the stage was vibrant with graffiti-covered walls and the actors dressed in streetwear, giving the play a gritty, urban feel. What stood out most was the use of rap battles instead of poetic duels, with the actors delivering Shakespeare's lines with rhythm and energy, making the Montague-Capulet conflict feel real and relevant. The playful use of bicycles and interactive transitions between scenes added a dynamic touch. Through their performance, the actors emphasised themes of violence, love and miscommunication, showing how these issues are still present in today's world. These modern elements helped bridge the gap between Shakespeare's time and ours, making the play feel fresh, alive and deeply relatable.

Both performances demonstrated the undeniable power of the performing arts, leaving an indelible mark on our minds and hearts that went far beyond entertainment. From grappling with the harsh realities of injustice in *To Kill a Mockingbird* or experiencing the tragic tale of the star-crossed lovers, these plays reminded us of the enduring relevance of theatre in our lives. Performing arts are more than just a form of expression; they are mirrors that reflect society's truths, are links between past and present and powerful forces that inspire empathy, reflection, and connection. These experiences showed us that the performing arts will always be a vital part of how we see, understand and communicate with the world around us, making them indispensable parts of who we are.

Tanishka Gavade & Purbasha Datta
The Henrietta Barnett School

As a performer, you can project a story that you want to share, and as the audience, you can interpret it in the way that you feel best fits – we believe that it is this very subjectivity of the performing arts that makes them so unique and interesting to understand.

Whilst there are many different kinds of performing arts, we feel most exposed to the ones that we practise ourselves; for us, it is dance and musical theatre. Although these are quite different art forms, many webs of connections can be noticed, be it through their compatibility with exaggerated movements, their exploitation of facial expressions, or their need for energy and enthusiasm throughout their performances.

Engaging in the arts releases positivity and happiness just as naturally as trees release oxygen, and adds colour to this world just as effectively as a painter with a palette. They provide an escape from reality for both performers and spectators alike, something that can often be hard to find. Therefore, it is unsurprising to learn that they can also enhance your mental health in many fulfilling ways. This could be by creating an outlet to release your emotions and express yourself – it has been proven that engaging in activities like acting, dancing and singing can help to reduce stress and increase peace within. Performing can be an escape from daily troubles faced by people no matter who or where they are.

When in a group performance, this can encourage social interactions and making new friends from outside your normal circle. Building a community with similar artists can provide a sense of belonging, another way that mental wellbeing is benefitted. Collaboration in group pieces also boosts communication, leadership skills and can even improve one's confidence in one's skills and ideas.

It is not just the performance itself that is beneficial to people. The rehearsal process of any dance, scene or song takes many hours of practice and work. This can promote many essential skills, including time-management and self-discipline and can also uplift mindfulness. The outcome can instil a sense of achievement which can ameliorate a person's day immensely.

It is also important to mention the power that witnessing performances has on members of audiences. Live performances can evoke strong emotions and are a good opportunity to be immersed in a story. Observing the arts stimulates the mind, and engagement with complex narratives can encourage critical thinking. Therefore, not only are performances good for your brain, but also good for your senses. A simple dance or a beautiful song improves your emotions strongly with vibrant colours or spirited sounds.

Overall, we think the performing arts are a powerful tool in enhancing mental health and wellbeing and providing positive emotions, whether it is yourself on the stage or not. They mean stories are spread, creativity is nurtured and, above all, a sense of community is imprinted.

Saanvi Dwivedi and Emaan Sherwani
The Henrietta Barnett School

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I'm ready for my close up Mr DeMille (Photo: Lynda Cook)

Sheep return to Heath

LYNDA COOK

An unusual sight greeted early morning walkers on the Heath Extension on Saturday 7 September: five sheep, with black faces and large eyes, were munching at the grass and vegetation in the enclosure at the bottom of the field bordered by Hampstead Way. Three of the sheep were Norfolk Horn ewes and the two, without horns, were Oxford Down ewes. These sheep normally reside at Mudchute Farm on the Isle of Dogs, located on Canary Wharf. They are accustomed to people and thus were most amenable to being petted and fed by hand.

For the following eight days, babies, children, teenagers and adults were equally entranced by these calm and gentle grazing animals. When a small girl sang 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' tunelessly, the sheep listened carefully. Children and adults picked clumps of grass and plantain (broadleaf plantain) from the field and handed the sheep through the wire fencing. The sheep particularly enjoyed the plantain which,

incidentally, has health benefits for humans too. Though the sheep were protected by fencing, on occasion registered volunteers would bring some people inside the enclosure so they could literally hug a sheep.

The week-long visit was the third in a series of visits organised by the Heath & Hampstead Society, along with the support of Heath Hands and the City of London, as well as local volunteers. Volunteers explained the many benefits of grazing on open areas of the Heath; for example, the field where the sheep were kept contains a significant number of anthills which are ecologically important. Mowing would destroy the anthills. The ants aerate and improve the soil and, most significantly, provide food for the threatened Green Woodpecker which has a long tongue to gather up ants. Other insects such as the Common Lizard and the Common Field Grasshopper lay their eggs in these mounds.

This successful experiment will hopefully be expanded to other parts of Hampstead Heath and replace, whenever possible, mowing with heavy machinery.



Photo: David O'Neill

Celebrating a new playground

SAMANTHA HAYCOCK

On 20 October, after four years of campaigning and fundraising, Friends of Market Place Playground in East Finchley were delighted to welcome a host of special visitors to the newly-refurbished site for the council's official opening by Councillor Danny Rich, Barnet's Deputy Mayor.

Despite heavy rain, the playground was buzzing with local residents and guests including London Deputy Mayor Mete Coban, MBE, the MP for Finchley, Sarah Sackman KC, the GLA's member for Barnet & Camden, Anne Clarke, council leader Councillor Barry Rawlings and representatives from funders, schools and partner organisations.

Local children were delighted to demonstrate the new equipment, which includes swings, climbing frames, a wide slide, table tennis and a large sandpit, providing imaginative and physical play for all ages.

The site has come a long way since a threat of closure in 2020. The former playground was concrete, dotted with outdated equipment and ringed by a grim, derelict cross-link fence. Inspired by the work of play expert and

author Tim Gill, the Friends group set out not only to deliver an inspiring playground but an asset for the whole community.

