

Suburb News

Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB KIDS GARDENING CLUB
BRITAIN'S BIGGEST LIVING GARDEN
inspire
WILDLIFE GARDENING & BIODIVERSITY



Poster advertising the Kids Gardening Club participation in Britain's Biggest Living Garden project (see page 10)



Garden Suburb Infant School pupils get on their bikes thanks to a generous grant from the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust (see page 2)

Summer sunshine sets off a burst of Suburb activity

THE EDITORS

After a cold and wet spring, summer is finally here at last (fingers firmly crossed!).

Summer is a particularly busy time for the Suburb as outdoor activities abound. From culture to horticulture and beyond, there really is something for everyone. There's the Central Square Summer Fair on June 8 (see advert below) which promises to be a fun-packed afternoon, the Garden Suburb Theatre's open air performance of Robin Hood in the Wood (p.8) and, of course, the fabulous Proms at St. Jude's music and book festival (p.18).

Summer is also the perfect time to consider how you can make your own garden wildlife friendly plus you can join in the very

exciting Britain's Biggest Living garden Project (p.10). There's also great advice on rewilding from our very own Garden Girl, Caroline Broome (p.20) and you can also visit the Suburb's spectacular Open Gardens (p.21).

If all this is not enough, you can try your hand at bowls at Bishopswood Bowling Club (p.15) and if bowls isn't your thing, you can kick a football around in one of our many lovely open spaces as the Garden Suburb Community Library is now lending footballs, not just books! (p.2).

And, finally, summer is the time for picnics and al fresco dining so get inspired by the mouth-watering dishes the SNY team have cooked up (pp16 &17).

We hope you all have a very good summer!



Britain's Biggest Living Garden project gets underway, as Revd Em provides the space for children, their parents and a team of ten local volunteers to start work on developing a community wildlife garden in the grounds of the church of St Jude's. Read the full story of this popular initiative in the RA Review section on page 10 (Photo: Revd Emily Kolltveit)

RA AGM

FRANCINE BARSAM

The recent Annual General Meeting of the Residents Association, held on 25 March at Henrietta Barnett School, drew a strong turnout.

Proceedings commenced with the approval of last year's minutes and accounts, as well as the decision to maintain the annual membership subscription at £15.

A highlight of the event was a presentation by a representative from the Zoological Society of London, shedding light on the concerning 46% decline in hedgehog populations across the UK. Particularly noteworthy was the monitoring effort in Hampstead Garden Suburb: leveraging camera traps placed in various outdoor locations to track hedgehog activity. This initiative, detailed on www.mammalweb.org, notably employs machine learning and AI to analyse findings, showcasing innovative approaches to wildlife conservation. (continued on page 2)

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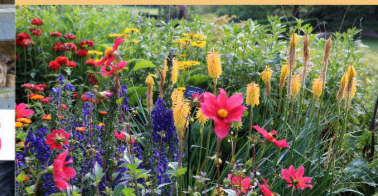
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Photo: Sarah Sands

Biking boom at Garden Suburb Infant School

JOANNE GOULD

Children at Garden Suburb Infant School on Childs Way have been getting push bike active in the playground thanks to a generous grant from the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust. Following a successful application to The Trust from headteacher Sarah Sands, pupils in reception, year one and year two now have access to three new balance bikes, three two-wheel pedal bikes and two two-seater trikes to develop skills and promote collaborative confidence building.

Sarah Sands said, "As a school, a key part of our ethos is teaching our children to lead a healthy lifestyle. We have recently been awarded a Gold level for our school travel plan focused on encouraging sustainable travel, and have also been awarded a Gold Healthy Schools Award; we organise special events such as 'Bling Your Bike' and 'Sparkle Your Scooter' days and provide scooter and bike storage, but we recognise that not all our children have access to this equipment. It is a challenging financial time for many schools, including ours and our existing playground stock has not been replenished for many years. We were thrilled to be able to purchase extra equipment to support road awareness safety and build cycling skills within the school thanks to this grant, which will benefit children within the Suburb and beyond and hopefully contribute to fewer cars on our roads."

Funds from the Garden Suburb Infant School PTA were also used to support the purchase, with helmets and refurbished storage also required alongside the new bikes, and fundraising activities – including a disco, the annual Treasure Hunt, a summer camp and an International Food Fair – will take place to further fund the project.

Donors to St Jude's spire renovation get their recognition

Suburb Residents will recall that when the appeal was launched to raise funds to repaint the brick tower under St Jude's spire, St Jude's promised to recognise those donors, who did not wish to remain anonymous and gave £200 or more, on a plaque in the Church. That plaque has finally been produced and is now on display in St Jude's. There will be a special Choral Evensong on Sunday 7 July to thank those donors and St Jude's will be writing to invite them accordingly.

David White



Fancy being an Explainer Volunteer?

MICHELLE COOK
ENGLISH HERITAGE

The Suburb and Kenwood are each, in their own ways, London's hidden gems and there has always been a strong relationship between the Residents Association and Kenwood with a representative of the Trees and Open Spaces Committee being a member of the Kenwood Landscape Forum.

All charities, including English Heritage, rely on volunteers and if you have an interest in any one of these areas: Art, Architecture, History, Hampstead Heath, Classic English Landscape Gardening, Guinness or Ionic Columns – what better way of supporting Kenwood than by becoming an Explainer Volunteer. In this role you will have the opportunity to build up a bank of knowledge to be shared with our many visitors and, by sharing your enthusiasm, help them to unlock Kenwood's stories.

Based in each of the rooms of the House, Explainer Volunteers are the beating heart of Kenwood because they enable us to open our doors every day and help visitors to appreciate our world-famous collection and fascinating history. Volunteering as an Explainer is a brilliant opportunity to interact with a variety of different people with different interests, getting to discuss all things Kenwood and beyond.

This summer, Explainer Volunteers will grapple with an

exciting new challenge – our permanent collection: 'Strike a Pose: Stephen Farthing and the Swagger Portrait'. If you would

like to volunteer please send an email to Kenwood.volunteering@english-heritage.org.uk to request further information.



Kenwood House (Photo: English Heritage)

Alive and kicking

MARC HULL

A summer season of loaning footballs has started at the Garden Suburb Community Library. This is an initiative from the charity Alive And Kicking and is supported by the City of London along with a number of large organisations.

Library members can borrow a football for one week and non-members can join so long as they have ID from a parent or carer. The loan is free, as with any book in the library, and the loan period is renewable. There are three sizes of ball and all we ask is that they come back clean!

Alive And Kicking supports communities in sub-Saharan Africa where the balls are completely hand-made. Over one million balls have been made since the inception of the charity. They are sold world-wide and in a fantastic range of designs.



Our footballs have been donated and the initiative involves libraries up and down the country to help get our young people physically and mentally fit.

For more information about this very worthwhile organisation, please take a look at the charity's website: aliveandkicking.org.

Tell all your young ones to pop into the library. They probably have their own football, but not like ours!

HGSRA AGM

(continued from page 1)

Other presentations covered diverse topics, such as a crowd-funding campaign to plant trees,

ongoing efforts by the REACH committee to enhance air quality and sustainability, and the ambitious Britain's Biggest Living Garden project. This initiative aims to transform the Suburb into the most biodiverse urban area in the UK, reflecting a collective commitment to optimising outdoor spaces.

During the interactive session, Councillor Rohit Grover fielded questions ranging from permit-based parking to infrastructure concerns including potholes and pavements. The spirited discussion underscored residents' deep investment in local environmental issues, highlighting the importance of community engagement in shaping a sustainable future.

Wrapping up punctually, the AGM saw the election of new Council candidates, signalling a promising future for collaborative initiatives aimed at enhancing the Suburb's ecological footprint.

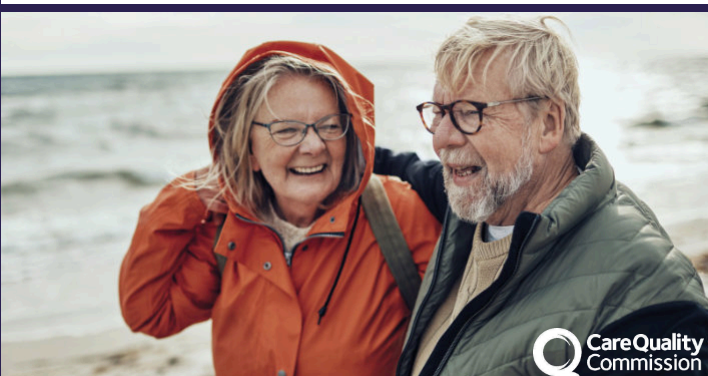
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Margaret c.1947



Winnie Stevens under the apple tree at 3 Hill Close

The Apple Tree where love blossomed for Margaret Levetus

ANDREW BOTTERILL

Margaret Levetus lived with her parents in our house in North Square from the 1930s until she married in 1951. The stream of letters she wrote to me and her artwork chronicling those times have already graced these pages (SN88 & SN148).

Her daughter, Celia, has now sent me another delightful slice of Suburb living and loving – some 1947 diary entries written by her father, Roger Till (wartime Royal Navy then Balliol Oxford), recounting his first meetings with Margaret. They are reflections of a sweeter, simpler time when a chap could have his head turned by a gel's handwriting. Pure Hunter Dunn with perhaps a touch of Beyond The Fringe.

The 'German Girl' was Gerda Gelbhardt whose obituary featured in the last edition of Suburb News. Margaret's father had helped to pluck her out of 1939 Berlin. Leon and Winnie Stevens, friends of the Levetus family, lived nearby at 3 Hill Close.

Sunday 13 July 1947

Rang up the Stevens and went over to their delightful home in Hampstead Garden Suburb... First time I'd seen their garden in the summer. Leon appeared in the side-car of a 1913 motor-bike his son has bought. There were several visitors. I

took an immediate liking to one of them – a girl named Margaret Levetus, a book illustrator who used to be a student at the Central School of Art... She came to supper with a German girl [Gerda]. Told them the Brains Trust story while washing up... Should like to see more of Margaret.

Tuesday 19 July 1947

Stayed the night at Margaret Levetus's home in Hampstead Garden Suburb. Spent an hour in their lovely garden resting in a hammock under a magnificent willow tree. Talked to old Mr Levetus... he knows a hell of a lot abt most things – books, art, stained glass & foreign countries. Mrs L is a pleasant woman, who went off to a committee meeting after supper. John, Margaret's brother, is at New College, Oxford. Margaret showed me her paintings. After supper we sat & talked (no drinks, & they are all non-smokers). Felt rather rectorial – as though I were in rather a terrifying atmosphere of intelligence & efficiency. Still, they are very nice, cultured & hospitable people... I was happiest when we gathered round the piano and sang songs from The Beggar's Opera...

Tuesday 22 July 1947

Several letters. My first from Margaret Levetus – an excellent letter: intelligent, balanced, clear and written in a hand I like... She's illustrating a children's book ("Sally").

Monday 6 October 1947

Day with Margaret Levetus. We met at the National Gallery and had a look at a few pictures – a Botticelli or two... We hopped on a bus and went to Richmond. Lunch at the Maids of Honour. Told Margaret I was a frustrated bank clerk. She didn't believe me. Then we went to Richmond Park... Margaret told me I made a great impression on her when we first met... Winnie Stevens had described me to her as "very nice – an intellectual with a sense of humour."

And the apple tree?

One can't be sure what kind of fruitfulness the Dame was hoping to encourage with her proclamation in 1909 that every Suburb garden should have an apple tree (she personally donated many to the first tenants). In one of Margaret's letters late in life she recalled: 'it was in the (Stevens') garden in 1947 that I first met Roger Till under the apple tree there' before adding rather enigmatically 'So one thing leads to another...'

That apple tree at Hill Close blew down 70 years later shortly before the house was bought by Richard and Irene Sowerbutts (formerly of 2 North Square). By complete chance we managed to salvage a last remaining bough just before the garden was cleared. This made a surprise souvenir for Margaret's daughters.

The magnificent willow in the garden of 1 North Square where Roger reclined in a hammock had to be taken down a few years after Margaret married and moved away. It was replaced... an apple tree.

It's still here.



The salvaged apple tree bough, now a souvenir for Margaret's daughters Celia and Lizzie

(All photos: Celia Till archives)



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Photo: Project IMPACT

Project ImpACT celebrates 22,000 meals

Laura Barnett
Communications & Fundraising Manager, Project IMPACT

On 17 March 2024 the Chief Rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis KBE, and local night shelter clients visited Project ImpACT's Youth Kitchen in NW11 to celebrate its milestone 22,000th meal.

Project ImpACT is an award-winning youth volunteering charity which connects young Jewish teens, empowering them to work together and make a positive impact to the lives of people of all faiths. The charity is at the forefront of inspiring and engaging teens to volunteer and contribute to the community and beyond in meaningful ways. Hundreds of ImpACT teens come together each week to volunteer at the new ImpACT Youth Kitchen and other programmes.

Also in attendance was a Together in Barnet night shelter client who is a recipient of the food cooked by the teen volunteers.



Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis; Chayli Fehlerx, Project IMPACT; Marcin Noczek, Together in Barnet; Sonia, night shelter client (Photo: Project IMPACT)

Asher Budwig



INTRODUCING

Asher Budwig

Francine Barsam

If you've got a sweet tooth then you could not have failed to have noticed Lola's Cupcakes pop up shops and stores which dot the capital with their brightly coloured branded shops and electric vans.

