



# Suburb News

Hampstead Garden Suburb  
Residents Association

What's the connection between Ove Arup, the Øresund Bridge and a marmalade cat, see p5

Michael Palin takes part in this year's Proms at St Jude's LitFest, see p14

BBLG's Kid's Gardening Club likes to recruit young, read the full story on p18

## A suburb summer

EDITOR: SHELLEY-ANNE SALISBURY

Summer is always one of the liveliest seasons in HGS. Once again, residents came together to enjoy a rich variety of events and celebrations right here on our patch of green.

The season began with the RA Summer Fair, where not even the rain could dampen spirits (p8). The sun came out to welcome Mayor Danny Rich to Northway Gardens (p10) and shone throughout Proms at St Jude's and LitFest, both brilliantly attended and offering a memorable programme of music, comedy and literature (p14).

The Antiques Roadshow visited Stephens House. Betty Mason and Diana Brahmans joined the crowds and share their account of this very special day (p11). Francine Barsam spoke to our local MP Sarah Sackman (p3) and I was invited to tour the Pears Building at the Royal Free witnessing some of the groundbreaking advances being made in immunotherapy research (p2).

Further afield, Marie-Christine O'Callaghan takes us to ancient Greece with her feature on Pandora and also reflects on Margaret Thatcher as we mark the centenary of the Iron Lady's birth (p23). Closer to home, food and drink lovers will enjoy discovering Shiraz Bakery in Temple Fortune (p13) as well as wine recommendations from our resident expert Joanna Dabrowska (p22).

As we all begin to spend more time indoors, Hilary Frolich offers practical advice on decluttering (p22).

Finally, please consider supporting the Residents Association. Membership is just £15 per household per year and it helps sustain the plethora of local activities, events, and initiatives that make our Garden Suburb such a special place.

Wishing you all a fruitful autumn.



Soaking up the sun at the Proms at St Jude's 2025 (Photo: Mike Eleftheriades)

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## Sensory Room for Suburb Infant School



(Photo: Sarah Sands)

SARAH SANDS, HEADTEACHER

Garden Suburb Infant School is proud to announce the installation of a brand-new sensory room, made possible through the generous support of the HGS Residents Association and the tireless fundraising efforts of the school's Parent and Teacher Association.

Garden Suburb Infants has recently seen falling pupil numbers,

in common with many London schools. This has been caused by a number of factors, including a 20% drop in birth rate between 2012 and 2022, and the high cost of living and housing. The decrease in the number of pupils is putting pressure on school funding, which is largely based on pupil numbers. For this reason, Garden Suburb Infant School has found itself with an available room but limited

(continued on page 2)



# Royal Free charity funding world-leading research on immunotherapy

SHELLEY-ANNE SALISBURY

The Royal Free Charity undertook a £60 million project to deliver the Pears Building which is home to the UCL Institute of Immunity and Transplantation (IIT). The IIT is one of the few research centres in the world dedicated to the human immune system. From this building, scientists are working on nothing less than unlocking its secrets.

At the end of June, I was invited, as editor of Suburb News, to attend an open neighbourhood event to hear about how the IIT has been progressing. Before the event started, I was treated to a

private tour of the clinical research laboratories by Professor Hans Stauss, the director of the IIT. It's a rare behind-the-scenes glimpse of some of the 27-strong research groups' white-coated scientists at work. As I'm led around the labyrinthine research building, eye-wateringly expensive machines quietly hum in the background, incubating the next breakthroughs in immunotherapy. There's a deep sense of purpose. Professor Stauss walks me through the spaces where research that could change lives is happening in real time, just a stone's throw away from where patients are treated in the main hospital building.

Professor Stauss outlined the three central aims of the institute: to *boost* the immune system to fight cancer and infections; to *regulate* or calm the immune system in autoimmune conditions like type 1 diabetes or multiple sclerosis; and to *repair* immune deficiencies in patients born with weakened immunity – often through gene therapy.

The public presentation in the building's auditorium, chaired by Jon Spiers, the chief executive of the Royal Free Charity, provided a series of fascinating talks that brought research and patient care vividly to life.

Dr Alexa Childs, a consultant oncologist, spoke about treating people with liver cancer. She explained how until 2008, there was little to offer patients with advanced liver cancer. Now, thanks to immunotherapy and access to clinical trials, new hope is emerging. One of her patients,

diagnosed with early-stage liver cancer, spoke to us about how he was offered the opportunity to join a clinical trial. His immunotherapy treatment reduced the tumour by 30%.