Design team Aileen Shackell and Phil Doyle created a sustainable scheme of high-quality play and social value that will serve generations to come. With new benches, a hammock, picnic tables and cycle racks, the park is a perfect place to hang out for all ages – a 'village green'.

Three years of fund-raising and lobbying by the Friends group raised the £450,000 for the build and, through support from Grow Back Greener, they secured several grants. The local community and businesses also dug deep through two crowdfunding campaigns. Their efforts were buoyed by Bill Nighy who brought his Oscar-nominated film *Living to the Phoenix Cinema* for a charity fundraiser.

The environment is at the heart of the project. Representatives from the Mayor of London's Grow Back Greener fund were delighted to see how their investment had been used to replace concrete with grass and flower beds, install sustainable drainage and – later in the year – plant 14 new trees.

For more information visit friendsofmarketplace.org.uk.

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Tortoise Trouble

On a fine Saturday afternoon on 26 October, I went into my garden in Hampstead Way near Asmunds Hill to get something from the shed, and noticed a tortoise sitting between our garden umbrella and a stored pile of chairs. Clearly, she was someone's missing pet and I fed her some cabbage leaves, took a photograph and posted it on to the chatline (the RA members' email group) asking if anyone was missing a tortoise.

Emma Howard, RA Chair, reposted the photo and details on local WhatsApp groups and, by a round-about way via the local community, we received a knock on the door late that evening from our next-door neighbour with Dominika and her daughter Ada, the owners of Mania, who live on Asmunds Place.

I had thought the tortoise had set off in the direction of Asmunds Hill, as earlier in the day I had watched her stride purposefully across the patio in that direction. But no, she was back resting under the pile of chairs on the patio and her owners were delighted to be reunited with her. We called round on Sunday morning to see if Mania was alright and took some photos of her happy owners.

Ada, who is nine, had been missing Mania and worrying about her greatly as she'd been gone for nine days. Maybe nine is a lucky number in this story with a happy ending, as Mania is also nine years old!

David White



Mania safe back home with Ada (Photo: David White)

Car Hacking in the Suburb

IVAN BERG

For quite a while – well, since electric cars (EVs) appeared in numbers on Suburb roads – their owners have smugly assumed that their pride and joys were not that attractive to thieves. For one thing, they didn't have catalytic converters, the number one item reported stolen in the Suburb over the past decade or two. If you were woken up at four in the morning by the buzz of an electric saw, it wasn't a neighbour doing a bit of early DIY, but a villain quickly liberating the expensive bit of a car's silencer that cleaned up the toxic stuff in the engine's exhaust, so that you could enter Central London's ULEZ congestion zone for 15 quid instead of 30.

Nevertheless, there have been a number of EV thefts in the Suburb: two in Howard Walk alone, one belonging to my son, which prompted this piece. Nik's car was a Kia EV6, the other, belonging to someone a few doors away, was a Kia E-Niro. Both cars were protected by their sophisticated anti-theft electronics, with their key fobs kept well away from hallways in radio frequency-protected Faraday cage pouches. Yet the E-Niro and EV6 were quietly opened and driven away in under a minute – the thieves undeterred by doorbell cameras.

So how is it done (and this also applies to many conventional modern cars that use keyless entry and start systems)? You

have probably guessed by now that the cars were hacked. If you are so inclined, and if you know how to get on to the 'Dark Web' you will find software (and even hardware) to buy in the form of a device that looks like a 'Game Boy' hand-held gaming device. With a press of a button or two, this device will talk to a car wirelessly and persuade it that the user is the owner of the car. There's software that was able to hack into a car maker's website using a car's VIN number to get a smart phone to open a car. Pay by Bitcoin. However, best not to

panic: a recent survey by HPI, the go-to car history checking service, showed that EVs are only half as likely to be stolen in London as petrol or diesel cars and the top six cars most stolen are all from the same South Korean maker: Hyundai Motor Group's highly desirable Hyundai and Kia EVs. More than twice as many petrol and diesel cars are stolen in the Suburb, with Range Rover, BMW and Mercedes-Benz topping the list.

To keep your car safe:

- Keep it locked in a secure garage.
- Keep it on a driveway behind a set of manually lockable telescopic bollards.
- Use a steering wheel lock.
- Park it under a street light.

Best of all would be 2FA (Two Factor Authentication), but no cars have it yet. CCTV Cameras and Video Doorbells can also be useful deterrents. The Met Police add to 'look out for suspicious tow trucks'.

Me? My old Jag is kept in a garage and I lock it, unlock it and start it with a key – remember those?

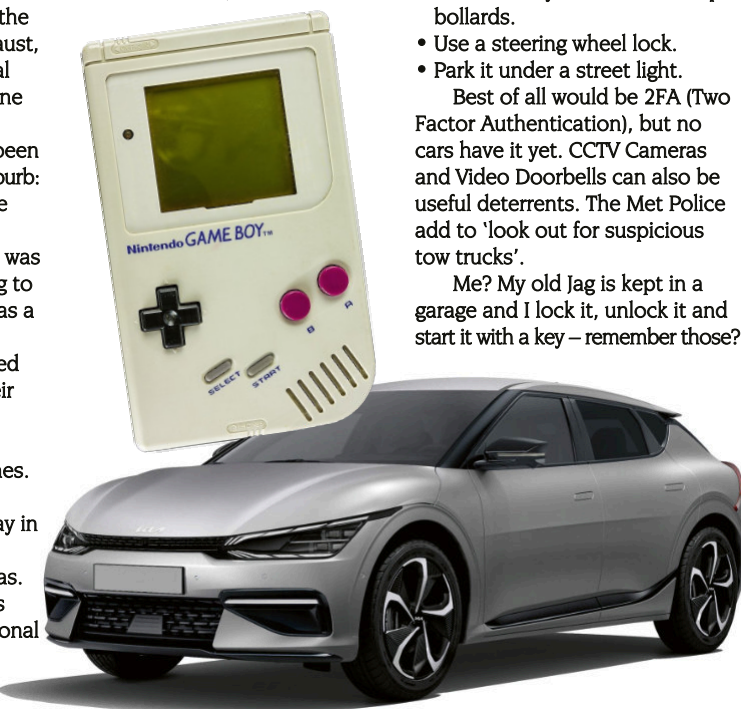


Photo: Emily Asquith

Big Wood KIDS event

EMILY ASQUITH

Friends of Big Wood are excited to announce a new season of woodland nature experiences for children, organised by the Big Wood KIDS volunteer team. We're passionate about getting kids into nature and where better to do this than in Big Wood and Little Wood, our magical local nature reserves?