Lola's MD, Asher Budwig, has been connected with the Suburb on and off for fifteen years, drawn by familial ties and all the great things that the Suburb has to offer. I had the opportunity to catch up with him.

Running a business with over 400 staff certainly has its challenges especially amidst lockdowns and frequent tube strikes. Yet, Asher's dual commitment to Environmental stewardship, both personally and professionally, remains unwavering.

A chance meeting with Emma Howard, HGSRA chair, picking up litter in the Suburb was the catalyst for him to get involved with the REACH committee. He's been instrumental in setting up the first Electric Vehicle Show which took place in April. The event gave potential electric vehicle buyers the opportunity to connect with current owners of all types of EV vehicles, reflecting Hampstead Garden Suburb's status as a hub for EV ownership. In addition, he



The Chief Rabbi celebrates 22,000 meals in the Project IMPACT (Photo: Project IMPACT)

helps homeowners make greener choices when embarking on renovating their properties around choices of sustainable practices, and puts forward the case to improve the window infrastructure in Suburb housing. As the founder of Next Day Solar, he spearheads the installation of solar panels and heating platforms, boasting first-hand experience with solar power in his own home.

His passion for doing something positive for the future of our planet is very clear. At Lola's strides are being made to reduce microplastic usage and packaging and he's invented a reusable food tong which aims at phasing out plastic gloves. His ethos of

problem-solving extends beyond business, as evidenced by his dedication to litter picking with his young children and navigating the streets on his electric bike.

Through Lola's Cupcakes, Next Day Solar and his voluntary work, Asher embodies a vision of sustainability and innovation, proving that amidst adversity solutions can be found.

As a passionate gardener, he nurtures both exotic and familiar produce. On my way out he proudly shows me his avocado plant, grown from the stone. Despite his south-facing garden and increases in global warming he says it will be at least ten years until he can make guacamole from the fruit.

HGS FELLOWSHIP- BE PART OF IT

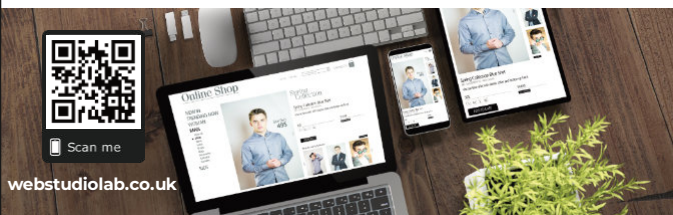
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Jonathan Seres

1945 - 2024

MARGARET HARRIS

One of the Suburb's most well-known and committed residents, Jonathan Seres, passed away in February 2024 after a long illness, about which he rarely complained. Even though there was no more than a few hours' notice, the funeral was very well attended; in fact it was standing room only in the chapel where the service was conducted and where his children spoke movingly about their Dad.

In his long period of HGS residence (he came to live in the Suburb in the early 70s) Jonathan took on numerous roles and responsibilities. He was a member of the Residents Association Council from 2010 to 2018. In 2013 he became Vice-Chair of the RA and Chair in 2014-15.

Jonathan was a founding member of the volunteer group which negotiated with Barnet Council in 2011 to ensure that the Suburb community library was saved from closure. He was heavily involved for many years with organising the RA Summer Picnic on Central Square and he spear-headed the refurbishment of the

toddlers' playground in Northway Gardens. He was also instrumental in the launch and success of the virtual Heritage Museum, drawing on his deep knowledge of Suburb history as well as on his network of links with groups in the area. Judy Smith, currently chair of the HGS Heritage Museum said of Jonathan "All his fellow trustees will miss his extensive knowledge, sound judgement and hard work."

The many roles and tasks taken on by Jonathan meant that he became widely known in the Suburb. On his twice-daily walks he stopped and chatted with everybody he met and right up to the time of his death he was combining his walks not only with socialising but also with litter-picking. Jonathan was never anxious to push himself forward, he just quietly took on whatever tasks he thought needed doing.

His love of the Suburb, its facilities and its architecture, were a prime driver for him. Fifty years ago he was gifted a copy of the 1971 Shankland Cox Conservation Study which became his constant guide for his walks around the area and for educating his children on the beauty and historic significance of the area.

Perhaps the secret of Jonathan's success in negotiating with officialdom lay in his training as a lawyer. In fact, he was by profession a well-respected pensions lawyer and published two books on the subject including Pensions: A Practical Guide and Pensions: Risk and Strategy. He also volunteered for ten years at the Islington Legal Advice Centre.

Jonathan was always keen to do whatever he could to help others – whether as a lawyer or as a local citizen. He was an exemplar of good citizenship and will be remembered especially for the many local projects he helped to establish and nurture.

As it is said of Sir Christopher Wren: *Si monumentum requiris circumspecte. If you seek his monument, look around you.*

David Harris

1938 - 2024

MARGARET HARRIS

David Harris moved to HGS with his wife Marjorie in 1968 when they were expecting their first baby. They have lived here ever since, involving themselves in a variety of Suburb activities.

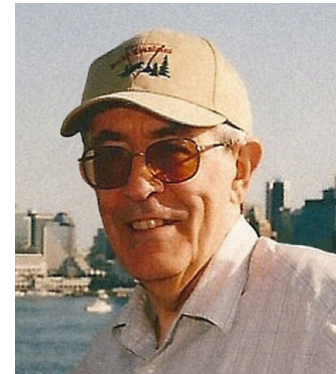
The couple met through Hampstead Young Liberals and then joined the Garden Suburb Ward Liberals, a group of which David eventually became the chair. As an election agent, he had an especially busy and exciting year in 1979, the year in which Margaret Thatcher was

elected as MP in Finchley. His staunch support for the local Liberal Democrats meant that his life in the Suburb was filled with meetings and administration and he garnered respect from across the political spectrum. As Marjorie recalls: "David was passionate about politics." He was also, she says, "a lot of fun."

David started his professional life as a journalist, moving to public relations and eventually to his final post – Director of The Hansard Society for Parliamentary Democracy. For the last 20 years of his life David had Parkinson's Disease and eventually lived life in a wheelchair, cared for by Marjorie. As Marjorie recalls: "he still had a zest for life, was passionate about watching cricket, collecting political memorabilia and enjoyed doing the Saturday Times crossword with his daughter Caroline." He also enjoyed the Tuesday talks at Fellowship House and the St Jude's Proms. As Susie Gregson, CEO of Proms, remembers: "He was

incredibly helpful to Proms by joining the sponsorship/fundraising committee and spearheading many of our approaches to trusts and foundations, achieving success particularly notably when we commissioned new music, something he really encouraged us to do."

David Harris died on 16 April 2024 but his generous support for good causes lives on as he donated his brain and spinal cord to Parkinson's UK for research.



Hana Sambrook

1923 - 2024

MARGARET HARRIS

It seems that the Suburb air helps to support long lives. A notable example was Suburb resident Hana Sambrook who died in February 2024. Although she lived her last 60 years in the Suburb, Hana's roots were far away, in Edinburgh, and before that in Bohemia.

Sadly, her happy 'bourgeois' childhood came to an end in 1938, when Hitler's Germany annexed the part of Czechoslovakia where Hana lived and the local population, including Hana and her family, were expelled. Her father was taken to Germany as a prisoner and Hana lived for a year with her aunts in a village west of Prague. She recalled how, on a snowy day in March 1939, on her way home from school, she hid terrified in a hedge, as the tanks of the Wehrmacht swept past her towards Prague.

Six years of wartime German occupation followed. On leaving school in 1941, she was commandeered into the German war effort, being placed in the administrative office of a munitions factory. After the war Hana spent some months working for the American army near Pilsen, translating for an intelligence unit,

before taking up a place at Charles University, Prague, to read English Literature. Hana then successfully applied for a scholarship at Edinburgh University in 1946.

At a party she met Keith Sambrook, a young English publisher. They were married in 1955 and spent seven happy years in Edinburgh before Keith was appointed Overseas Director at the London publishers Heinemann and they moved to the Hampstead Garden Suburb in 1963. Hana came to love the Suburb and stayed in the same house for more than 60 years. During those years she enjoyed

walking on the Heath and classes at the Institute. Her reputation as a baker of cakes for the Horticultural Society was so high that her cake recipes are still in use for flower shows. Hana retained a love of good food to the end of her life, always looking forward to her Sunday afternoon 'coffee and a little something' with enthusiasm.

In the summer of 2023 Hana made it to her 100th birthday. A month earlier she had been seriously ill with pneumonia and Covid but, all the same, she was able to enjoy her birthday cake and her letter from the King.

The Free Church

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Judy Smith experiencing the virtual tour of St Jude's (Photo: composite from Michael Eleftheriades photography)

Virtual Reality inside St Jude's for the Virtual Museum

MICHAEL ELEFTHERIADES

Panoramas (Greek for 'all-encompassing vision') are not a new phenomenon. Invented by Irish painter Robert Barker (1739-1806), they became popular in Victorian times. Panoramas were originally painted on the walls of specially built circular buildings. The observers would view from the centre and, as the view from the top and bottom of the painting was obscured, it created the illusion of 'being there'. With the invention of photography, panoramas started to be made by combining multiple images together.

As a young architect, I had a keen interest in technology and started to research how I could capture architectural models as well as physical spaces. Initially working with film cameras, it wasn't until 1995, and the

introduction of Apple's QuickTime VR, that I started to work in the digital domain. Inevitably, living in the Suburb and recognising its historic and architectural significance, I started to capture its buildings and spaces, photographing Brim Hill for English Heritage (2007), Howard Walk for the HGS Trust (2016), and more uniquely climbed and captured the Suburb from the top of Henrietta Barnett School (2017) and St Jude's (2021). More recently, after creating a virtual tour for the HGS Free Church, I started to post panoramas on Google Maps amassing close to 12,000 views in just over a year – a testament to their popularity.

In 2023 I met the trustees of the HGS Heritage Virtual Museum and we discussed how we could make their website truly virtual and interactive. The first result of our collaboration is the virtual tour of St Jude's, which can be viewed at: <https://tinyurl.com/stjudesvr>. On mobile devices it can also run in Gyroscope Mode or in VR Mode (rightmost button).

This provides a side-by-side view so that the tour can be viewed with Google Cardboard or similar viewers. If you have a virtual reality headset, enter the URL in the device's browser and click on the VR Mode button for a truly immersive experience. You can navigate around the space by clicking on the targets or view

information using the hotspots. This is a new and bold beginning for the HGS Virtual Museum and we hope to add Central Square and the Free Church in the future. For the first time, people outside the Suburb will be able to experience, as well as learn about, what we are privileged to enjoy on our own doorstep.



Steve Morris demonstrating the virtual tour to Kate Webster (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)

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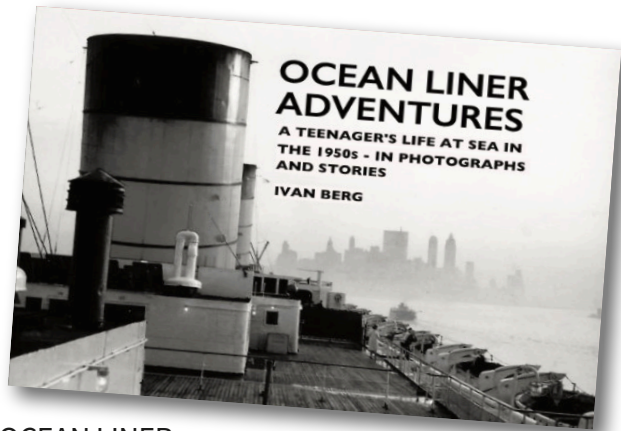
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Michael Eleftheriades' intriguing photography from the top of the St Jude's spire (2021)



OCEAN LINER ADVENTURES
by Ivan Berg

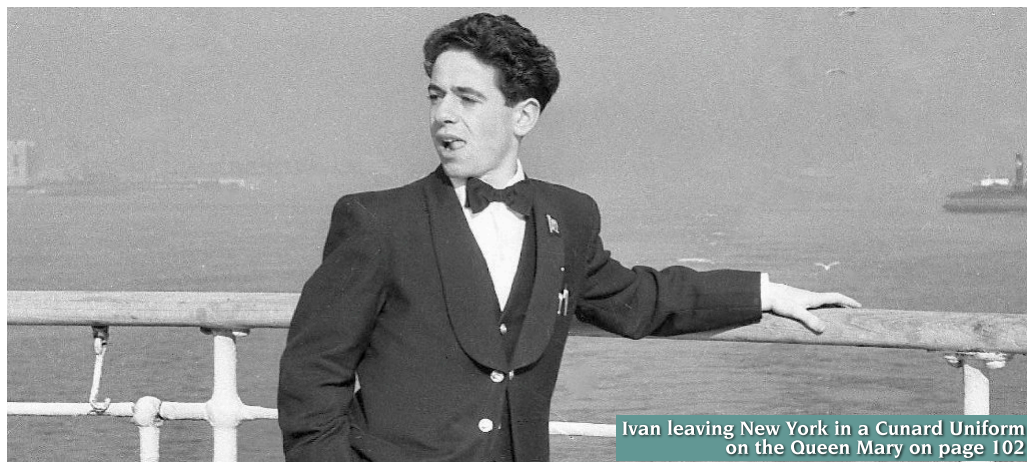
Local resident Ivan Berg's *Ocean Liner Adventures* is a captivating journey through the mystique and yet gritty life aboard ocean liners. You are transported to a bygone era of self-discovery and the exploration of a whole new world seen through the eyes of a 1950s teenager from a bombed-out East End of London.