Dr Gloryanne Aidoo-Micah, a Cancer Research UK clinical fellow, offered a compelling insight into her work analysing how immune cells respond to liver cancer. Her research focused on CD8 T-cells – the body's frontline attackers – and is developing biomarkers to help identify which patients will benefit most from specific treatments. Her work is laying the foundation for more personalised cancer care.

Dr Jennifer Cross, the Royal Free's interim medical director, gave an overview of the hospital's close collaboration with the IIT, emphasising how proximity between clinicians and researchers is speeding up the path from lab discoveries to patient treatment. This is translational research. This synergy is embodied in the NIHR Clinical Research Facility (CRF), a purpose-built centre for early-stage human trials, funded in part by the Royal Free Charity. Here, patients take part in pioneering studies, often receiving brand-new treatments long before they become widely available.

I left the Pears Building with a sense of awe. Behind the glass façade, world-leading scientists and compassionate clinicians are working side by side – not in a lab in Oxford or Cambridge, but in our own backyard and it's making ever increasing strides forward. So impressive.



Photos: Beth Gulliver

## Archer Academy Headteacher wins award



Photo: Katie Ruback

We are delighted to announce that Headteacher Lucy Harrison has been named Silver Winner of the Headteacher of the Year in a Secondary School, at the prestigious Pearson National Teaching Awards – chosen from thousands of nominees across the country. This is a truly remarkable achievement, and one which recognises Miss Harrison as an exceptional leader who brings compassion, creativity, integrity, and an unwavering dedication to every Archer student and staff member.

A huge congratulations to Miss Harrison on this well-deserved award. She will now progress as a finalist for the Gold Award, which will be announced later this year at a national ceremony in London, featured on BBC One's The One Show. An exciting and proud moment for the whole Archer school community.

Katie Ruback, Communications Director, Archer Academy

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## GSIS Sensory Room (continued from p1)

resources. At the same time, as in many schools, the number of children with sensory and emotional needs has been rising.

Recognising the urgent need for a dedicated space to support these children, the school has transformed an unused room into a sensory haven. Sensory rooms are known to help children develop essential skills such as communication, coordination, concentration, cognitive development, socialisation, and motor skills. They also provide a calming environment that supports emotional regulation and balance.

The new space has been equipped with a range of specialist items including soft flooring, tactile activities and calming lighting. The school also plans to introduce sensory circuits to further enhance the therapeutic benefits of the room.

This initiative is a shining example of community collaboration, and the school extends heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to making this vision a reality.



# A champion for community, cohesion and change

## Sarah Sackman MP

FRANCINE BARSAM

The first day of the school holidays never fails to throw a spanner in the works – and this year was no different. I had planned to meet Sarah Sackman MP in person, but due to her childcare issues we connected via a Teams call. Despite the time crunch, our conversation was meaningful and wide-ranging.

**INSPIRED BY HER ROOTS** Sarah Sackman's political journey began with her family values – fairness, social justice and hard work. Her late grandfather, a businessman and community leader, had a lasting impact, showing her how politics can improve lives.

"Representing the place I grew up in is a privilege," Sarah says. "I'm a Suburb girl. The values that shaped this community – public service, education, healthcare and shared space – are what bind us. It's important that we take pride in our community and share those values with the wider country."

Finchley and Golders Green is a constituency defined by diversity, aspiration, and mutual respect. Sarah believes these qualities are not just local strengths – they reflect broader British values that should be celebrated.

### MOTIVATED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Sarah is driven to act when she sees inequality. She finds inspiration in the positive work of local groups, from special needs schools and charities to interfaith initiatives that bring the community together.

### TACKLING CRIME

One of Sarah's first priorities has been addressing local crime. Last autumn saw a rise in burglaries and she credits the local metropolitan police for increasing visibility and

patrols. "Residents feel safer knowing their concerns are being taken seriously," she says.

### STRENGTHENING SOCIAL COHESION

Sarah is deeply committed to social cohesion. "We live in a diverse area where people from all walks of life have chosen to make their home," she says. "But this sense of community doesn't happen by chance – it takes work."

Last year, during a period of civil unrest in parts of the UK, Sarah worked with local groups to ensure that residents in the Suburb felt safe and supported. She stresses that maintaining community harmony must be an ongoing, active effort.