We kicked off the 2024-25 Big Wood KIDS season with two fantastic nature-inspired art and music workshops for 6-12 year-olds run by our fabulous partners Dream in Green. Set in a beautiful glade in Big Wood, children created beautiful art and craft and tried their hand at storytelling and songwriting led by talented artist Sophie Chan Cooke, founder of Young Artist Society (YAS), and wonderful musician Caroline Chan of Mini Beat Music. Look out for the next Dream in Green workshop for 6-12 year-olds in February, date and time to be confirmed.

Families with younger children, keep an eye out for Big Wood KIDS events in 2025, with family workshops including nature-inspired art, singing and music. Also to come from the Big Wood KIDS team, nature learning workshops for older children.

For regular updates, follow Friends of Big Wood on Eventbrite. Even better, become a Friend of Big Wood and be kept up to date on Big Wood news and on all our activities including children's workshops, adults' guided ecology walks and volunteer conservation activity mornings. By joining as a Friend, you'll also help to conserve this precious remnant of ancient woodland. Visit friendsofbigwood.com or contact friendsofbigwood1@gmail.com.

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

SIMONE HALFIN

Hampstead Shoe Repair is owned by Marof Arabzadah. Marof, who came to England from Afghanistan 25 years ago, has run this shop for 10 years. Marof told me his father taught him when he was very young how to make and repair shoes, so for him it was easy.

I noticed a rather smart pair of shiny black patent shoes being stretched on a machine, which is another service he provides, as well as selling many different coloured laces and insoles. He also cuts all kinds of keys, from security to simple door keys. Marof is also able to repair watches, change batteries and fit new straps. I asked him how he had learned all these skills. He assured me he was quick to learn and remembers how to do things.

Alterations are also on offer and Marof does them all himself. Apparently, shortening sleeves from the shoulder is the most tricky. He said it would not be possible to keep the shop going if he didn't offer a wide range of services. He showed me some beautiful leather handbags which needed new zips, a very difficult job, but he guaranteed me they would be as good as new!

Marof told me one of the nice things about working in his shop is that he knows most of the customers and they are very friendly. "I give them the best price and they are happy."

The shop, situated on the Market place next to the barbers, is open Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.30pm and 9.30am to 4pm on Saturday.

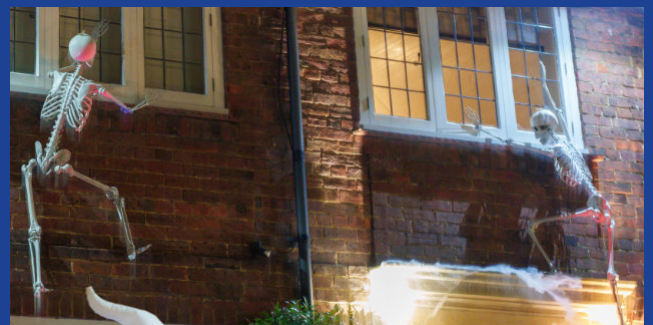


Photo: Paul Wenham



Photos: Peter McCluskie

Suburb Hallowe'en



A Lutyens Experience

PAUL WENHAM

Everyone living on Hampstead Garden Suburb knows the rich inheritance we have of St Jude's Church, the Free Church, Henrietta Barnet School and, of course, the magnificent houses gracing Central Square – all designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

You will also know that Lutyens designed many important public buildings here in the UK and around the world, notably India. He also used his incredible skills in

designing many fine country houses, one of which my wife and I were privileged to stay in last weekend.

An old school friend was celebrating a major birthday and decided to invite ten guests to stay at Goddards, a stunning Arts and Crafts house in the Surrey hills, not far from Dorking.

The property is now managed by The Landmark Trust where the Lutyens Trust keeps its archive in the library.

Indeed, the house is open to the public on Wednesday afternoons between April and September.

The Trust also arranges a Lutyens study week there in June each year.

The gardens were designed by Gertrude Jekyll who worked with Lutyens on many of his houses. We were able to explore the gardens on the Saturday, but the inclement weather the following day meant that we were house-bound. But that was no hardship as we enjoyed the house in all its glory and even used the skittle alley which was part of the original design.

The house was a stunning example of Arts and Crafts design, and the furniture also provided fine examples of the movement, fitting perfectly with its surroundings. It was an absolute joy to stay there. Anyone thinking about following our footsteps, should contact the Landmark Trust on 01306 730871.

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SUBURB EVENTS

Positive feedback for new format Trust AGM



Joe Mathieson – Trust architectural adviser (Photo: Peter McCluskie)

PAUL CAPEWELL

The Trust held its 56th AGM in September at the Free Church Hall. A new initiative this year was the running of a Members' Meeting ahead of the business of the AGM itself. This gave Trust members a chance to hear more about the Trust's work over the last year and a chance to

ask questions on subjects not covered by the formal business of the AGM. These included future plans for the land below Central Square, allotments, noise, artificial grass and unconsented work to properties.

It was also an opportunity for residents to hear about the Trust's new Retrofit Guidance, published in September, which helps home-owners understand what energy efficiency improvements can be made to their Suburb home, while remaining in keeping with the character of this special place. The guidance can be downloaded from the Trust's website.

The meeting also recognised the departure of the Trust's Chairman, Raymond Taylor, at the close of his second 3-year term. Raymond has considerably improved the Trust's financial position during his tenure, and he now hands the reins over to his successor, Richard Townley.

The meeting also heard that the Trust's CEO Simon Henderson will

be leaving in January after serving for five years.

The formal business of the AGM followed the close of the members' meeting, including receiving and considering the annual report and accounts and authorising the appointment of the Trust's auditors.