Ivan was born in 1936 and was evacuated in WW2. Leaving school at 15, he spent nearly five years in the Merchant Navy before National Service in the RAF. He became a writer while at sea and then a TV script writer, as well as the creator of a weekly cartoon strip for a boy's adventure magazine. His varied media career

included writing several motoring books and working for 17 years as Top Gear magazine's Data and New Technology Editor.

The book is also topical in that Ivan would most probably never have created it but for the Covid lockdowns. With little else to do, he scanned his 1950s archive of film negatives and then restored them digitally for a local photo exhibition which then turned into this book. Nearly every other page shows a classic black and white photo taken by Ivan, matched by a text which follows his life from a host of dismal junior jobs in the City to a fully-fledged and confident young man.

The first thing that strikes you about this collection is the impact of the photos and, in the accompanying narrative, Ivan



Ivan leaving New York in a Cunard Uniform on the Queen Mary on page 102



The Statue of Liberty and Jersey Ferry on page 98

shows an extraordinary talent for capturing what went on behind the scenes on the ocean liners that then sailed the globe, including when he unwittingly allowed thieves to steal a priceless Bechstein Grand Piano from the Queen Mary!

What sets this book apart is Ivan's ability to transport you through his photos to a different era in so many places which were a new world for a young Londoner, including New York, Montevideo and Cape Town. You're taken on a journey back to the golden age of ocean liners, including the Queen Mary, on which he was a 'Writer'.

Berg had initially started out as a 'Saloon Boy' on the MV Bloemfontein Castle, a Union-Castle passenger ship running from Southampton to South Africa, visiting Lisbon, Las Palmas, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban. His life onboard was not nearly as grand as he imagined, the Saloon Boys had to pay the chefs to give them the same food as the passengers!

The era of Ivan's book can be best summed up in the list of luxuries he was able to buy on a trip to New York: Albums by Sinatra and Jonny Cash's first 45 rpm I

Walk the Line. He also bought a six-place peach coloured Pyrex glass tea set (for his parents), a pink Motorola portable radio and cans of coffee and ham.

Berg's attention to detail is particularly impressive. He describes his wonder at seeing Table Mountain and cities like Montevideo and New York. Then on the Caribbean cruises on RMS Mauretania in 1956 he recounts the friendship he formed with his shipmate Sir Tommy Steele (then known as Thomas Hicks) from Bermondsey and how Steele introduced Berg to his London circle which included Lionel Bart and Mike Pratt who co-wrote many of Steele's early hits.

Ocean Liner Adventures (2024) is available from Amazon, priced at £7.75 <https://bit.ly/3x8j745>. The special photo edition of *Ocean Liner Adventures* can be ordered from Waterstones at £14.99.

BOOK REVIEW BY ELEANOR LEVY

NORTEÑA: AUTHENTIC FAMILY RECIPES FROM THE NORTH OF MEXICO
by Karla Zazueta

Karla Zazueta's exquisite book is far more than a collection of recipes. It's a warm and embracing homage to her motherland and its gastronomic way of life. Coming from a large extended family 'of excellent cooks', cuisine is in her blood – a favourite childhood game was pretending to run a restaurant!

Along the way, Karla builds an important picture of North Mexico's topography and current cultural make up. Baja California is a peninsula of over 700 miles that separates the Gulf of California to its east from the western Pacific Ocean. With these extensive aquatic boundaries, the cuisine naturally favours sea food.



Karla Zazueta
(Photo: David Benitez)

Combined with its Mediterranean climate and the recent arrival of Japanese and Chinese communities, a new Baja Med style of cooking has evolved, comprising Mexican, Asian and Mediterranean elements plus foraged edible plants. In the fish section there is an interesting range of recipes: skate wing soup, mussels cocktail, prawn ball soup, tuna and mango ceviche and grilled octopus, accompanied by an outstanding photo and the reassuring words: cooking octopus can be a bit scary... don't be intimidated by the number of legs. If you say so Karla!

With its essentially dry terrain, North Mexico is ideal for raising cattle. Beef recipes include shredded beef brisket burritos, beloved by all and extensively sold by street vendors, and Karla's mother's favourite, Bavette steak. Spit-roasted kid goat, ideal for Sunday lunch and pork in red chilli sauce with, once again, a mouth-watering illustration included as well as white tripe and hominy soup, chicken red hominy soup and, for chillier days, cheese broth.

The vegetarian section particularly caught my eye; stuffed long green peppers, delectable looking tomato enchiladas with cheese and Mexican cactus salad. Karla suggest buying them in brine filled jars from a Mexican food stockist and serving with plum tomatoes and white cheese.

For deserts you can choose from a rich Flan Mexicano – sweet potatoes in syrup or a traditional Mexican rice pudding. Drinks are



no less exotic including frozen Margaritas, grapefruit and tequila cocktails and, for chilly evenings, masa harina hot chocolate (atole) which is a very popular drink over the Christmas season.

The recipes together with Karla's marvellous commentary are further enhanced by the beautiful photographs, providing a visual delight of not just the food but of North Mexico. The book also underlines the different culinary world of Mexico, with its emphasis on spices as essential ingredients. As Karla writes: chillies are a fundamental part of Mexican cuisine...no Mexican meal can be enjoyed without a good fiery, spicy salsa.

Karla's book is also a travel guide to a fascinating country via its food. For the adventurous cook, this recipe book is definitely a must-have.

You can check out Karla's Instagram profile here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya58kd22>. And you can buy her book and sign up for cookery classes here: www.mexicanfoodmemories.co.uk.

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Maggi Hurt with Mela Hilleard (Photo: Francine Barsam)

FILM REVIEW

Home is where the heart is

FRANCINE BARSAM

Having just seen my 23-year-old daughter off for a three month adventure around the Far-East, I was in need of some distraction. So a trip to the Polish film festival at the ICA in Pall Mall looked like it could do the trick.

The film Home is a multi award winning documentary filmed over seven years on location in Southway, Hampstead Garden Suburb. The film, shot mostly on a hand held camera, gives a raw insight into a group of Polish, Irish and South African immigrants newly arrived in London. It probes their relationships with each other, their desires to belong and explores the true meaning of home. The question of what is a home isn't unique to this group, it's something that many immigrant groups face. A large part of the film centres around the character of the bedridden author Elizabeth who has opened up her home to this group of live-in companions including her adopted son, Roger. There they discuss what home represents. The film captures the essence of the Suburb throughout the seasons. Sadly it also covers the end of Elizabeth's life following which the home is sold and the group disperses. It shows how the impact of one person's death has a rippling effect on this close group of friends as they go their separate ways.

Filmmaker Mela Hilleard now lives in Kensington but still visits the Suburb from time to time as she finds the area inspirational for future work and has fond memories of her time here.



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Photo: Cara Pennock

GST's Silver Lining

COLIN GREGORY

Garden Suburb Theatre's spring production of Silver Lining at Upstairs at the Gatehouse had a sold out run and played to enthusiastic audiences, including author Sandi Toksvig herself, seen here with the cast and director Daryl Hurst (centre).

This summer the Garden Suburb Theatre will be performing Robin Hood in the Wood, a battle for good over evil as Robin and his gang fight the dastardly Sheriff of Nottingham, his sidekick

Gisbourne, an evil Priest, and a daft bunch of hapless guards in the infamous Little Sherwood Wood. A tale of bows and arrows, tights and trees. Directed by Mary Musker and Sam Parizat there will be lots of fun, silliness, chases and water fights (hopefully onstage only).

Performances are from 21-29 June in Little Wood. (21, 22, 27, 28 & 29 at 7.30pm and 22, 23 & 29 at 3pm). You can book your tickets at: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/gardensuburbtheatre/robin-hood-in-the-wood/e-boqqjv>.



Girl observes performer in Covent Garden (Photo: Myke Jacobs)

Capturing Moments

HGS U3A Photography Exhibition

MYKE JACOBS

Join us for a visual journey through the lens as the HGS U3A Photography Exhibition arrives at Fellowship House. From the vibrant streets of our community to the tranquil landscapes beyond, immerse yourself in the artistry and passion of local photographers.

The exhibition showcases a kaleidoscope of perspectives, each frame telling a unique story. Witness the beauty of everyday life through candid portraits, breath-taking landscapes, and captivating abstract compositions. Whether you're an avid photographer or just appreciate capturing moments, there's something for you to admire and enjoy.

Step into Fellowship House and explore the intricate details of nature, the bustling energy of urban life, and the quiet moments

of introspection captured by our talented members. Each picture is a testament to the creativity and vision of our community, reflecting the diversity and richness of our surroundings. It's a celebration of art, community and the joy of photography.

Whether you're a photography enthusiast or simply looking for inspiration, mark your calendars for the HGS U3A Photography Exhibition at Fellowship House. Don't miss this chance to experience the world through the eyes of our talented local photographers. Join us in celebrating the beauty of our community, one frame at a time.

Admission is free. All are welcome to attend and be inspired by the art of photography.

From 1 to 31 July at Fellowship House, 136a Willifield Way, NW11 6YD.



EMMA HOWARD, HGSRA CHAIR, CHAIR@HGSRA.UK

I am writing this in mid-May on a sunny late Saturday afternoon. The birds are singing; the roses are in bloom, and the rhododendron have been magnificent this year after all those months of rain. I never fail to be amazed by the beauty of the new green of trees coming into leaf and this year seems especially glorious. We are so blessed to live in this wonderful area with green all around us.

I am therefore absolutely delighted with the successful launch in our beautiful 'garden' suburb of Britain's Biggest Living Garden Project led by local resident, the aptly named Dominic Rose. Dominic is putting a great deal of time, effort and energy into getting this off the ground and you can read in this issue about the launch presentation and the Kid's Garden Project. This complements very well the work done by the RA's Trees & Open Spaces committee members; the great work done by volunteers looking after Big Wood and Northway Gardens, and the choice of this special area for a hedgehog study by national charities including the Zoological Society of London.

Dominic was voted onto RA Council at our April meeting appointed as the RA's Biodiversity lead and can be contacted at biodiversity@hgsra.uk.

Those of you who were able to attend our full house AGM on Monday 25 March will have heard presentations by our various committees. I am constantly impressed with the time and energy our many volunteers put into our groups and activities including our Trees & Open Spaces, Publications, Events and the Environment Committee (REACH) who

put on two very successful events on Electric Vehicles in April.

I would also like to say a special thank you to Peter Falk who has been an amazing Chair of Friends of Big Wood for many years and has done so much to preserve it for future generations. He has worked tirelessly with his volunteer team to dig out ditches; plant hedges; organise specialist studies of the trees and fungi, and generally ensure its preservation as one of the few remaining areas of ancient woodland in the area. I greatly enjoyed a send-off to Peter at Fellowship House on 12 March at the Friends of Big Wood AGM. Maria Schlatter was elected as the new chair and will also be brilliant with her deep knowledge and passion for botany and conservation. Peter was presented with a number of special gifts, including a collection for trees to be planted in the area and a wonderful tree cake with real petal decorations, baked by Asher Budwig of the REACH committee.

Asher Budwig baked a 'tree cake' for Peter Falk's send off (Photos: Emma Howard)

Pump It Up

JONATHAN WAXMAN
REACH COMMITTEE
REACH@HGSRA.UK

HGS Residents Association's REACH committee has set a goal of a Net Zero Suburb by 2040. What does that mean? What are the things that really move the needle?

According to a recent Barnet Council audit, 60% of carbon emissions in the borough (London's second most populous just behind Croydon) come from buildings ie heating buildings in winter.

Lighting is also in that buildings element but with modern LED bulbs that may represent a tenth of heating demand in terms of energy consumption.

We calculate that HGS has the same basic profile. So how do we eliminate that 60% of carbon emissions from heating? It's the boiler that has to go – that's where the gas is burned and the carbon dioxide comes out the flue of the boiler into the air (though you wouldn't know it – no smell or colour). Probably 5-10 tonnes each year for typical HGS homes.

What should replace the boiler to keep our homes warm? Well – hot off the press news – it won't be a hydrogen-powered boiler. The Government just announced that it is shelving all the hydrogen pilot schemes that were planned. Hydrogen is super dangerous and very expensive and scientifically was always a non-starter. Hydrogen will not be coming to a home near you soon (or ever).

What does the Government say it will be then after thinking about this for the past 5-10 years? It is going to be heat pumps for areas like ours – and heat networks in areas that are more densely populated. There are excellent reasons why heat pumps are magic – and we would be happy to chat to you about that, if you are interested (we are!).

Great news is that there is a £7,500 government grant – the Boiler Upgrade Scheme – that you can get to install a new heat pump. Get it while you can!

HGS REACH has loads of heat pump information for you, for your architect, for your builder or

for your heating engineer. We will help you get heat pump ready! We can put you in touch with HGS residents who have installed heat pumps in their homes. You can chat to them about their experience, running costs and so on.