An especially meaningful moment came earlier this year when she attended a Ramadan celebration hosted at Alyth Gardens Synagogue. Over 100 people from various faith backgrounds including Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and those of no faith, gathered for an evening of community and shared understanding.

"During a time of extreme global tension, with a worrying rise in both Islamophobia and antisemitism, this event was an incredibly powerful gesture," she reflects. "It showed how we can come together locally, even when the world feels divided."

### PROTECTING GREEN SPACES

As a barrister specialising in environmental and planning law, Sarah is passionate about protecting our green spaces, what she calls the "lungs of North London." She's especially fond of Lyttleton Playing Fields, where she joined a bulb-planting initiative earlier this year.

She supports sustainable housing solutions, including solar panels and heat pumps, and is committed to tackling Barnet's wider housing challenges.

**IMPROVING TRANSPORT LINKS** Sarah works closely with Transport for London (TfL) on bus routes and station accessibility. "No one should be excluded from public transport because of mobility issues," she says. She continues to press the Transport Minister and TfL for progress.

"There's a long way to go," she admits, "but I'm keeping up the pressure to make travel accessible for everyone."

**BOOSTING LOCAL HEALTHCARE** Sarah described the investments Labour has made into NHS appointments and GP funding which she explained has resulted in improvements in accessing local GPs and the number of appointments available, and leading to some shortening of waiting lists.

"We're fortunate to have great facilities like the Royal Free and Finchley Memorial," she says. "But it's also about making healthcare



Photo: Office of Sarah Sackman MP

more preventative and responsive to people's needs."

### A VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE MP

Sarah prides herself on being available and approachable. "I've made it a priority to get out and meet people where they are," she says. That means visiting schools, faith groups and community centres and holding coffee mornings in a range of settings from Tesco's on Ballards Lane to an allotment potting shed in Cricklewood.

"I believe politics should be local. Whether it's crime, fly-tipping, or flooding, I stay in touch with residents on Facebook, Instagram and email. My team and I always try to respond quickly."

### A FEW PERSONAL INSIGHTS

*Her favourite park?* Lyttleton Playing Fields. *Last good book?* A Tale of Love and Darkness by Amos Oz. *What's it like being an MP?* "It's funny, intense, and round-the-clock. And

yes – if you've seen The Thick of It, it really is a bit like that!"

### ADVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WANTING TO ENTER POLITICS

"Politics is purposeful. It matters. It's worth doing. Go for it."

### A MESSAGE TO THE HGS COMMUNITY

As we wrapped up our call, Sarah had one final message for readers of Suburb News: "We have every reason to be hopeful. The best days of our community are ahead of us. Change takes time, but I hope people see in me a visible and accessible MP – here to help everyone in this community."

On that positive note our call ended. Sarah had shown passion, determination and a generosity of spirit that left me feeling positive, inspired and lucky to have Sarah representing HGS.

[www.facebook.com/SarahSackmanFGG](https://www.facebook.com/SarahSackmanFGG)

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Photo: Bhanuka Warnasooriya

## Letters of Faith

RABBI MARC LEVINE & REVD EM KOLLTVEIT

**I**n their second exchange of warm and thoughtful correspondence, Rabbi Marc Levine of Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue and the Revd Em Kolltveit of St Jude-on-the-Hill reflect on the theme of hope from their respective Jewish and Christian traditions.

Their letters reveal a shared commitment to nurturing compassion, resilience and spiritual vision in the face of a fractured world. Drawing on scripture and personal conviction, they explore how hope is both an act of faith and a daily discipline.

AUTUMN 2025

Dear Revd Em

*I feel very fortunate that we've begun this dialogue, not only as colleagues serving the Suburb, but as fellow clergy striving to bring a spirit of compassion and care to our communities.*

*Your reflection on being a good neighbour in our previous conversation, resonated deeply with me. In both our traditions, this call to love and to serve is not an abstract idea but something rooted in the everyday, in the way we listen,*

*respond, and uphold the dignity of those around us. I find it moving that we share such a grounded understanding of our sacred responsibilities.*

*As I think about the challenges that people in our communities face both locally and globally, I find myself returning again and again to the idea of hope. In Judaism the word for hope is tikvah, a word that appears throughout our liturgy and texts. It's more than a feeling; it's a kind of spiritual resilience, a belief that brokenness is never the end of the story. King David in his Psalms writes, "Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy" (Psalm 126:5). I find in that verse both honesty and promise that our faith does not ignore suffering but transforms it with vision and purpose.*