Two Special Resolutions were then put forward for approval by members. The first of these enabled new residents to become full members immediately on moving to the Suburb (previously members had to be resident for three years). The second allowed trustees to stand for election for a third term, where previously the limit was two. Both special resolutions received the required majority of votes in favour by members attending the meeting and were therefore passed, and the AGM was then closed.

This was the first time we held a members' meeting before the

AGM. There was a good amount of positive feedback for the new format from members who welcomed the opportunity to hear a more diverse report on the Trust's work than the formal agenda of the AGM allows. We will continue to develop this format for future meetings, but recognise the need to make the timings of the two meetings clearer to ensure that those wishing to attend one or the other can do so.

The postal ballot for a new Elected Trustee took place following the AGM. The results were as follows: of the 193 valid voting papers received, Bryan Marcus received 73 votes, and Nicola Avery-Gee received 120 votes. Nicola Avery-Gee is therefore the new Elected Trustee.

While we are grateful to the nearly 200 members who voted, we want to improve on this 33%

turnout in future trustee elections. We'd be grateful to hear from members on any barriers to their taking part in this election that we can learn from in future.



Nicola Avery-Gee – new Trustee (Photo: Peter McCluskie)



Trust Council (Photo: Peter McCluskie)

RETROFIT GUIDANCE

Our retrofit guidance is now available



This 36-page fully illustrated document aims to give Suburb home-owners the information they need when considering making energy efficiency improvements to their home. It sets out what is possible in a typical Suburb home, giving examples of effective changes that can be made without Trust consent, and setting out the kinds of work that would require consent from the Trust. Case studies of real Suburb homes are included.

Download our new retrofit guidance today – visit www.hgstrust.org and follow the link on our homepage, or go to 'Your Property' then 'Design Guidance' to find the new document, along with the existing Design Guidance document.

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Proms at St Jude's Suburb stalwart moving with the times

RON FINLAY

From its beginnings in 1993 as a small series of concerts in St Jude's Church, Proms has grown to become a large and much-loved local festival. Guided Heritage Walks were introduced in 2003, a LitFest for best-selling author talks in 2012, a comedy night in 2018 and a family festival in 2023. Over 5,000 people attend each year and Proms has raised more than £1.1 million pounds for good causes – notably Toynbee Hall and the North London Hospice. It also plays an important part in fostering music education through its outreach to local schools, its support of young, rising musical stars graduating from conservatoires and academies, its family concerts and its programme of 'Teeny Proms' to pre-school children.

However, Proms is very conscious that it must not rest on its laurels. Tastes in music are changing, so the concert

programme must be flexed to continue to appeal to loyal audiences while seeking to attract new ones. Society is changing, including the make-up of the local population, requiring Proms not only to reflect this in the events it puts on but also in the composition of its teams of organisers and other volunteers. And technology is changing, with the need for Proms to manage its marketing, communications and even ticketing to keep up with and stay ahead of consumer trends.

With all that and the occasional pandemic thrown in, there's never a dull moment if you're a trustee or involved in one of the many teams making the festival happen every year. At a time when the cost-of-living crisis has pushed some other festivals into bankruptcy, Proms has been able to survive owing to its organisers all being volunteers.

Echoing the words of Proms' Founder and Chief Executive,

Susie Gregson: "Proms is very special as a festival and as a charity. Its longevity is down to hard work by many dedicated people over the years, to create a tremendous sense of community and fun. It would be lovely to see even more residents getting involved to feel the thrill and excitement of being part of this very special event. Thank you to everyone who has helped create the Proms magic over the years."

For audiences, Proms continues to delight. If you haven't attended before, put the dates in your diary now. If you'd like to contribute as

a volunteer, please go to our website promsatstjudes.org.uk and click to become a 'volunteer at Proms'.

The next Proms Festival runs from 21-29 June 2025 at St Jude's

Church, The Henrietta Barnett School, The Free Church and on Central Square. You can visit www.promsatstjudes.org.uk for more information.



Proms at St Jude's in all its glory (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)



Crew selling programmes (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)



Appreciative audience (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)



Proms bar volunteers (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)

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The Seasons by Walter Crane (Photo: Public Domain)

Alyth perform The Seasons

DIANE LANGLEBEN

Don't miss this opportunity to hear one of Haydn's most beloved works, The Seasons, performed by the Alyth Choral Society & Orchestra at Alyth Synagogue on Sunday, 8 December at 7.30pm.

Experience the grandeur of Haydn's majestic oratorio, a vibrant celebration of nature's cycles, from the renewal of spring

to the reflective stillness of winter. With its beautiful choral and solo passages, The Seasons captures the essence of each period of the year, transporting the listener through a rich musical journey.

Under the baton of Alison Smart Fisher, this performance will feature an outstanding lineup of soloists, including Eleanor Pennell-Briggs (Soprano), Nathan Vale (Tenor), and Pauls Putnins (Bass). The orchestra will be led by

Tim Hooper (Continuo), offering a performance full of energy, elegance, and emotion.

Tickets are available for £20, through Ticketsource, our website: alythchoralsociety.wordpress.com, by scanning the QR code below, or at the door on the night.

Under 18s free, plus complimentary refreshments. Alyth Synagogue, Alyth Gardens, NW11 7EN.



HGSu3a Open Day

Our local HGSu3a held their annual Open Day on 12th September. The u3a organisation provides to those who no longer work an opportunity to meet, learn and exercise mentally and physically.

During the course of the morning more than 50 new members joined, bringing the total membership above the 700 mark. Most of the 60 plus activities, ranging from Bridge to Bowls and from Astronomy to Yiddish, were represented by their Group Leaders, who met and signed up new participants for their groups from among the existing and new members who attended the event at the Free Church in North Square.

Malcolm Brahams, Joint Vice-Chair HGSu3a



Photo: Malcolm Brahams



Photo: Roger Cookson

Paws and Prayers Pet's Blessing at St Jude's



MATHEW WILKE

St Jude's was abuzz with more than just parishioners on 28 September, as the church hosted its very first 'Blessing of the Pets' service. All creatures great and small were welcomed and the pews resonated with the sound of paws, claws and an occasional bark as Rev Emily Kolltveit and recently-ordained deacon, Rev Elinor Delaney, led this rather unique congregation in a joyful service, with backing from resident band, the Hey Judes!