If you are interested in taking things a step further, we are looking for between 10-100 homes to register their interest and to achieve a significant discount on a feasibility survey for each property. The survey is likely to cost £200, and you are not committed to anything once the survey has been completed.

Do you have a heat pump installed already and want to share your story? We are producing a series of videos on homes with clean and green initiatives to help other HGS residents get started. If you'd like to take part please email us!

For all of this and more get in touch with us at reach@hgsra.uk – we are pumped to hear from you! As Henrietta would have almost certainly said: "It's a Heat Pump In Every Home."

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Air source heat pump (Photo: Sarah Stafford)

Britain's Biggest Living Garden

DOMINIC ROSE

RA REVIEW

The aim is for HGS to be the most biodiverse urban area in the UK. Residents and local groups are working together to achieve this goal and the response since the launch has been overwhelming. The RA, St Jude's Church, HGS Trust, HGS Horticultural Society, Barnet Council and conservation bodies are taking a keen interest, and there is increasing interest in using what we are doing here in HGS as a national case study.

Hundreds of local residents have signed up to get involved creating a genuinely Suburb-wide movement. 200 people have completed the Residents' Survey and joined the community, capturing valuable information about wildlife features we have in our gardens as well as attitudes to our outdoor spaces and wildlife. 80% of respondents say wildlife is very important to their enjoyment of their garden, and nearly 90% are excited by the ambition to make the Suburb the most biodiverse urban area of the UK. There are now over 100 members of a vibrant WhatsApp group with information on how to make our gardens more wildlife friendly. You can access the survey by clicking 'Join the community' on www.britainsbiggestlivinggarden.org (or scan the QR code on the right).

DR STEVE HEAD FILLS ST JUDE'S CHURCH

On 29 April, around 300 people attended the launch of Britain's Biggest Living Garden (BBLG). We heard live music by Caroline Chan on the theme of wildlife and our climate emergency. We then heard a fascinating and insightful talk by

Dr Steve Head, leading ecologist, founder patron of The Wildlife Gardening Forum and scientific partner to the BBLG project.

Steve explained enthusiastically:

☀ Why gardens with their managed high density of plants and habitats are the most biodiverse type of land in the UK.

☀ UK gardens cover a combined area larger than nature reserves and form potentially connected wildlife corridors across the country.

☀ Wildlife-friendly gardens don't need to be 'overgrown messes' but key choices will make sure that beautiful and functional gardens can support biodiversity.

☀ That HGS presents a unique opportunity for BBLG and he hopes to measure the impact we have locally and use that as a scientifically rigorous case study nationally and internationally.

Steve quoted Simon Henderson, CEO of HGS Trust: *"The Suburb is a collection of many houses in a large garden, not a collection of houses with many gardens."*

I outlined how people can get involved and pointed out that you don't have to do everything in order to be able to do something: every little bit matters. Members of the audience also had the opportunity to ask questions.

THE SUBURB'S KIDS' GARDENING CLUB

Inspiring the next generation of gardeners by showing children how they can have a direct impact on wildlife and biodiversity and how they can create their own little nature reserve is a key aim of our project. There has been a historic bond between children and gardening in the Suburb going back to its earliest days which we are pleased to be reviving.

So, on a wet Tuesday afternoon in mid-April with the support of Revd Em who provided not just the space but also an amazing spread of cakes and sandwiches, almost 40 children, their parents or carers, and a team of ten local volunteers met at St Jude's to start work on developing a community wildlife garden in the grounds of the church. We also have the invaluable and voluntary support of professional gardeners: Singer Gardens and Flagstone Gardens.

Having sown hundreds of seeds, laid out a pathway and dug up over a ton of soil, the children and volunteers left muddy but with tremendous enthusiasm for the coming sessions. It has been great to see such strong bonds forming so quickly between people



Young and old enjoying working together (Photo: Kids Gardening Club)

united by a desire to get involved and to make a difference.

The Club is entirely funded by donations and run by volunteers: if you would like to join as a volunteer, or donate any unused equipment or plants, you can find out more information on our website. The RA is funding the greenhouse and other running costs and HGS Horticultural Society is funding the raised beds.

THE BBLG WILDLIFE GARDEN CHALLENGE
Whilst one wildlife-friendly garden is a great start, a HGS corridor of wildlife-friendly gardens is exponentially better. All gardens have the potential to be wildlife friendly and everyone can play an important part in this communal project, even small steps can make a big difference.

To recognise the work of residents to support wildlife in their gardens, as well as to provide a helpful and practical guide to steps you can take, we have partnered with the Wildlife Gardening Forum to develop 'Britain's Biggest Living Garden Wildlife Garden Challenge.' You can earn points towards Bronze,

Silver or Gold Awards for wildlife-friendly features you have in your garden, the activities you undertake and your approach to gardening. Each Award will be rewarded with a certificate and a window sticker, with special plaques for Gold gardens.

This BBLG Wildlife Garden Challenge has been developed by leading ecologists based on scientific evidence and we are incredibly lucky to be the first large scale pilot of this scheme ahead of a planned national rollout. The impact of what we do here in the Suburb will truly be felt across the whole country.

To find out more, just click 'Challenge' on our website /www.britainsbiggestlivinggarden.org.



Dominic Rose is founder of Britain's Biggest Living Garden and is a Member of the HGSRA Council.
Email: biodiversity@hgsra.uk.



Dominic Rose at the launch of Britain's Biggest Living Garden (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)

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Kids Garden Club start on the BBLG Project (Photo: Emma Howard)



Dr Steven Head launches BBLG at St Jude's (Photo: Michael Eleftheriades)



Photo: Asher Budwig

Should your next car be electric?

GREN MANUEL
SECRETARY REACH
REACH@HGSRA.UK

For many HGS residents, the answer should be Yes. That was the conclusion of an evening meeting held by HGS REACH, the RA's climate action group, in April that considered the future of electric driving in HGS, discussing not only big issues such as sustainability of lithium mining, but also local and immediate issues such as the availability of charging for the many residents who don't have a drive.

Of course, many residents have already made the switch to electric. That's good news for the planet – switching means you're helping keep the planet healthy for your children and grandchildren. But it's also good news for local air quality, which is not as good as you might hope: in April NO_x air pollution, as measured by our local air quality monitor (at the junction of Meadway and Hampstead Way) was, on average,

worse than in Piccadilly Circus.

To help residents make the switch, HGS REACH ran two events in a single week. On Sunday 14 April we had the first HGS Electric Car and Bike Show. More than a dozen local residents brought their electric vehicles to St Jude's car park in Central Square (see pictures) and answered questions from interested residents. Around 150 people came to chat and hear about the realities of driving electric.

This was followed by the evening event held on 18 April which had a more in-depth discussion of the issues with experts in this field. Robert Poole, head of charging infrastructure for Barnet Council, talked about the availability of local chargers – an issue of concern to 39% of local car buyers, according to an HGS REACH survey last year.

Robert provided an update on the Council's installation strategy which is continuing apace (see the panel below).

Electric cars are much cheaper to run, but what about the upfront

cost of electric vehicles? Freda Lewis-Stempel, a Mail Online motoring journalist specialising in electric cars, gave a useful rundown of new vehicles launching in 2023 – some of which are significantly cheaper. The Dacia Spring (produced in Eastern Europe by the Renault group) will be just £15,000 (although it is a city car with a modest advertised 137-mile range). The new electric Renault 5 will be more pricey at £25,000 but will have a more generous 249-

mile range plus an essential accessory, a built-in baguette holder! More broadly, Tesla's price cuts in April are putting pressure on other manufacturers to trim prices.

The meeting also heard that modern, long-range electric cars are coming onto the second-hand market as buyers trade in after three years. And according to Which? battery degradation is usually minimal, less than 1% a year, so these could be a great buy.

These are all logical reasons for buying an electric car. But there's an additional reason, which is more emotional. As Jonathan Shine, a local electric vehicle entrepreneur who has driven electric for more than two decades,

said: "Every electric vehicle I've driven, particularly the ones I drive now, is really, really pleasurable to drive – very quiet, smooth, and pleasurable."

To be sure, using public transport and cycling (or an electric bike) is the most sustainable form of transport. And there are some petrol cars where the electric equivalent is still much more expensive, such as the 7-seaters needed by those with a large family. But for many Suburb residents, making their next car an electric vehicle offers a double win: improved sustainability plus fantastic driving experience.

As Freda Lewis-Stempel said, "It's a very enjoyable thing to do – and you're also giving back."



Photo: Peter McCluskie



Photo: Peter McCluskie



BARNET COUNCIL CHARGING POINTS TODAY

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Photo: Peter McCluskie

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RA REVIEW

The First Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association NLF Piano Prize

EMMA HOWARD
RA CHAIR CHAIR@HGSRA.UK

The North London Festival of Music, Speech and Drama has a great heritage having been founded in November 1920 by a group of North London musicians including music critics John Graham and Herman Klein. I was delighted that the RA Council voted unanimously last year that we should sponsor the first prize of £750 for the Festival's prestigious piano competition with entry restricted to pianists currently studying in a Senior Department of any UK Music College, Academy or Conservatoire.

Thirteen pianists delighted onlookers by each playing two pieces on the wonderful Steinway grand piano including works by Ginastera, Scarlatti, Ravel, Hayden, Albeniz, Bartok, Prokofiev, Mendelssohn and, of course,

Bach, Beethoven and lots of challenging Chopin.

Distinguished Adjudicator, James Kirby, summing up the day's performances said that the overall standard was very high indeed and, as well as awarding the 1st and 2nd Prizes, he gave commendations to Aida Rodrigues Ramos, Ryan Yip and Joanna Lam.

Second prize was awarded to 19 year-old Firoze Madon who is studying at the Royal College of Music. First Prize was awarded to 25-year-old Jeremy Chan and James praised him saying: "He is clearly destined for a professional career on the concert platform." Jeremy is studying for a Performance Diploma at Guildhall School of Music and Drama having done a first degree in English at Durham University and a Masters in Music Performance at GSMD.



NLF piano contestants line up with HGSRA chair, Emma Howard, centre (Photo: Peter McCluskie)



1st Prize winner (Photo: Peter McCluskie)



2nd Prize Winner Firoze Madon (Photo: Emma Howard)

I felt privileged and humbled to be able to present the certificates and prizes to all these amazing young pianists. Both finalists then got the chance to perform again one of the two pieces they had performed earlier. Firoze played Chopin's Barcarolle in F# Op. 60 and Jeremy gave a

truly virtuosic performance of the fiery Fugue from Barber's Sonata in Eb Minor.

Onlookers clearly enjoyed this wonderful end to a great day and were thrilled to be able to

talk to the musicians. For those of you who missed this free event right on our doorstep at the Free Church, please do come next year, for as long or short a time as you'd like.

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HGS Community Harvesting and Protecting our Environment

Run by the RA's Trees & Open Spaces Committee, the aim of Community Harvesting is to collect fruit – mainly apples and pears – that would otherwise go to waste from people's gardens and get it to food banks and other community causes. If you have fruit to spare and are happy to share or if you want to help with the harvesting (it really is lots of fun and your kids will love it too) contact: harvesting@hgsra.uk.

Community Harvesting only happens for a couple of months each year so, if you want to be part of the wider and ongoing task of protecting the Suburb's wonderful trees and open spaces – either as a committee member or as a non-committee volunteer, you can read more about what we do at www.hgsra.uk/trees/index.html and then please contact us via trees@hgsra.uk.

Steven Rowe (Trees & Open Space Committee Chair)



Photo: Stephen Rowe

Road safety and improving the public realm

CLLR ROHIT GROVER

In my last article I wrote about the issue that residents raise with me and my fellow Suburb councillor Mike Mire the most: improving the condition of Barnet's roads and pavements. We always try to do our best to secure the Suburb's fair share of funds that are available, so thank you for your suggestions as to where further improvements could be made.

This time I'm going to write about another issue that occupies much of our time: improving road safety, as well as a subject that is close to my heart: maintaining and improving the public realm.

ROAD SAFETY

I'm delighted that the pavement build-outs and hatched road markings on the approaches to the Meadway/Hampstead Way roundabout have finally been completed. Improving pedestrian safety at this junction was one of the first issues that came across my desk when I was first elected in 2015, and it's taken many years of funding requests, design proposals, consultation exercises and dealing with threats of legal action to finally get this done. The response to these measures has been overwhelmingly positive in that they do appear to force motorists to navigate the

roundabout with more care while also improving the sightlines for pedestrians crossing the road. Roads can never be made 100% safe, but at least this junction is now safer than it was. My thanks to Emma Howard for all of her work and support on this issue.

Another longstanding concern of many residents, North and South, is speeding and pedestrian safety on Falloeden Way. This is something that all of the Suburb's elected representatives – including your MP, Assembly Member and Councillors – have been working on for many years. Getting Transport for London to do anything is like pushing a rock up a hill. However, we have recently been informed that the road safety scheme TfL were 'developing before and during the pandemic is still on their books', and we're told that the first iteration will be released late May/early June. Let's hope this isn't another false dawn.