*I'd love to ask you, what gives you hope in your ministry? How does your tradition speak to the sustaining power of hope, especially in a world that so often feels uncertain?*

*I'm so grateful for this conversation and the companionship it reflects. May our shared efforts continue to bring light and strength to this place we both serve.*

Yours in friendship,  
Rabbi Marc Levine  
Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue

Dear Rabbi Marc,

*I am so delighted that you have chosen the theme of hope for our continued dialogue. This theme has also been on my mind in recent weeks and I strongly agree that, without hope, we become a mere shadow of what God has made us to be – his true reflection.*

*These are difficult times for our people and the spiritual discipline of practising hope – specially when the world seems desolate and broken – is one we must dedicate ourselves to. Of course, the Christian ideal of hope is very much centred in the hope we have in Jesus Christ. However, the shared scripture that Christians and Jews both enjoy often delves deeply into that state of anticipation, which is crucial for healthy human existence. My favourite prophet, Isaiah, depicts God as a farmer who plants vines and actively waits for good grapes. I often think that the Christian faith is all about learning to wait in a place of tension and excitement, actively looking for signs of God's Kingdom in the present world and to come.*

*Marc, I know we both recognise that, at times, this tension can feel overwhelming – as the global news continues to be devastating for all people of faith. However, I am reassured that we are a people who care deeply about each other, and I hope we will continue to learn and encourage one another in our clerical mission to serve and teach a community that could be an example to the wider world.*

*I believe there is good reason to be hopeful, as we mirror the peace, unity, and hope offered through our faith in an ever-loving God who waits for us. There will always be tears, but I know we are both dedicated to bringing those songs of joy to this place – together – at this time and always.*

Yours in friendship and eternal hope,  
Revd Em Kolltveit  
Vicar of St Jude-on-the-Hill



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Klaus and his daughter Katrine run the Øresund Bridge (Photo: Unknown fellow runner)  
Below: Marmalade cat (Photo: Andrew Botterill)

## The man who ran the bridge

ANDREW BOTTERILL

What makes a community? In our treasured Suburb, along with the busy volunteers and vocal social media posters, there are those below the radar, many of whom have influence far beyond these hallowed acres. Usually we learn about them only from the neat obituaries which follow – too late.

For example, whatever would you imagine connects the Suburb with a giant Scandinavian infrastructure project? The answer is a quiet Dane, a blue plaque and a marmalade cat.

The project is the Øresund Bridge – familiar to *Scandi Noir* aficionados the world over – the fixed Denmark/Sweden road and rail link. First dreamt of in the 1880s, it was completed before time (in 2000 after only five years) and within budget (£3billion). Transit charges will pay for the bridge by 2050. It is now jointly owned by the Danish and Swedish governments and has already brought palpable economic and social benefits to the region. Eat your heart out HS2.

Halfway down Meadway, living in a state of enviable Hygge, is the Danish couple, Klaus and Lone Falbe-Hansen. They arrived in London in the late 60s and, aside from a few periods abroad for business reasons, have lived here ever since, the past 47 years in the Suburb. Lone has been a professional physiotherapist all her life and their three girls, Danish style, all attended local State schools.

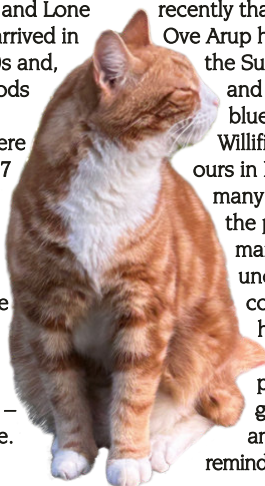
Klaus is the quiet – and humorous – Dane. He joined Ove Arup

Partners after qualifying in Copenhagen as a civil engineer in 1967. Later on he led its multi-disciplined design team responsible for Øresund. He was similarly involved in several other Arup bridge projects over the years, eg Stonecutters Bridge in Hong Kong and a bijou bridge closer to home, the Kylesku Bridge north of Ullapool in Scotland.

Retirement has brought plenty of activity with it: frequent grandparent duties (six grandchildren), renovation of a Tuscan hilltop village house, music, especially opera (they more or less live at the ROH), photography, cooking, legendary BBQs and the exertions of twice-weekly tennis at Farm Walk.