Held in honour of the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and ecology, the service marked a celebration of all creatures. Rev'd Em, with her typical warmth, welcomed both the furry and the feathered, while Rev Elinor, who is well-beloved at St Jude's, made her debut in animal blessings with grace (and perhaps some drool on her robe).

The idea of blessing pets might seem a little eccentric to some, but it's part of a growing tradition in many churches that recognise St Francis' love and care for the natural world. Rev Emily explained: "It's not just about blessing the animals but also about reminding us of our role in caring for God's creation. Plus, it's a lot of fun!"

And fun it certainly was. There were a few (as was to be expected)

comical moments, such as finding a giant stuffed teddy-bear with mitre and all sat proudly in the bishop's throne and the concern that overly energetic tail-wags might knock over a flower arrangement or two... There was certainly a joyful chorus of barks throughout the service.

The service ended with prayers for all animals, both domestic and wild, and a special blessing for the pet owners, acknowledging the joy and companionship animals bring into our lives. As the congregation made their way to the treats table – some on two legs, some on four – there was a palpable sense of joy in the air.

St Jude's hopes to make this a yearly tradition, offering a light-hearted yet meaningful way for the community to come together and celebrate all creatures, human and otherwise.



As regular attendee, Kevin the Wire Fox Terrier barked: "It's a rare service where both my soul and my human's can be nourished!"

Let's hope the pets forgive us for making them behave in church for this one day. We believe Rev Emily's Siamese cat's Albus, Zeus and Freya have already forgiven her.



Photos: Peter McCluskie

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THE GARDEN GIRL

CAROLINE BROOME

As soon as the clocks go back, how many of us bin the begonias, ditch the dahlias and retreat indoors without a backward glance until next Easter? We spend so much time and money on our outdoor spaces in the summer, so why then do we ignore them come the winter? Surely this is precisely the time when we need some colour in our lives. So, add some sparkle to your containers to cheer you on through the darkest months.

When talking about winter displays the usual refrain is: "I never go into the garden in winter, so why bother?" Well, the point is, if you had something beautiful to look at, you might be tempted to go outside. Enjoying a cup of coffee in the shelter of your patio on a bright, sunny winter's morning is so precious. Just being in the sun for 10 to 15 minutes a day can boost your vitamin D production and improve your sleep. Eyes closed, face up to the sun, nothing but the sound of the birds, will uplift your mood and calm your mind.

So, I say Go Big or Go Home! Choose your largest containers to create maximum visual impact. For easy access, which will encourage you to venture outside, group them by your back door or French windows in the sunniest spot, by some seating. Make sure you can see them from your kitchen window so you can enjoy the view, even on rainy days.

As with so many things, Failure to Prepare, Prepare to Fail. First, clean out any old compost left over from summer displays. Don't waste it, you can either spread it on your borders as a mulch or add it to your compost bin. Scrub out the interiors with mild detergent and rinse away any bugs, such as vine weevil larvae, to avoid contamination. Place pots in their final positions; you don't want to be moving them once they are filled, believe me! It's worth lifting your containers onto pot feet to promote good drainage. If water is allowed to



Harmonious heuchera (Photo: Caroline Broome)

Put on a show this winter

build up, it may freeze the plant roots and burst the pot. Place a piece of broken crock over the drainage holes to stop the soil leaking out, and if the pots are very deep you can always half fill them with polystyrene chippings of the type used in packaging, to keep the pot from becoming too heavy and save on compost. If you are planting a small tree, such as an olive or bay, then use John Innes No 3. For acid-loving plants such as azaleas and heathers, be sure to use ericaceous compost and for most other plants and flowers a peat free multi-purpose will do the job. Alpine displays will need a 50/50 mix of multi-purpose and fine horticultural grit.

That's the practical side taken care of; now comes the good bit: buying your plants. I favour Finchley Nurseries in Mill Hill <https://www.finchleynurseries.org> and Sunshine Garden Centre in Bounds Green <https://www.sunshinegardencentre.co.uk> and you get 10% discount as a member of the HGS Horticultural Society. In the spirit of sustainability and because we are all inherently lazy, I've selected low maintenance, permanent planting.

Annual bedding may be colourful, but it is labour-intensive and has to be ditched at the end of every season. So, for flower colour go for bulbs instead. There is still time to plant in December. I favour February flowering *iris reticulata*, followed by *narcissi Tete a Tete*, which will flower year on year, and finally tulips, lots and lots of tulips! After flowering, you can plant them out on the garden. If you want to see how it's done, I

recommend an early spring visit to East Ruston Old Vicarage: <https://eastrustonoldvicarage.co.uk>.

If you prefer something more subtle, then go for foliage colour and texture. Choose one statement evergreen per pot as the main feature. *Fatsia japonica* Spider's Web, metallic astelia, dwarf *nandina* Obsessed and fragrant mahonia

Soft Caress will pack a punch. For colour and movement, why not add dogwoods, prized for their fiery winter stems, and year-round ornamental grasses such as *carex* and *hakonechloa* as your supporting act! Heucheras are the chorus girls of the performance, available in dozens of colours to suit all tastes. Water well after planting. And enjoy!



Front window boxes (Photo: Caroline Broome)



Winter containers (Photo: Caroline Broome)



Narcissi at East Ruston (Photo: Caroline Broome)

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Chris Page, Penny Hartley, Sue Williams, Michelle Handler, David and Caroline Broome (who also won the Banksian Medal), Paul Hartley, Sue Medway (Director of Chelsea Physic Garden and LGS Trustee) and Robyn Price (Photo: London Gardens Society)

HGS Horticultural Society win Solomons Cup

On 17 October members of HGS Horticultural Society collected the prestigious Solomons Cup at a ceremony at London's Guildhall, when they came second overall as

'Suburb in Bloom' with their collective points in the various garden competitions run by The London Garden Society each year.