I recently organised a meeting at the junction of Middleway and Thornton Way between about 15 residents and some of the Council's highways officers, who listened to concerns around speeding, poor sightlines and signage. I can now confirm funding has been approved for speed surveys to take place in the wider area. This is the first step of what I'm afraid could be a long

process, where the results will be analysed and, depending on what the data reveals, plans will then be drawn up and consulted on.

THE PUBLIC REALM

It has been since 2020 that the Council has implemented a number of measures on The Causeway by East Finchley Station, including the installation of CCTV, improved lighting and cutting back foliage. This is a pathway that needs constant attention – particularly the foliage that overhangs from a number of private dwellings. Legally, it is the responsibility of residents to cut their foliage back, but the process of ensuring this happens involves serving notices and then enforcing non-compliance. Frankly, it's far easier and cheaper for council officers just to turn up and do the work themselves, which is what I'm trying to persuade them to do several times a year. I don't think this should always be the case, but in a location like The Causeway where there are genuine safety concerns, I think it's justified.

The CCTV is not yet permanent – every time I ask about whether a decision to make it permanent has been made, I'm told that the 'pilot' has been extended. Long may that continue.

The Causeway street sign at the exit from East Finchley station went missing many months ago.



Emma Howard and Rohit Grover at the Meadway roundabout (Photo: Passerby)

This was in the traditional heritage style, which meant a replacement had to be commissioned from specialist suppliers. I was offered a standard sign replacement in the interim, but I've been on the Council long enough to know that temporary measures frequently become permanent, so I politely declined. Hopefully by the time of writing the new heritage sign should have been installed.

On the subject of signs, I'm very grateful to the resident who pointed out to me that the replacement 'South Square' sign outside St Jude's includes the Barnet logo. This is not in line with conservation area design guidelines, which stipulate that street signs should only include the name, postcode in red letters and black borders. I've noticed similar signs elsewhere in the Suburb – including

with green borders. Once you see such things you can't ignore them! I'm trying to get to the bottom of what's going on, and generally being a nuisance with council officers who know my thoughts on these matters!

I was thrilled to see the new golden shingle rubber crumb tarmac laid down on Hill Top. As a conservation area, cracked and uplifted paving stones should always be replaced on a like for like basis, but sometimes tree roots mean there is no alternative to tarmac. Thanks to the efforts of conservation expert Philip Davies, whose recent award of an OBE was reported on in Suburb News, it has been agreed that, in these circumstances, golden shingle will be rolled in to mitigate the visual impact of tarmac. Please do go and take a look!



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OUT & ABOUT

Heavenly Bluebells



Big Wood Bluebells (Photo: Shelley-Anne Salisbury)

MARIE-CHRISTINE O'CALLAGHAN

In 1839, Emily Bronte wrote: "The Bluebell is the sweetest flower/ That waves in summer air:/ Its blossoms have the mightiest power/To soothe my spirit's care."

And indeed there are few things more beautiful than walking into a woodland covered in bluebells "as blue as the sea – as blue as a bit of sky come down." (Beatrix Potter).

Bluebells are a quintessential British flower that have long graced the woods with their heavenly colour and sweet scent. In the Bronze Age people used bluebell glue to attach feathers to their arrows, later on the sap was used to bind the pages to the spines of books and the Victorians used the starch from crushed bluebells to stiffen the ruffs of their collars and sleeves.

Bluebells have been given many nicknames over the years.

Roy Vickery, a botanist for the Natural History Museum, thinks there are over 70 or so different names for them: cuckoo's boots, crow toes, fairy flowers, ladies' nightcaps, wood bells and witches thimbles, to name but a few. And there are many folktales surrounding these flowers. Legend has it that a field of bluebells is intricately woven with fairy enchantments. Some believe that fairies hang their spells on bluebells to dry and disturbing the flowers would unleash wild magic, others hold that walking amongst bluebells may lead you to become pixy-led, dazed by enchantment and unable to find your way out of the wood; so, when entering a bluebell wood, it is always a good idea to ask the fairies' permission and whisper 'thank you' when you leave.

All good advice as bluebells are a protected species and it is against the law to intentionally pick, uproot or destroy them. You

should also avoid walking on them because if their leaves are crushed, they will die as they can no longer photosynthesise.

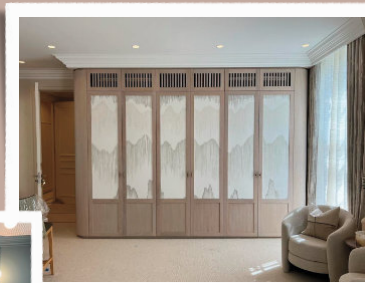
Having said all this, there is nothing to stop you having your very own patch of enchantment. You can buy English bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* from reputable garden centres. They grow best in partial shade with moist but well-drained soil and if you plant them in clumps you can create a mini-woodland effect, but be prepared to wait as they may take a while to get established, however, when they do flower, they will delightfully 'soothe your spirit's care'.

References: Roy Vickery; Garlands, Conkers and Mother-Die; British and Irish Plant Lore; Bloomsbury 2010. Follow this link to the National Trust website page on how to care for bluebells: <https://tinyurl.com/yev3wvxm>

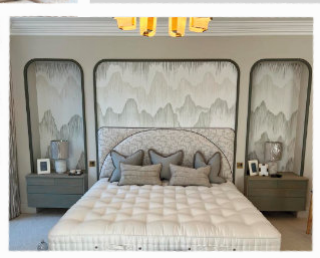


Big Wood Moth Breakfast (Photo: Maria Schlatter)

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Another Moth Breakfast

Friends of Big Wood are delighted to host the annual 'Moth Breakfast' on Sunday 14 July 8.30 am meeting at Temple Fortune Hill gate

Dr Phil Sterling, a leading authority on moths and a volunteer for Butterfly Conservation, the charity working to conserve butterflies and moths, will set a harmless light trap in a garden adjacent to the wood. We will open the trap in the morning and expect at least 60 species of moth that are active during the warm summer night to visit. Phil will share insights into their lives and the ecology of the wood.

Coffee and biscuits available. All the family are very welcome.

Friends of Big Wood organise a wide-ranging programme of work and research in this woodland nature reserve in cooperation with Barnet Council. Please consider supporting our work to protect Big Wood by becoming a Friend. See www.friendsofbigwood.com for more information. You can join via our website, and you will receive our monthly newsletter with news of our events if you do. You can visit us at our stall at this year's RA Summer Fair on 8 June, or if you'd like to contact us directly, please email friendsofbigwood@gmail.com.

Melanie Eddis, Friends of Big Wood Volunteer



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

SIMONE HALFIN

Walking into Amber Rose, the florist in Market Place, this morning I was entranced by the magnificent flowers and plants beautifully displayed, some in handmade glassware and pots and some in artistic bouquets: all glorious and the smell of lilies and roses was just heavenly.

The owner, Shahram Ramezanie-Zadeh (Sean, as everyone calls him) runs the shop together with his wife Sonia. The couple have twins who went to Brookland School. The twins are now 29 but have decided not to follow their parents into the business. I asked Sean about the name of the shop, he said that his mother is called Kahrobâ, which is Persian for Amber, and that the florist is named after her.

He told me that most of the plants and flowers in the shop come from Holland, but he likes to buy orchids from UK growers. He goes to the nurseries to choose the orchids, even though it means that he has to wear a hazmat suit and a mask to avoid bringing any contamination into the nursery.

I wondered if he had any tips on prolonging the life of plants? He said that you have to make sure that each plant is in its right environment; for example, whether they prefer light or shade. It is especially important for orchids which must be in a bright spot and must not be overwatered; an egg cup of water and the leaves sprayed once a week should be enough. They will also benefit from a diluted tomato feed administered once a month. As well as selling flowers and potted plants, Sean will also supply bedding plants to order and even deliver them.

Amber Rose was responsible for all the flowers in the first series of The Apprentice, supplying them to each of the houses in Hampstead, Highgate and Central London. Sean, quite rightly, declined to tell me the names of the famous clients he has: footballers, film stars, lords and ladies etc.

I asked whether tastes had changed over the years: he replied that tastes will frequently change with the seasons, the colours and the fashion. He gets a lot of pleasure seeing the faces of his clients when they pick out the right flower or plant. He told me that he loves cheering people up and has been known to go up to ladies and present them with a rose – much to the amusement of their husbands. I did then think that I should try and look miserable but didn't need to, as he generously presented me with a beautiful bouquet of hyacinths and roses when I left.

Sean obviously loves living in this area and takes part in many charity events to raise money locally. He also loves collecting very special cars, and tinkering with them. He hopes to raise money by going on a charity rally very soon, that is if he can find the time, as Amber Rose is open seven days a week.



Sean's handpicked orchids displayed on his website

Get a big bowling welcome at Bishopswood Bowling Club

CHERYL KUCZYNSKI

Summer is now upon us and it's time to get outdoors, be active and have fun! If you've ever thought about taking up lawn bowling or returning to the game and you want a big, warm welcome, come along to Bishopswood Bowling Club, located on Lyttelton Playing Fields, just off Norrice Lea, next to the tennis courts.

We are open every day, from around 10am until the sun goes

down in the evening, and our experienced coaches will be delighted to give you some free tuition. We can lend you some equipment at first too.

Come in at any time, take a look around, watch a game and chat to members. Or, if you prefer, you can arrange a time to chat to someone. Tea, coffee and cold drinks are always on tap, not to mention delicious biscuits!

We are a friendly, sociable club and always delighted to see

new players – of all abilities or none. It's great when new members tell us that taking up bowls has added so much to their lives; after all, what can be better than doing some exercise in the fresh air and (quite often) sunshine with friends?

Come in whenever the gates are open.

For more information, please visit the club website at <https://bishopswoodbc.co.uk> or contact us on 020 8058 2212 or email: info@bishopswoodbc.co.uk.



Photo: Bishopswood Bowling Club

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World food favourites

Pasta

In a world filled with culinary delights, few dishes hold the universal appeal and enduring popularity of pasta. From bustling streets in Italy to kitchens in the UK, pasta has captured the hearts and taste buds of people all over the world. So what makes this rather simple dish such a beloved staple amongst households?

Pasta's origins are believed to be in ancient China, and, it is possible that explorer Marco Polo brought it back to Italy from the Far East in the 13th century. A few centuries later, the Industrial Revolution brought about significant advancements in pasta, making it more accessible to all social classes and ensuring its widespread popularity both in Italy and abroad. From Italian classics like penne arrabiata to Asian-inspired dishes including pad Thai and ramen, pasta takes many forms and flavours in every corner of the world.

One of pasta's greatest strengths is its versatility. Pasta comes in a myriad of shapes and sizes from the long strands of spaghetti to the tiny pillows of ravioli allowing consumers to have a unique eating experience every time. With this versatility pasta serves as the

perfect canvas for an endless array of ingredients and sauces. If you're in the mood for a simple tomato sauce or a creamy Alfredo, there is always a pasta dish to suit every taste and palate.

There's nothing better than a delicious bowl of pasta on a cold afternoon with your family and friends; this dish can be enjoyed by all cultures, bringing people together. Whether you are a vegetarian or an omnivore, an adventurous eater or someone who prefers a simple meal, there's something for everyone. Ultimately, the power of pasta is not just in its ability to fill our stomachs but in its capacity to bring people together, transcend cultural boundaries, and create a shared experience of joy around the dining table.

Labdhi Ostwal and Rushda Zafar – The Henrietta Barnett School



Seder Table

Passover is that time of year when the whole Jewish community unites. As the sun goes down on the first night, families come together at each other's homes, filling the air with love, laughter, and mouth-watering aromas you just can't beat.

At the center of the Seder table, you have that iconic Seder plate filled to the brim with symbolic foods telling the story of our ancestors breaking free from slavery in Egypt. The humble matzah reminds us they had to leave in a hurry, with no time for their bread to rise. The bitter herbs like horseradish represent the bitterness they endured.

As we read from the ancient Haggadah, classic dishes like egg soup and matzo hit the table, just like they have for generations. The egg symbolizes life and renewal – a powerful reminder of our people's resilience through tough times.

But Passover is so much more than just the food. It celebrates our heritage, values, and the unbreakable bonds that unite our awesome Jewish community. The room fills with joyous singing as

the whole family ensemble in reimagining classic songs with Jewish lyrics, led by Grandma. In these moments you feel that profound connection to your roots – that sense of belonging that transcends place and time. Seeing the smiles, feeling the warmth of embraces, and sharing that reverence for tradition – it's a reminder of the incredible strength of our community.

While conflicts may rage in the world, our family Passover celebration stands as a beacon of hope – proof that even in darkness, the lights of unity, resilience, and faith can never be extinguished. As it is written, "You shall observe this ritual for all time" (Exodus 12:24). Our indomitable spirit has withstood every test and it will continue shining ever so brightly. L'chaim!

Zebediah Futerman and Luca Done Rossi – Archer Academy



London is a multicultural city and that is reflected in the students of both Henrietta Barnett and the Archer schools, who are writing about their culinary traditions and how food brings people together.



Chocolate

Chocolate, with its rich history and irresistible flavour, has long been cherished as a beloved treat enjoyed by people of all ages and backgrounds; it has a unique ability to bring people together due to its universally loved taste and the positive emotions it evokes. However, beyond its delectable taste lies a deeper significance – chocolate has a remarkable ability to bring communities together, fostering connections, creativity and collaboration across cultures and continents.