It was not long before Klaus heeded again the siren call of the Øresund, this time not to build the bridge but to run it. Klaus decided to register for the 25th anniversary public half-marathon (21km) across the bridge from Kastrup to Malmö on 15 June. As one of the oldest entrants, he ran it without difficulty (thanks to Farm Walk), together with his daughter Katrine (a current Arup employee) and faster than 1,700 other starters.

And the cat? It was only very recently that we realised that Ove Arup himself had lived in the Suburb from 1932-39 and the garden of the blue-plaques house in Willifield Way backs onto ours in North Square. For many years we have had the pleasure of a beautiful marmalade cat of uncertain gender which comes through the hedge from the Arup house to sit peacefully in our garden on sunny days and is, for us, a constant reminder of quiet Danes.



HGS u3a

Stronger Together

## HGS u3a Chair, Carol Spiers talks about facing life's challenges as a community

### Poor mental health: it can affect any of us – at any time

Poor mental health doesn't discriminate. It can affect any one of us – regardless of age, background, or lifestyle. One moment you may feel absolutely fine and the next, everything feels overwhelming. This shift can happen without warning and it doesn't always follow a pattern.

### Different ages, different pressures

For working adults, stress at work and fear of burnout are all too common. Teenagers feel pressure to stay online constantly – never switching off. Working parents may wrestle with guilt, worried about their children isolating themselves with phones and devices.

And later in life? The children move out, and empty nest syndrome sets in. Retirement may arrive with the promise of leisure but, for many, it brings a loss of purpose. Add to that the loneliness and health issues that can come with age, and it's clear that each life stage brings its own challenges.

### The power of talking and being heard

Whatever the age or stage, communication is key. Sharing your challenges with someone who listens – really listens – can be a lifeline. These trusted people form your dream team. They may not always be your children – everyone's busy these days – but a friend or neighbour who checks in makes a real difference.

### Building resilience – and a sense of purpose

We won't always feel strong. But helping someone else can give us purpose. Being part of a community that notices and cares when you're not yourself – that's powerful. It starts with a phone call, a conversation, or showing up to a group activity.

### The role of community and connection

Whether you're a young mum at a toddler group or an older adult at HGS u3a, engaging with like-minded people builds connection. Some may need help making the first move. Reaching out with a simple, "How are you?" and waiting for the answer can change someone's day.

### Let's bridge the generational gap

Stress affects everyone. But together, generations can support one another. Young people can help with tech. Older people can share wisdom and life lessons you won't find in textbooks.

Intergenerational connection is the way forward.

We are lucky to live in a community like the Suburb. Let's continue to share, support and care – because when we do, we build resilience and reduce the burden of poor mental health for all.

See page 15 for details about our next HGS u3a Open Day on Thursday 11 September

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# The 61st Mayor of Barnet

## In conversation with Rabbi Danny Rich

SIMONE HALFIN

I have known Danny for many years, since he was the Rabbi of Kingston Liberal Synagogue in Long Ditton for two decades – over the bridge from Hampton Court if you don't know where it is located. Danny was born in Balham, head boy at school and studied politics and modern history at Manchester University. He has had a varied career in community life: he sits as a JP in South West London, serves as a prison, hospital and hospice chaplain and even briefly worked before university for the London Fire Brigade, which resulted in him appointing the first ever fire service cadet in Barnet. He feels his greatest achievement in Kingston was founding the multi-cultural Interfaith Forum which aims to enhance the environment where we all live and also to bring the communities of all faiths together.

Danny has been married twice. His second wife, Laura, came from the Finchley area and he was happy to move to North London. Danny lived south of the river for 50 years and tells people it is exactly the same distance from south to north and north to south, a fact widely disputed by many people. Laura and Danny have eight children between them, some of whom are interested in politics.

To move on to his current position as Mayor of Barnet, Danny said firstly he wanted to be a Mayor who represented the borough as a whole, and secondly he had chosen charities that represented voices which were not always heard, ie UNITAS, which supports young people in deprived areas who often feel they are not being listened to, the Jewish Deaf Association and Home Start which helps families who might have difficulties to stay together, or help the parent and the children do the best they can. He told me supporting those took up the whole budget, as it also includes funding children with special needs, who need help getting to and from school, the elderly, who are healthy one day and need to go into care or be looked after suddenly and the homeless on the streets.