Horticultural Society steps back from the brink

LAURENCE WOLFF

Hampstead Garden Suburb. The word at the centre of the place we all live is 'garden'. It is impossible to imagine the Suburb without its gardens. And yet there was a real possibility that the oldest society in the Suburb, Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society, founded in 1909 by Dame Henrietta Barnett herself, was going to fold for want of people to run it. There is no law to ensure such societies keep going. Hampstead Horticultural Society closed in 2017 after a 70-year existence. There have been outstanding Suburb gardeners such as Ruth Beedle, Diane Berger, Caroline Broome, Marjorie Harris, Yvonne Oliver and Chris Page who have run the society, in some cases, for decades. Not unreasonably, they felt it was time for others to take that responsibility. Thankfully, a committee has now formed that is well-equipped to take the society forward.

Sir Nikolaus Pevsner described the Suburb as 'the most nearly perfect example of the unique English invention and speciality, the Garden Suburb'. Perhaps I imbibed his view from an early age. My mother was friends with Pevsner's wife, and sometimes left me in a pram parked in the hallway of their house at the top of Hampstead Way. Through living successively in Wyldes Close, Willifield Way, Meadway and now Wordsworth Walk, I have come to appreciate the unique environment of the Suburb and to realise what a privilege it is to be a resident.

What gardening knowledge I have has been absorbed through osmosis from my wife, Augusta. My father was Professor Heinz Wolff, who some readers may remember from his appearances on television. His interest in gardening was tenuous. However, he was once featured on the cover of New Scientist with a piece of apparatus that he designed to grow food on a mission to Mars. A kind of gardening.

We are currently finalising the programme for 2025. Included will

be lectures, a quiz night and a plant sale. Trips will take us to Beth Chatto's Plants and Gardens, RHS Wisley and a tour of winter Suburb gardens in February. There will be an exhibition with a garden theme at Fellowship House. The two highlights of the year are the marquee flower show with the RA in June and the September show in the Free Church Hall. HortSoc should be what its members want it to be and we are open to new ideas.

We are instituting Volunteer Members. These are HortSoc members who, if available, are prepared to help with the shows in jobs such as setting-up, clearing away, serving teas, baking, stewarding etc. There will also be

opportunities for communal gardening. If you are able, consider adding your name to the list.

The object of HortSoc remains what it was when Henrietta Barnett founded the society – 'to encourage the enjoyment of gardening.' The committee promises that you will be met with a warm welcome. As recent research has shown, gardening does great things for your well-being, as does a wide social network. With HortSoc, you get both. Please consider joining yourself and encourage friends and neighbours to join too. Single membership is £10 and a couple/family is £15. You can just email membership@hortsoc.co.uk.



The new Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society committee: Top row left to right: Martin Moore (Membership Secretary), Alison Seabrook Moore (Events Secretary). Second row: Emily Asquith (not on the committee, but liaison with other groups such as Friends of Big Wood); Michelle Handler (Press and Publicity). Third row: Steve Morris (Treasurer), Sue Williams (Secretary). Bottom row: Laurence Wolff with Lottie (Chair), Annie Brunner Beaumont (Website). Not in photograph – Daisy Ellis and Robyn Price (Photo: Augusta Wolff)



Winners Patricia Major and Emily Greeves (Photo: Liz Hall)

Allotment winners

EVELYN THOMAS, ALLOTMENT SITE SECRETARY

2024 proved a very difficult year for vegetable growing on the allotments. The weather was either too cold, too hot, too wet or too dry. Snail numbers were of plague order and fox cubs bounded with energy amongst newly-planted crops.

Despite all the above, allotment judges, led by Rev'd Em Kolltveit with Nancy Hadden and myself (both site secretaries) spent an enjoyable July morning looking at several Highly Commended plots to decide Best Plot and Best Newcomer.

Patricia Major's BigSite plot won the Best Plot and therefore the Allotment Shield. Judges were impressed with the classic, eco-friendly vibe, with insects encouraged and more seedlings waiting to be transplanted when existing crops were over.

Emily Greeves on Creswick West had transformed unused land into a plot full of tasty-looking produce with the assistance of some young helpers and duly won the prize for 'Best Newcomer'.

If you would like to apply for an allotment please contact the Trust on mail@hgstrust.org.uk. At the moment there is a short waiting list.



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"Some of the noblest thoughts of the world have been given through the medium of plays..."

COLIN GREGORY

As is proper for a *garden suburb*, the HGS Horticultural Society is the longest standing society established in May 1909. Early residents had a passion not only for gardening but for many other pursuits. Henrietta Barnett, who had strong views about most things, held strong views about recreation. She disparaged noisy supporters at football matches and what she called "inane beach shows" but approved of those involving effort and co-operation such as games of skill and botanical rambles. That she was in favour of amateur theatre is evidenced by her remarks on becoming the first President of the Play and Pageant Union (of

which the Garden Suburb Theatre is the successor) in January 1920. "I feel strongly," she said, "that some of the noblest thoughts of the world have been given through the medium of plays, and now you are inaugurating a new society which will be a medium for conveying what is best in the lives of you all."

When I joined the Garden Suburb Theatre (or the Hampstead Garden Suburb Dramatic Society as it was then called), there were still a number of members alive who recalled its earliest days. One quoted to me her father's description of the early residents: "men with long hair, beards and sandals and women who had short hair and wore pewter jewellery." At the first show I took part in – a

performance of Aristophanes' *The Birds*, translated by the director Diana Bromley, who taught classics at The Henrietta Barnett School – I was introduced to Dr Stephen Coffin, who was among the earliest residents and recalled that a drama society started in 1908, a year or so after the Suburb was founded in 1907.

It is not known what plays were put on by the early residents. The first show of which we have any record is a large-scale outdoor pageant entitled *The Masque of Fairthorpe*, staged by the residents on a field close to where the Free Church Hall now stands. It was an allegory of the founding of the Suburb, in which the wicked "Jerry Builder" is repulsed by the good Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust



A scene from the Play and Pageant Union 1950 Revue with David McCallum on the far left, he later played the Man from U.N.C.L.E. (Photo: Suburb Archives)

so the residents can live in houses with gardens and the elves and fairies can continue to dwell in the woods and fields. Several hundred residents took part and similar pageants were performed each year until the outbreak of World War I.