Chocolate plays a central role in celebratory occasions, bringing friends and family together to share in the joy of special moments. Whether it's a chocolate cake at a wedding reception, chocolate eggs at Easter or chocolate truffles as a birthday treat, these occasions create opportunities for people to come together in a shared experience that brings joy and pleasure to everyone and creates lasting memories. It is also a popular gift for birthdays, holidays, and special occasions; giving and receiving chocolate creates a bond between the giver and receiver, conveying feelings of appreciation, love and friendship.

Chocolate is a classic comfort food that people turn to in times of stress or sadness – that is because chocolate contains something called endorphins which are natural substances that make us feel happy. When we eat chocolate it's like getting a little burst of happiness.

Chocolate is deeply ingrained in many cultures and traditions around the world. Through trade and exploration, chocolate has travelled across continents, introducing people to new flavours and traditions. This exchange fosters connections between diverse cultures. Whether it's the ritual of drinking hot chocolate in cold weather or the exchange of chocolate during festivals and celebrations, these customs create a sense of belonging.

Chocolate is more than just a sweet indulgence; it is a powerful catalyst for connection, collaboration and community building and brings people together across cultures, interests and backgrounds. Just remember to enjoy it – in moderation!

Sofia Kountouri and Rakshiha Chandrajit – The Henrietta Barnett School

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Pierogi

In the heart of Poland's culinary tapestry lies a beloved dish that transcends generations: Pierogi. These delectable dumplings, crafted from unleavened dough and stuffed with an array of fillings, hold a special place in Polish culture and cuisine.

Originating in the 13th century, Pierogi have evolved into a versatile staple, enjoyed year-round and during festive occasions. Traditional fillings include mashed potatoes, cheese, cabbage, or savoury meats, each bursting with flavour and heritage. The process of making Pierogi is an art form, passed down through families, with each fold and pinch representing a connection to Poland's rich history. Whether boiled, fried, or baked, pierogi offers a tantalising taste of tradition. In modern times, these savoury delights have gained international acclaim, with Polish communities worldwide celebrating their heritage through the shared enjoyment of Pierogi. As Poland continues to cherish its culinary heritage, Pierogi remain a symbol of unity, connecting people across borders through the universal language of food.

Beyond its cultural significance, Pierogi have also found their way onto the menus of upscale restaurants, where chefs experiment with innovative fillings and presentations while staying true to the dish's roots. Additionally, food festivals dedicated solely to Pierogi have sprung up in various corners of the globe, drawing crowds eager to sample different variations and learn about their origins. Moreover, the internet has facilitated the sharing of Pierogi recipes and techniques, allowing enthusiasts from diverse backgrounds to recreate this Polish delicacy in their own kitchens. Whether enjoyed as a humble street snack or as part of an elaborate feast, Pierogi continues to captivate taste buds and spark conversations about culinary traditions. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, Pierogi serve as an ambassador of Polish culture, inviting people of all nationalities to savour a bite of history.

Arwen Bryla and Enesa Gjinovci – Archer Academy



Flia

I come from a family that lives in different parts of the world, and we do not get to see each other as often as we would like. However, when we do get together for the holidays, it is always a special occasion. During the summer holidays, my family and I travel to visit our extended family, and we are always greeted with a warm welcome and a delicious meal called Flia.

Flia is a traditional dish from Albania/Kosovo cuisine, and it is a staple in my family's household. It is a meal that can feed a lot of people, making it perfect for our large family gatherings. The preparation of Flia is intricate and takes about three hours, but it is well worth it. The ingredients consist of the following: flour, butter, water, yoghurt, double cream, eggs, oil, and salt. and it is usually served with a side of yoghurt or sour cream. I would say it has a similar taste to crepes. It is cooked outside on an open fire which is used to heat a special lid where the Flia is actually cooked. My aunts and grandma make the batter, my uncles oversee the fire and the cooking of the Flia, and the children collect sticks to feed the fire. Everyone pitches in to make Flia, making it even more special.

After three hours of cooking, we get to enjoy the meal together on a picnic blanket in the breezy but hot weather. Flia is such an amazing way to bring the family together and start our vacation on a high note.

I believe that food is an excellent way to connect with friends and family – it's always a special treat for us all, making Flia on our holiday get together.

Enesa Gjinovci and Arwen Bryla – Archer Academy



Biryani

In the bustling kitchens of Indian households, amidst the clatter of pots and pans and the fragrance of spices, lies a treasure trove of memories and traditions. In the rich mosaic of Indian culture, food does not exist for the mere purposes of sustenance – it is, rather, a language of love – bringing entire families together, connecting generations and cherishing traditions.

While every food has its basic recipe, Indian cooking demands that each person modifies that recipe to their personal preference which, with the vast range of spices used, makes the dish memorable. These small changes and tweaks to the recipes are what keeps the recipes alive, since the person adds a tiny fragment of themselves to this recipe. Traditionally, for mothers and daughters, the kitchen becomes a temple – a place where secrets are shared and lessons are learned. Together, they knead dough for rotis, roll out puris, and simmer pots of aromatic curries, their hands moving in harmony as they weave together the threads of family history.

Biryani, a dish that needs no introduction, embodies the rich tapestry of flavours and traditions woven into the culinary landscape of South Asia. Originating from the royal kitchens of ancient Persia, Biryani has evolved into a beloved staple across India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and beyond, captivating palates with its fragrant aroma and exquisite taste. Biryani is a harmonious blend of fragrant basmati rice, succulent meat or vegetables, and a symphony of spices, meticulously slow-cooked to perfection. Each bite is a sensory delight, where the warmth of cinnamon, the earthiness of cumin, and the subtle heat of chili dance on the palate, leaving an indelible mark of satisfaction.

An inherent belief of Hinduism is that God is everywhere, in everything, particularly in food, and so it should be respected. For generations, Indian families have gathered around the dining table to share not just food, but stories, laughter, and moments of pure happiness. In every dish, there is a story waiting to be told - generations past, journeys undertaken, and thus culminating in bonds that tie families together. In a culture where hospitality is one of the most sacred duties, no one is ever turned away; instead they are welcomed with open arms and a seat at the table.

In today's fast-paced world, where time appears to slip through our fingers, the tradition of gathering together for a meal is even more significant. It is a reminder that amidst the chaos and uncertainty of life, there is always a place where we can find peace and love - in the flavours of home.

Vaishni Jeyananthan and Saanyakta Kumar – The Henrietta Barnett School

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Proms at St Jude's Literary Festival



Photo: John Godwin

Brilliant book festival coming up!

CHERYL KUCZYNSKI

Besides the music which made its name, our local Proms at St Jude's Festival also offers outstanding talks from the world of books. This year's LitFest runs over the weekend of Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 June.

It starts in style with the hugely popular comedian, screenwriter, author and podcaster David Baddiel (*Jews Don't Count*; *The God Desire*) talking about his new book *My Family: The Memoir*, in which he explores the lives of his mother and father with comedy, poignancy and laughter.

Also on Saturday, Royal biographer Robert Hardman will be in conversation with Simon Lewis, former Communications Secretary to the late Queen, about *Charles III: New King. New Court. The Inside Story*. The book describes the first year of the Carolean era – the role played by Queen Camilla, relationships with Princes William and Harry, and the King's plans for reforming the monarchy.

Lovers of good food will enjoy award-winning cook and writer

Fuchsia Dunlop in conversation with Frances Wood, former curator of the Chinese collections in the British Library. Fuchsia's book *Invitation to a Banquet: The Story of Chinese Food* is an unforgettable journey into Chinese food as it is made, cooked, eaten and considered in its homeland.

Fans of crime fiction will enjoy Saturday's closing session with best-selling novelist Erin Kelly. Her latest book, *The House of Mirrors*, is a suspenseful tour de force, featuring ingenious plotting, vivid characterisation and dark family secrets.

Moving on to Sunday, award-winning journalist, broadcaster and author Sathnam Sanghera will talk to Claire Berliner, writer, editor and Head of Programmes at The London Library about *Empireworld*, the follow-up to his best-selling book *Empireland*, which was developed into a Channel 4 documentary. The author examines the immense impact and influence the British empire has exerted across the globe.

Social historian David Kynaston will discuss his latest

book, *A Northern Wind: Britain 1962-65*, with journalist and BBC presenter, David Aaronovitch. His book examines the period from the seismic coming of the Beatles, via a sex scandal that rocked the Tory government to the arrival at No 10 of Harold Wilson.

Journalist and Financial Times Managing Editor Tobias Buck's book *Final Verdict: A Holocaust Trial in the Twenty-first Century*, covers one of the last Nazi war crime trials in Germany. The book explores war crimes, justice, collective guilt and the part his own German grandfather played in the Holocaust.

Finally, cultural historian and English Literature professor, Clair Wills, will discuss her book *Missing Persons, or My Grandmother's Secrets*, which tells a story spanning the 1890s to the 1980s, of Ireland's unmarried mothers and unwanted children, as seen through three generations of her Irish family.

MUSIC

On the music front, Proms offers wonderfully diversity this year. From Mendelssohn, Brahms and Schubert through to Motown, film

themes and Tango, with the Great American Songbook and Blue Grass in the mix too. In addition, the Last Night of Proms sees inspirational broadcaster and choirmaster Gareth Malone making an appearance as guest narrator – truly an evening not to be missed.

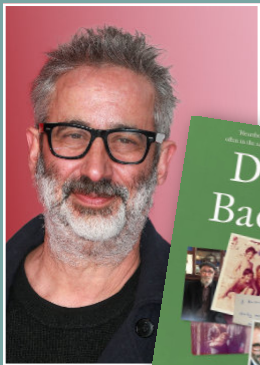
And that's not all – Proms also offers a Comedy Night, guided walks around the Suburb and beyond and a fun Family Festival. There are many free events too.

"We may be local, but we punch well above our weight with the musicians and authors we attract to our festival," says Proms Chair, Kate Webster. "Our prices are very competitive and our lunch-time concerts are free, as are many of our Family Festival events."

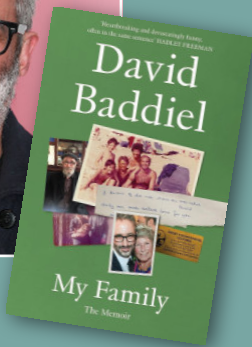
Booking is now open.

Details of all the events are on www.promsatstjudes.org.uk. To get news updates as they happen, just sign up to the mailing list at www.promsatstjudes.org.uk.

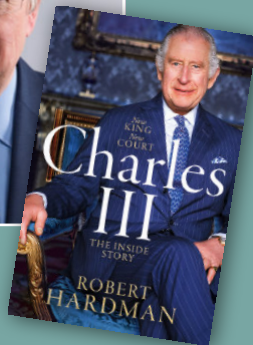
Cheryl Kuczynski is part of the Proms at St Jude's Marketing and Communications Committee



David Baddiel



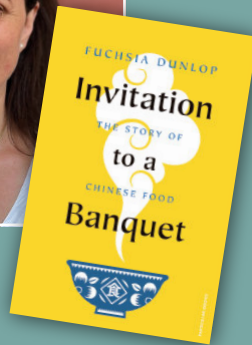
Robert Hardman



(Photo: Sam Kai)



Fuschia Dunlop



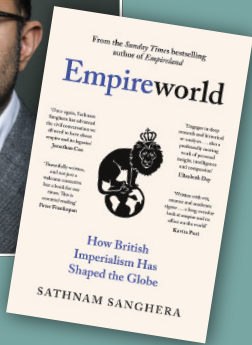
(Photo: John Godwin)



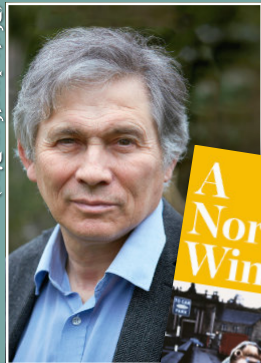
Erin Kelly



Sathnam Sanghera



(Photo: Jonathan Ring)



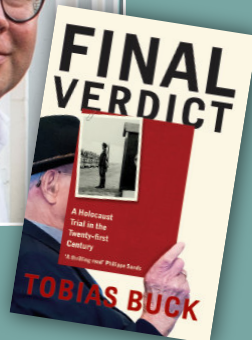
David Kynaston



(Photo: Alfredo Galiz)



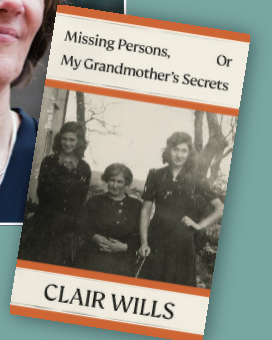
Tobias Buck



(Photo: James Sittler)



Clair Wills





Rabbi Elliott Karstadt, Imam Sabah Ahmed and Rabbi Hannah Kingston (Photo: Adam Martin)

Interfaith in Action – Alyth’s Iftar on the Theme of Friendship

JUDY SMITH

For the past ten years Alyth Gardens Synagogue has hosted an Iftar – the meal that breaks the day of fasting during the month of Ramadan.

The event runs to a strict timetable that includes interfaith study sessions and Jewish and Islamic evening prayers which are preceded by the Muslim call to prayer from the Bimah (prayer stage) in our synagogue and then breaking bread together when the fast ends followed by a communal buffet meal of middle eastern delicacies.