Given his Jewish faith and the fact he is a Rabbi, I asked him about antisemitism in the borough. Danny said he hadn't personally come across any but felt the best way was to initially deal with it as quickly as possible and also to try and educate people. He also felt the law needed to deal better with people who encourage hate.

Being Rabbi to two synagogues, Southgate Progressive and Stevenage, and the managing chaplain at Kingston hospital, doesn't leave him with much spare time and Danny felt one of his biggest challenges is getting round and thanking all the volunteers. Without these volunteers the borough could not function.



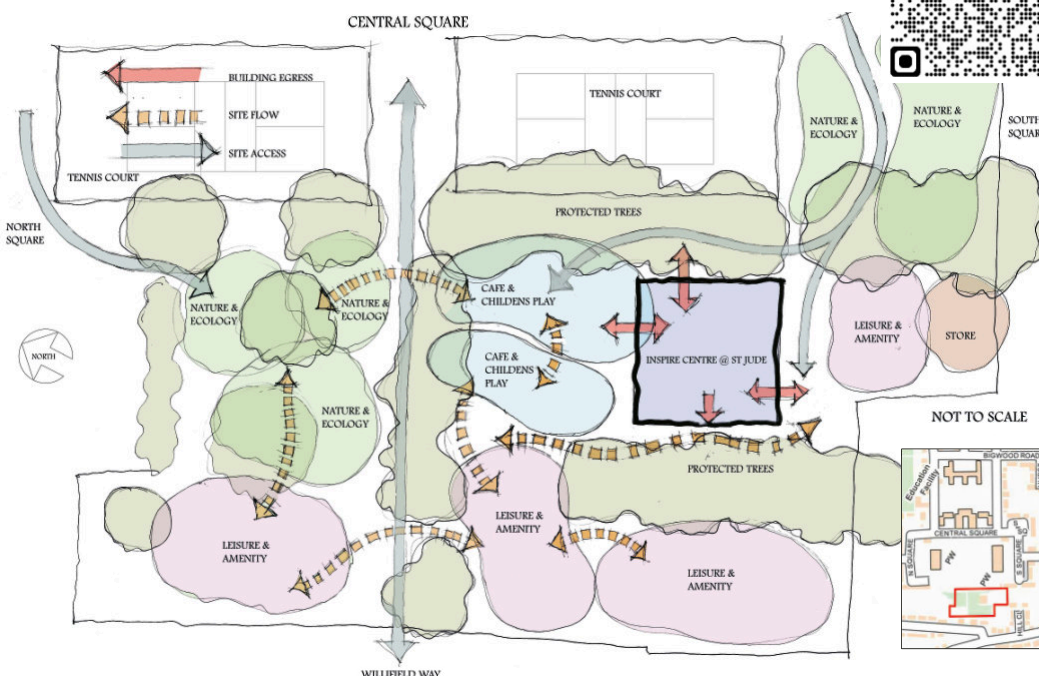
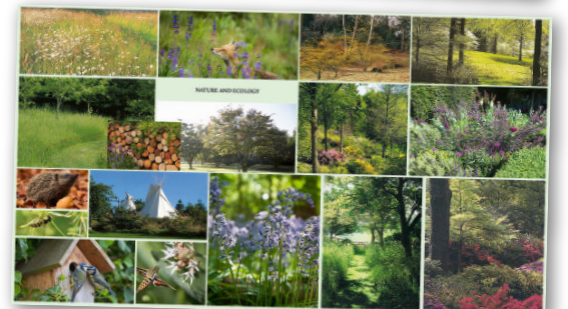
Photo: Simone Halfin

## Central Square Consultation – we want your views

We are exploring ways to improve the under-used space to the west of Central Square, behind the tennis courts. This consultation seeks the views of residents and other users of the Square on a set of early ideas for how the space might be enhanced. These proposals are exploratory, and your feedback will help shape the next stage of planning.

Please take a look at our three themed concepts and site plan via the link/QR code and tell us what you think. Your feedback will help shape the future of this shared space. Follow the QR code to complete a survey and send us your feedback.