As for indoor plays, the May 1911 edition of *The Town Crier*, a Suburb magazine, reports that the original 1908 group, of about 20, "was unable to continue owing to the fact that the Institute is not licenced for stage plays." (The Institute is now Henrietta Barnett School.) Later it was discovered that they could perform if a club were formed at "whose performances only members and their friends would be admitted." The Hampstead Garden Suburb Dramatic Club was formed in October 1910 and by May 1911 it had 150 members, of whom 35 were acting members paying a minimum of five shillings (25 pence) subscription. Their fourth production was *The Merchant of Venice* in April 1911.

The needs of the indoor thespians were united with those of the outdoor players by the formation of the Play and Pageant Union in 1920. It was regarded by some as rather erudite and high-brow and in 1929 a second group was established – known as the Speedwell Players, after the Speedwell telephone exchange that covered what is now the 8455 code. Its founder, Daisy Ward, said that "We are not going to be a mutual admiration society. We are going to be a happy party and I do not want to see members walking about handing out the

'frozen mitt'." The two societies co-existed for many years but by the mid-1960s many residents belonged to both and in 1966 the merged to form what is now the Garden Suburb Theatre.

Other drama groups, the St Jude's Players and the Touchstone Players, were associated with St Jude's Church and the Free Church. They collaborated with each other from time to time, such as the 1950 production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with David McCallum as Oberon. Today the Garden Suburb Theatre draws its membership from across North London. Fewer members live in the Suburb, but it still continues to perform each summer in the open air theatre in Little Wood, which it constructed in 1920.

The Garden Suburb Theatre and its predecessors has always included home-grown writing in its programme, from the first pageant in 1910, written by Paul Jewitt, to GST's most recent outdoor show Robin Hood in the Wood, by GST member Dave Barron. Particularly popular for many years were annual reviews entitled "Sanfairynn" – derived from the WWI Tommy's attempt at his French-speaking comrade's *ça ne fait rien* (it doesn't matter). Our photographs show a scene from the Play and Pageant Union 1950 Revue, by Gordon Bromley and John Vincent Smith, before a familiar background; and last summer's show, Robin Hood.

If you are interested in joining the Garden Suburb Theatre visit gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk.



Edwin Coutts as Robin and Rowan Cox as Maid Marion (Photo: Suburb Archives)

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Intermittent fasting: Is it right for you?

LOUIE FISHER, NUTRITION COACH

In recent years, intermittent fasting (IF) has gained popularity as a weight loss and health improvement strategy. Celebrities to fitness influencers are touting its benefits. But is IF the right choice for everyone? Let's take a closer look at what it entails, the different types of fasting, and what the scientific research says about it.

Intermittent fasting is not so much a diet as an eating pattern. It alternates between periods of eating and fasting, focusing on when to eat rather than what to eat. It is effectively 'time restricted eating' (TRE), meaning that if people wanted to, they could eat the same foods in the same amounts as usual – they just needed to eat it within a given time frame each day. The fasting period generally means eating no food, but in some cases, such as the 5:2 diet, it refers to a vastly reduced calorie intake in given time periods. Previous studies have shown that allowing the body extended periods without food triggers a variety of health benefits that could include improved gut health, better blood sugar control, lower cholesterol and weight loss.

There are several popular approaches to intermittent fasting, each with their own structure and level of restriction:

The 16/8 Daily Method: This is one of the most common fasting methods: fasting for 16 hours a day and restricting your eating window to 8 hours eg finish dinner by 8pm and not eat again until noon the next day.

The 5:2 Method: Made famous by Dr Michael Moseley, you eat normally for five days of the week and reduce your intake to about 500–600 calories for the other two days. These fasting days are typically non-consecutive.

24 hour (and longer) fasts: This involves fasting for 24 hours once a week (or every few weeks). For example, you might stop eating after dinner one day and not eat again until dinner the next day (or longer).

If these seem too daunting, Tim Spector of Zoe suggests fasting for 12-14 hours daily, which is basically not eating anything after dinner (no late-night snacks in front of the TV) until your breakfast the next morning. I tend to follow this one, regularly stopping eating around 8pm and not having breakfast until 9 or 10am the next morning.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF INTERMITTENT FASTING

Weight Loss: By reducing the window of time in which you eat, many people naturally consume fewer calories, leading to weight loss. Research supports this, with studies showing that intermittent fasting can help individuals lose weight and reduce belly fat over time.

Blood Sugar Control: IF may improve insulin sensitivity, which could lower blood sugar levels and reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. Several studies have found that intermittent fasting can lead to improved markers of insulin resistance and lower blood sugar levels.

Heart Health: Some research indicates that intermittent fasting may improve risk factors associated with heart disease, such as lowering cholesterol levels, blood pressure and inflammatory markers.

Cellular Repair and Longevity: During fasting, the body initiates important repair processes, including autophagy, which removes damaged cells and which some say helps protect against diseases like cancer (although this is complex and highly debated). Some animal studies also suggest that intermittent fasting could increase lifespan, though human studies are still limited.

Gut Health: Zoe's 'Big IF' found that many participants reported that symptoms of bloating improved with intermittent fasting.

THE FLIP SIDE

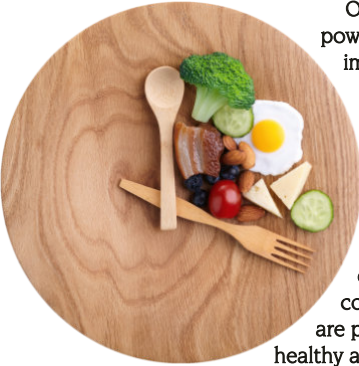
While there are many studies supporting the benefits of IF, research is still evolving, and findings are mixed. For example, some research also shows that the effectiveness of IF may depend on the individual.

It's also definitely not for everyone! Some people may experience fatigue, irritability, or difficulty concentrating, especially during the initial stages of fasting. For those with certain medical conditions, such as diabetes or eating disorders, fasting could be harmful and should only be pursued under medical supervision.

IS INTERMITTENT FASTING RIGHT FOR YOU?

While there is promising research on intermittent fasting, it's crucial to remember that one size does not fit all when it comes to health and nutrition. Some thrive on IF and enjoy its structure and flexibility. Others find it too restrictive, especially if it leads to overeating during the eating windows or negatively impacts their energy levels.