Many of us wondered whether we would be able to hold the Iftar this year. After the October 7 massacre and the ongoing tragic war in Gaza, would we still be able or want to meet together? Our Rabbis, Hannah Kingston and

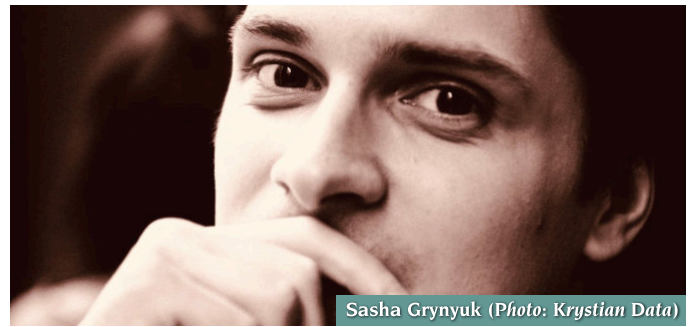
Elliott Karstadt decided that it could only be possible if we faced the 'elephant in the room' head on and acknowledged to each other the pain we all felt in respect to the ongoing death and destruction in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank. And so, the theme of Friendship was chosen for the Iftar which was held at Alyth Gardens Synagogue on Sunday 17 March.

Would we be able to use the friendship built up over so many years between our community and many different Muslim communities to come together to meet, study, pray and eat and then navigate and acknowledge the pain we were all feeling?

The people did come – well over 100 – from various Muslim communities and many different synagogues. We discovered that people had sought us out knowing

that Alyth was that safe space where we could all be together.

We studied, prayed, ate, talked and listened to each other. The Muslim and Jewish religious leaders and scholars who were there to teach us all, demonstrated that, if we have built relationships of trust over the many years in which we have been practising interfaith in action, we would be able to come together to hold our eleventh Iftar. It took courage and strength and some of the conversations were understandably difficult. But, by the end of the remarkable evening, we all felt that this event demonstrated that even if we cannot change the horrors which have unfolded across Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, we can, at least, begin to change the public perception of Jewish/Muslim interfaith dialogue here.



Sasha Grynyuk (Photo: Krystian Data)

LICO Memorial Concert

ANN SHEFFIELD

The London International Concert Orchestra (LICO) is composed of retired and working professionals, recent graduates and amateur players from all backgrounds, ages and nationalities who are united by their love of music and there will be a very special performance taking place at their home base, the Free Church, on Sunday July 14 at 7.30pm.

This Memorial Concert is in honour of their founder, the late Sarah Aaronson OBE, and will consist of some of Sarah’s favourite music, including: Tchaikovsky’s Fantasy Overture Romeo & Juliet, Glinka’s Overture to Ruslan and Ludmilla and much-loved pieces by Mozart, Brahms, Johann Strauss and John Williams. An added attraction is Kyiv-born pianist Sasha Grynyuk who has won numerous competitions, prizes and awards and will play Rachmaninov’s Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini. Tickets can be booked via the LICO website www.li-co.org.

The Exuberance of Youth



Photo: Natasha Radjabi

Every Monday evening for many years Fellowship House has resounded to the shouts and laughter of our good friends the 2nd Golders Green Guides under the able and cheerful supervision of Guide Leader Natasha Radjabi.

One early March evening excitement reached a crescendo. On a visit to Middlesex University the previous November, the girls had been shown the principles of creative photography. Now had come the moment to mount an exhibition of their work in the Fellowship Art Gallery. Cats, cakes and Christmas were favourite themes alongside family skiing, friends on the school bus and a NASA moon landing. Proud parents arrived later for the opening party.

The whole experience was a breath of fresh air – something the Baden Powells would have approved of.

Joining information is at: www.girlguiding.org.uk

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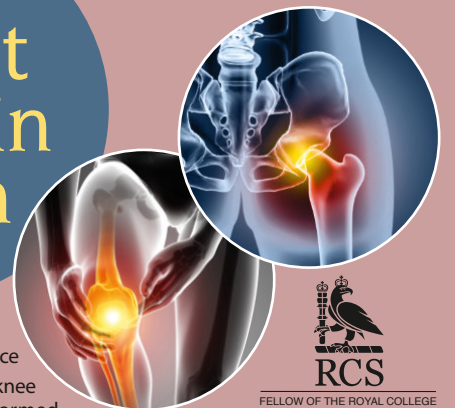
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Hidden behind the shrubbery of the apple tree is the log pile (Photo: Caroline Broome)



Elegant water feature at East Ruston Old Vicarage (Photo: Caroline Broome)

Rewilding is on trend

CAROLINE BROOME

Those of you who read my column regularly will know by now that I am a strong advocate for biodiversity and all things natural. Rewilding is now officially on trend. However, not everybody favours the more natural look or, as in my case, may not have a lawn to convert into a mini meadow. So what can you do, if like me, you prefer a more formal look but still want to attract wildlife into your garden?

It's June and my little patch of heaven is brimming with fledglings; bees are buzzin', and mini frogs are springing up all over the place. Yet, at first glance, my patio garden is manicured to within an inch of its life! But look closer and all will be revealed.

In the far corner, behind the old apple tree, is an ever-growing pile of old wood, gradually being colonised by ivy, a perfect refuge for frogs, toads and – oh, how I wish – hedgehogs. I don't have room for a compost bin so I save my conscience by tossing all my twiggy prunings into the corner. Screened by a dense understory of shrubs and herbaceous perennials, this haven for wildlife is hidden unless you know where to look.

Now let's consider the bird life. I have a wooden nesting box in the apple tree which has been home to great tits every spring for over twenty years. Brightening up opposite corners are variegated ivy and euonymus, whose dense foliage provides perfect cover for nesting robins. If rustic bird boxes and insect hotels aren't your thing then look for more sleek contemporary designs made of slate or metal, the internet is full of them! When it comes to bird food, through trial and error, over the years I have come up with a recipe to suit most avian palates. White and black sunflower seeds for the tits, mealworms for the robins and starlings, niger seeds for the goldfinches, whilst mixed bird seed just doesn't cut it at all! In winter we hang peanut feeders and suet blocks at the opposite end of the garden to attract the parakeets, enabling the smaller birds to continue visiting their own feeding station undisturbed.

We are advised that single flowers are more beneficial to insects than double flowers. What does that denote? It's all about pollination. Blooms with a single layer of open petals, exposing the flower's centre, allow bees and hoverflies to access pollen more

easily, passing it from flower to flower as they go. Birds pick up pollen on their wings as they reach into the flowers, seeking out insects to eat, and spores are carried around on the wind. Double flowers are those with multiple, ruffled petals that hide the all-important pollen at their centres.

Rose lovers amongst you do not have to worry as breeders are introducing more and more of the most exquisite single flowered types, such as For Your Eyes Only. There are scores of old roses that fit the bill too; rosa Mutabilis, a shrub rose with a fairly loose habit which will climb to about ten foot if trained against a fence, has a succession of antique pink petals that change shade as they age, flowering from mid-summer to new year.

Dahlias too have some strikingly good-looking single varieties, the most popular being ruby red Bishop of Llandaff. If you are a fan of bi-coloured blooms, then check out Moonfire. And from personal experience the towering spires of veronicastrum virginicum will be covered in bees. Buddleias, loved by butterflies, have fallen out of fashion perhaps due to their ungainly size, but

there are now numerous compact patio varieties such as buddleia Buzz, which don't grow more than four feet.

Umbellifers are great for insects too. Anything that looks like cow parsley is likely to be an umbellifer: fennel, thalictrum, filipendula venusta are all architectural statement perennials. Too big? Then how about Astrantia or Hattie's Pin Cushion and achillea?

Whatever the size of your plot, it's good to have water. From a large natural pond to the smallest of ornamental water features, even the tiniest freshwater pool will attract some wildlife. Water attracts dragonflies and damselflies, frogs and newts. What child isn't fascinated by frogspawn and tadpoles? Many frogs make light work on snails and slugs too. Wildlife doesn't care if your pond is symmetrical and precise in design, as long as the water is clear and there is some means of escape and shelter.

There is no shortage of wildlife friendly plants and man-made habitats to suit whatever your style of garden, so enjoy the summer knowing that you are contributing to the biodiversity of the Suburb and the wilder world beyond.



THE GARDEN GIRL



Le Manor aux Quat' Saisons bug hotel (Photo: Caroline Broome)



For Your Eyes Only (Photo: Caroline Broome)

Allotments in an English Springtime

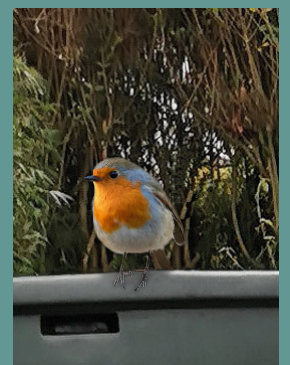
It has been a difficult spring for gardening in the Suburb – endless rain and cold, northerly winds. It was so wet a few weeks ago that there were streams coming down the middle of our allotment site. The ground is still cold and claggy.

But the birds love the hedges around the site and the taller trees in the surrounding gardens. In March they all started singing at once – robin, wren, blackbird, tit, even a woodpecker. It seems that the males establish themselves about a fortnight before the females arrive and sing to entice them to the nesting area.

The robin family are probably the happiest creatures on our Allotments. They don't seem to mind the cold and they certainly don't mind the rain, which brings all those delicious worms to the surface. They nest low down in the hedge and they move like lightning!

The gardeners have been busy on the fine days and the plots are now mostly ready for the growing season, with some planting already done: potatoes, onions, carrots. Some veggies, like broccoli, have overwintered; others are being coaxed along in small pots on windowsills indoors, or being bought as seedlings from garden centres. The songs of spring have been delightful – but roll on summer and a good crop!

If you are interested in applying for an allotment, please contact the Trust.



Liz Hall

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OPEN GARDENS Lorraine Wilder will be opening her ½ acre cottage garden this summer in aid of North London Hospice. From a derelict and overgrown, space she has transformed it into three distinct areas – a formal garden with rose arbour nearest the house, then a vegetable plot and a small orchard at the back that retains some native planting. July will be vibrant with colour – roses, hydrangeas and echium reflecting Lorraine’s favourite palette of green, pink, purple and white, laid out according to Beth Catto’s mantra of ‘right plant, right place’. Come along 2-6pm on Sunday July 7 and also enjoy some delicious home-made cakes, tea and bubbly! 25 Asmunds Hill, NW11 6ES. Entrance £5.

Michael Berg



Photos: Lorraine Wilder

HortSoc Update

This June, HGS Horticultural Society’s summer flower show is going to be a whole lot different! Our flower show will be part of the RA’s Summer Fair and will be in a marquee on Central Square, just as it was at the beginning of its illustrious history. Come along and enjoy this family-friendly show which this year offers free admission for everyone into the marquee to view the exhibits. From this year HGS Hort Soc members have free entry for all classes of the competition, so registration should be much easier too. There is also a new non-competitive category called Exhibition Only: Have you created a floral display, taken a great photo, grown a special plant or vegetable, crafted something that you are very proud of? Just bring it along to create a varied and unique display for everyone to admire and enjoy, no rules, no regs, no age restrictions, you don’t even need to be a member of the HGS Hort Soc!

‘Make a Collage of a Butterfly’ is a new children’s class, open to all under 16s, that we hope will spark the imagination of our budding gardeners of the future. An A4 template can be provided by emailing events@hortsoc.co.uk and plant and non-plant material can be used. There will be prizes, and we have new judges who will leave useful or inspiring notes on the entries! All your old favourites, such as ‘Judge the Sweetest Smelling Rose’, the Grimsdyke Brass Band and of course our legendary, mouth-watering afternoon teas, will be there. Our raffle will be full of prizes, including gift vouchers from local garden centres, with charitable donations going to Perennial, The Gardeners’ Royal Benevolent Fund, which offers support and advice for everyone in horticulture: <https://perennial.org.uk> and the Harington Scheme for young adults with learning disabilities and/or difficulties: www.harington.org.uk. The Flower Show will be open for longer too, from 2-5pm. Registration night is Tuesday 4 June, 7-8pm at Fellowship House or by email to events@hortsoc.co.uk. For Exhibition Only and Butterfly classes just let us know by Thursday 6 June so that you can reserve your space in the marquee. For more details about our Summer Show and all our other events, visit our website at: <https://hortsoc.co.uk> or join the Society by emailing membership@hortsoc.co.uk.

Caroline Broome, Chair – HGS Horticultural Society



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HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB ARCHIVES TRUST

By Rail to the Suburb

ALAN WALKER

Hampstead Garden Suburb came into existence because Henrietta Barnett didn't like railways, or one railway in particular – the Charing Cross, Euston and Hampstead Railway, also known as the Hampstead Tube, which opened in 1907 (with an extension to Golders Green where the depot was built in what was then open country).

The Borough of Hampstead had thought it would be a good idea to have an intermediate station at North End to give visitors access to the Heath. Henrietta suspected a station would lead to the whole

area being built up and successfully led a campaign against it. Work on the station was abandoned, the surrounding farmland became the Heath Extension, and the adjoining area became the Suburb. The half-built station was only linked to the surface in the early 1950s when a staircase and small lift were installed to serve a Cold War emergency control centre constructed on the platforms. To this day the entrance is concealed by a small concrete structure on Hampstead Way thinly disguised as an electricity sub-station.