Overall, Intermittent fasting can be a powerful tool for weight loss and health improvement, but it's not a magic bullet. Its benefits largely depend on how well it fits into your lifestyle and whether you can maintain it long-term. Like any diet, the most important factor is sustainability – if intermittent fasting helps you feel better, more energised, and suits your routine, it could be worth trying. However, there are plenty of other ways to achieve a healthy and balanced life!



Festive wines and how to spot them

JOANNA DABROWSKA,
WINE JOURNALIST

I started the winter festivities early with the pleasure of spending Diwali in Delhi. It was an unforgettable experience and I loved the message behind it: even a small glimpse of light can illuminate overwhelming darkness.

I'm too late with my recommendations for Diwali, but hopefully I'm in time for Chanukah and Christmas, which I've learned carry similar symbolism and we could all use a bit of light and warmth in the current climate.

Here are my recommendations which I hope will brighten your festivities with joy and that mentioned light.

Champagne Chavost – *Cepage.uk or Hedonism Wines* – from £44.90 Blanc de Blancs to £120 for Eureka

Holidays wouldn't be merry without a touch of sparkle, so I'll start with my favourite champagne. Not a big house but a grower making a name as one of the few organic producers in Champagne. The younger crowd will appreciate the playful cartoons on the label, while mature recipients will appreciate the taste of a higher-

end Champagne. I enjoy their Blanc de Blancs, but if you're planning to welcome the New Year with it, go for Eureka. A fantastic choice to start anew!

Château Galoupet Rosé – *Berry Bros & Rudd* – £43

Though some might think of rosé as just a summer drink, I encourage you to try this one. It's a still wine crafted for gastronomy, so it can handle both cold climates and hearty festive meals. Its acidity, delicate fruit notes, and elegant structure will enhance smoked salmon starters, roast turkey with cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, herbed stuffing, or a lighter cheese course like Brie or mild Cheddar. Go for a 2021/2022 vintage.

Barolo – *Pio Cesare or Sassicaia* – *Eataly, Waitrose Cellar or Hedonism Wines* – from £60 for 2018 Pio to around £230 for 2018 Sassicaia

This wine takes me back to one of the best tastings I attended this year – the 20th anniversary of Grandi Marchi, held at the beginning of summer during a heatwave. There's nothing quite like Sassicaia in a heatwave, especially with a 20-year-old vintage! Barolo is a superb gift wine, though best given to someone who can wait to open it as it needs at least seven-ten years in the cellar. Choose the vintage accordingly: young as an investment or older to enjoy now with goose, duck, roasted turkey with all the trimmings, Beef Wellington and a cheese board. And, if you're feeling adventurous, try it with a mince pie or a slice of Christmas pudding (though I'd suggest keeping the brandy butter aside).

Happy Holidays!



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JUDY SMITH, CHAIR

Over the years we have discovered that not only is the Museum being explored by local Hampstead Garden Suburb residents, but is also used and visited extensively for research by people worldwide. It is a remarkable resource and we want to be sure that all our visitors and users find what they are looking for. To that end, we have decided to carry out some market research to discover what all our visitors, both local, national and international, would like from the Hampstead Garden Suburb Virtual Museum.

Since the Museum's launch in 2018, our online Virtual Museum has been growing and growing. Each year we have added at least one major Collection and over the past couple of years we have been expanding even more. We are now displaying extensive information on the people who lived in our unique Suburb. We are also beginning to link them to the maps in the Museum to show where these people lived. We have videos, Virtual Reality tours of our Grade 1 listed churches, films, lectures and so much more.

Before the creation of the Virtual Museum there had been moves to have an actual physical museum but the creation of such an entity proved to be impossible, not only in finding a venue and staffing but also what would have been displayed? We were very aware that as our residents cleared out their houses, irreplaceable artefacts, photographs and documents would be discarded. The decision was taken to create a Virtual Museum. We discovered that, although we had very few actual objects, we did have a wealth of written information and images and believed the Museum

could be the place to store these. That is how we acquired the wonderful Raymond Lowe collection of early images of the Suburb.

We are now reaching a point where our current platform cannot support the expansion of the Virtual Museum, so we are looking at alternative platforms. We would like the visitor experience to be enjoyable and as easy to navigate as possible.

We will post a link to a questionnaire in the next Suburb eNews. Please do complete and return it so that we can be sure to build the Museum that you want and enjoy visiting.



Photo: Andrew Glendinning

Aurora over the Suburb

ANDREW GLENDINNING

This year has seen some spectacular auroral displays over Hampstead Garden Suburb. The latest one on 10 October featured strong auroral reds above St Jude's church, as seen in this photo. These are extremely rare and are only seen when large numbers of charged particles from the Sun released in 'coronal mass ejections' hit the earth's upper atmosphere. These particles react with the Earth's magnetic field and cause oxygen atoms about 200 miles above the Earth to become 'excited'. At this height, they are less concentrated and so vibrate at a higher frequency making the reds visible.

The more usual auroral colours are greens which again are emitted by oxygen atoms, but at lower altitudes of about 100 miles above the Earth. The display over the Suburb in May produced greens but also purples which are emitted by 'excited' nitrogen atoms. These purples are also rare and caused by powerful ejections of particles from the Sun.

The reason for this unusual level of activity from the sun is because it is reaching a 'Solar Maximum' which is the period of peak activity in the sun's 11 year cycle. During this maximum there are more sunspots and solar flares and frequent Coronal Mass Ejections which cause aurora.

If you are interested in astronomy and would like to learn more about aurora and other celestial phenomena and the latest developments in cosmology and the exploration of space, please consider joining the Hampstead Garden Suburb Astronomical Society. Our website is www.hgsas.co.uk.



Cycling Not Permitted on the Heath Extension

It was brought to the attention of the SN editors that the photo on the banner of the Autumn issue (SN159) showing children sitting on bicycles gazing out towards the Suburb might encourage others to believe the RA are encouraging cycling on the Heath Extension. This was unintended. Cycling is, of course, not permitted anywhere on the Heath Extension. We apologise for any confusion this may have caused.



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