Henrietta Barnett probably wasn't that down on railways. She

said that her heart was uplifted every time she took the train to the south coast and saw the Downs approaching. She's never had a locomotive named after her, but between 2005 and 2013 a Brighton and Hove double-decker bus was branded 'Dame Henrietta Barnett' (she spent her final years in Hove). Furthermore, the Underground seems not to have held any grudge against her or the Suburb as London Transport's creative genius Frank Pick made his home in Wildwood Road.

Despite originating in opposition to a railway, the Suburb still needed to make use of one in its construction. Building material came to a yard near East Finchley station on the Great Northern Railway's branch from Finsbury Park to Edgware. It was then conveyed by narrow gauge light railway to the Suburb. A 1914 map shows the line running up what is now Middleway, and then dividing with branches to Meadway Court, around South Square to a yard near where St Jude's Church Rooms now stand, and to Turners Wood. A painting entitled Spreading London by the Hampstead artist Algernon Newton (1880-1968) shows a wagon being pushed by workmen, although it is known that a small steam engine named King George did most of the work (and regularly came off the rails on a sharp curve near the Market

Place). During the First World War Meadway Court residents had their domestic coal delivered on the light railway.

In 1913 the railway nearly had its revenge on the Suburb when the Northern Junction Railway proposed an orbital line (mainly for goods) through the valley of the Brent from East Finchley to Brentford. It would have run on a 35-foot-high embankment through the Suburb crossing Finchley Road at Henley's Corner. Protest meetings were held at the Institute, and the press fulminated at the proposed desecration of a "world-famous" example of town planning, until Parliament rejected the plan.

There was another way of reaching the Suburb by rail. In 1909 the Metropolitan Electric Tramways opened its line from Cricklewood to Golders Green and then on to North Finchley the following year. Local tramways were also proposed from Temple Fortune to the north end of Erskine Hill, from Golders Green to the Bull and Bush, and across country from Highgate to Hendon.

The tramway through Temple Fortune wasn't planned for the benefit of Suburb residents but to cater for the considerable passenger traffic from Finchley to the City and the West End. The railway through Finchley did not

become part of the Underground until 1940 and only had three or four steam trains an hour to Finsbury Park where you had to change. After 1909 the quickest way into town was by tram to Golders Green and forward on the Northern Line.

What might be recalled as the old 'Suburb entrance' to the tube station was actually built to serve a tram stop outside the Refectory public house. At peak times there was a tram up and down Finchley Road every two minutes. The tram stop became so busy that queuing was 'invented' to control the crowds and inspectors posted to explain it to waiting passengers. The tramway company wanted to build an elaborate tram station in the tube station forecourt, but with the support of local ratepayers, Hendon Council opposed this as "of benefit only to Finchley people". The trams were replaced by trolleybuses in 1936.

In 2009 proposals were made for a North West London Light Railway scheme that might have brought trams back to Hendon and Cricklewood. For the time being the author is aware of several model railways belonging to Suburb residents that deserve a little publicity.

Alan Walker is a previous vicar of St Jude's



Spreading London by Algernon Newton (Photo: Public Domain)



This poster, published by the Underground Electric Railways Company of London, promotes the tram services to Finchley and Cricklewood as well as the Underground services to and from central London. (Photo: © TfL from the London Transport Museum collection)





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Golders Green route 40 to Cricklewood (Photo: © TfL from the London Transport Museum collection)

The Olympic Games



PARIS 2024



If you dream and allow yourself to dream, you can do anything – Clara Hughes, six times Olympic medalist

MARIE-CHRISTINE O'CALLAGHAN

Back in 776 BC, Koroibos won a foot race in Olympia, this was the first recorded athletic event in an Olympic game. Some literary and archeological evidence suggest that the games may have existed much earlier, but it is from that date, that the Ancient Olympic Games were held regularly every four years.

Olympia is a valley in the Peloponnese in Greece. It was a centre for the worship of Zeus, chief deity of the Greek pantheon, and had one of the seven wonders of the Ancient World: the gigantic chryselephantine (gold and ivory) statue of Zeus. The festival held in his honour included the sacrifice of 100 oxen and athletic games. These games were special because they brought all the Greek city-states together whether they were in Greece, Italy, North Africa or Asia Minor.

Koroibos was a cook from the nearby city of Elis, like all the other competitors, he was an amateur, a man, a free Greek citizen and he

competed naked. It has been suggested that the nakedness was to honour Zeus by showing off physical strength and physique, this may explain why women did not take part in the Olympics and why they were banned from attending.

Originally, these Olympic events lasted only one day but this soon became five days with a total of 18 events: races of different lengths, jumps, discus, javelin, wrestling, boxing and chariot racing (the charioteers were clothed).

There was only one victor per event and he was awarded a wreath made from the leaves of sacred olive trees until, that is, he went back to his city. Victors were treated like heroes, had statues made of them and received substantial rewards. An Athenian winner would receive 500 drachmas and free meals at the city hall for life. Other cities would award their winners a lifetime pension and special seats at public events.

These Olympics were held until 393 AD when the Roman Christian emperor Theodosius I banned them because he believed they were 'a pagan abomination'.

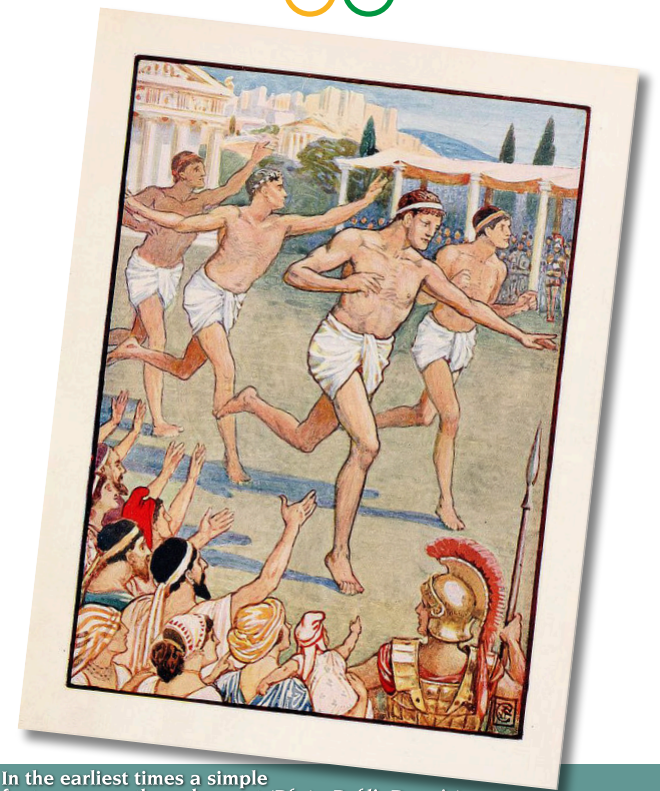
And there it ended until Pierre de Coubertin, a French aristocrat,

founded the International Olympic Committee in 1894 in Paris with the objective of organising the first Olympic Games in modern times. He succeeded, and in 1896 the first International Olympic Games were held in Athens with 14 participating countries.

On the 26 July 2024 the XXXIII Olympiad will be held in Paris, one hundred years since it last hosted them in 1924; it will showcase 32 sports, 10,000 athletes and 205 participating countries.

On the first day of the Ancient Olympics, the athletes swore solemnly not to commit offences before the statue of Zeus. The words of this ancient oath have not been preserved but the one used today which is sworn by one athlete on behalf of all is: "In the name of all the competitors I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, committing ourselves to a sport without doping and without drugs, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport, and the honour of our teams."

Pierre de Coubertin did say: "The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not the winning but the taking part."



In the earliest times a simple foot-race was the only event (Photo: Public Domain)

Driveway Bollards

In recent months, bollards have begun appearing in a few driveways in the area. They are of various designs and colours, but all look alien to the setting of the houses and the character of the streets.

The Trust believes that the proliferation of bollards would be damaging to the appearance of the area and so we are keen to resist this.

Under the Scheme of Management, consent from the Trust is required for any installation that would change the external appearance of a

property. This is in order to protect the special character of the place for everyone.

Any bollards installed without Trust consent would be in breach of the Scheme.

The Trust's purpose is to protect the unique character and amenities of the Suburb and we hope that residents understand that this is why bollards are unlikely to be approved.



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The Importance of Gut Health

by Nutrition Coach,
Louie Fisher



In the vast landscape of health and wellness, one often overlooked, yet crucial aspect is gut health. Studies in the last few years have suggested that the health of our gastrointestinal system plays a pivotal role in our overall well-being: From digestion to immunity, weight management and even mental health, the importance of maintaining a healthy gut cannot be overstated.

Our gut is home to trillions of bacteria, fungi, and other microorganisms collectively known as the gut microbiome. These microorganisms play a crucial role in various bodily functions and studies in recent years have shown our gut health is closely linked to our overall health (PREDICT 1 study, 2020), and even more so, that a healthy gut microbiome is linked with a reduced risk of obesity, heart disease and Type 2 diabetes!

Furthermore, approximately 70% to 80% of the body's immune cells reside in the gut, highlighting the likelihood that gut health is vitally important in keeping our

immune system functioning well. Other emerging research has also uncovered a link between the gut and the brain (termed the 'gut-brain axis') which suggests a strong connection between gut health and mental health conditions like anxiety and depression

So, in short, we need to look after our guts to ensure we optimise our physical and mental health!

So how do we look after it?

Well, our guts are incredibly unique (they even vary massively between identical twins!) but research has shown some common microbiota strands in healthy individuals. This suggests certain types of food seem to have better



outcomes on our gut health, such as a wide variety of plant foods, spices, and fermented foods.

Why not try these tips to improve your gut health:

1. Eat a widely varied Diet: Incorporate a variety of fibre-rich fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins into your meals. Some people aim for 30 different plant foods per week, which can include coffee, nuts, legumes, herbs and spices. The more variety the better!

2. Probiotics and Fermented Foods: Include probiotic-rich foods like yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut and kimchi in your diet. These foods introduce beneficial bacteria into your gut, promoting a healthy microbiota balance.

3. Stay Hydrated: Adequate water intake is crucial for optimal digestion and overall gut health.

4. Manage Stress: Chronic stress can disrupt gut function. Incorporate stress-reduction techniques such as meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises into your daily routine.

5. Limit Artificial Sweeteners and Ultra-Processed Foods: These substances can negatively impact gut microbiota composition and will often contribute to gastrointestinal discomfort.

By implementing simple lifestyle changes and adopting gut-friendly habits, we can support our bodies in maintaining optimal health from the inside out!

Good Luck!

Three summer wines worth trying

by Master of Wine,
Joanna Dabrowska



I fell in love with the Suburb about six years ago, when I got totally lost cycling from East Finchley to Golders Green, wandering and wondering what this idyllic, picturesque English suburb was. I loved the Suburb so much that I have decided to join the party (two years of tenure so far).

Wine is my passion project, and, aside from the full-time role in the marvellous world of data & AI, it occupies the majority of my free time. Recently I decided I would like to obtain a Master of Wine title. Why not, one of the most extensive and difficult exams in the world is surely worth a try.

Long story short, here I am testing my skills in wine journalism. If you're interested and would like to join me on this adventure, do check my Instagram at: @wine_world_wonders, and if you're not on Instagram, perhaps some of the wine suggestions below will pique your interest.

I participate in various masterclasses and tastings that are held in London, showcasing wines from all around the world. Vines are particular about their climate, thriving only between the 30-50° latitudes, but this still leaves many unexplored regions. Let me introduce you to three summer wines that are perfect for warm soirées and sunny afternoons:

1. Classic: Westwell Pelegrim NV – Kent, England available at westwellwines.com (£33). No summer is complete without a good old English sparkling wine. This blend of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier offers complex aromas of brioche, lemon, lime, green apple, and cherry blossom. It's a must-have at my summer parties and can hold its own against the finest Champagnes. If you're not convinced yet, I'd suggest booking a tour & tasting and discovering Westwell's delicacies for yourself.

2. Adventurous: Zweigelt 2021 – Neusiedlersee DAC Reserve available at goodwinegoodpeople.com (£15). The flagship grape of Austria knocking at your doors. The lake situated in the most western part (one hour car ride from Vienna) claims that its unique 'SEeroir' creates some of the best wines in the country. I must admit, they have a strong case. Zweigelt is one of those wines that go perfectly with food. Well-structured, complementing tannins & acidity, full of bright cherry and cranberry aromas, it transforms into rich dark cherry and cocoa flavours. Perfect with all the burgers and other meats you'll barbecue.

3. Quality & Price: La Chica Bonita 2022 (Valencia DO) available at laithwaites.com (£4.99 per bottle when you buy 6). The biggest surprise I had in recent months was this inconspicuous bottle. At a pleasingly low-alcohol level (only 5%), this delicious Moscatel from Spain might compete with one of your finest off-dry Rieslings! Fantastic acidity, sweet notes of honeysuckle, melon, and orange blossom, filled with gentle fizz, make it a perfect companion to... spicy West Asian cuisine. I dare you to try it with kimchi!



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