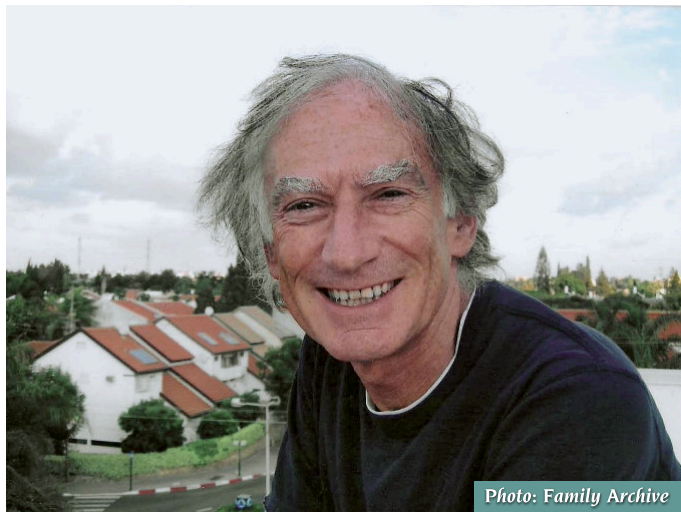
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## David B Lewis

1946 - 2025

MARGARET HARRIS

David Benjamin Lewis (the B was always included in his name to distinguish him from another David Lewis who was also active in Suburb affairs) died aged 79 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's Disease.

David became involved in the Suburb Residents Association after moving to the area during the 1990s with his first wife Susan, who died in 2007. He served on CONsam (the RA Sub-Committee which deals with planning matters) and the RA Events Committees. He was elected as Chairman of the Suburb Residents

Association for two separate terms, the first from 2005 until 2009 and the second from 2015 until 2018. During his first tenure he spearheaded the celebrations for the Hampstead Garden Suburb centenary.

David married Lynda in 2009 when she was living in Israel and, at the end of 2010, they returned to live in the Suburb. Lynda joined the Residents Association and the Heath & Hampstead Society, serving on the Trees & Open Spaces Committee and the Heath Sub Committee of the Heath and Hampstead society (H&HS). She and David were active in protesting against the controversial rebuilding of the dams on Hampstead Heath, David creating the Protect our Ponds website. In conjunction with the H&HS they worked with the City of London to ensure minimal damage to trees and the environment while the project continued.

David is survived by two sons from his first marriage, Duncan and Matthew, and by Lynda and his stepson Michael and grandchildren.

She was one of the Suburb's quiet volunteers, involving herself in the Central Square Minyan and Norrice Lea synagogue's welfare helpline, and regularly delivering Suburb News. She never sought publicity or thanks but just got on quietly with tasks that needed doing – from administration to fundraising for good causes.

After a year in Israel and then New York as a young woman, Talya returned to the UK to become one of the youngest female stockbrokers in the City, with a position at Sebags. She was one of the first women in the City to qualify as a stockbroker. Locally, Talya found time to



## Fellowship House remembers Moya Page

ANDREW BOTTERILL

Thirty people came. Late afternoon June sunshine sparkling through the silver birches, trestle tables, home-made cakes, tea pots and cups, chatter, laughter, the occasional pop of a champagne cork, the discreet smack of wood on wood.

We had come for a croquet tea to remember Moya Page (1924 – 2022) and to sample some of the benefits of her generous bequest to Fellowship. Moya had lived her whole life on the Suburb, most of it in the same house on Oakwood Road. Upon leaving Henrietta Barnett School during the war she joined the BBC. Later she worked for various charities before coming to Fellowship where she was Hon Sec for a decade and always a much

appreciated stalwart presence.

With the encouragement of her children, we had spent some of the bequest on her favourite Fellowship activity – croquet: repainting the hut, doing up the path, installing new perimeter boarding, a new memorial bench, a cup to be awarded annually to

the best improver and a new set of balls and mallets.

Such a pleasant afternoon, so... English.

*If you feel like trying out croquet on the Fellowship Lawn (a magical spot in the Suburb), do call Chris Page on 0208 455 2785.*



Photos: Andrew Botterill

## Talya Singer

1947 - 2025

MARGARET HARRIS

Talya Singer, who died in June 2025, was born and brought up in Hampstead Garden Suburb, living as a child in Meadway and attending Henrietta Barnett Junior and Senior Schools.

support Kerem School, becoming head of the PTA and later a school governor. She trained with the Jewish Marriage Guidance Council and in 1995 became a City of London magistrate. After her marriage to her Australian gynaecologist husband, Albert, the couple lived for four years in Sheffield, before returning to the Suburb to live in Southway, where their children were brought up.

Talya was very proud of her name which in Hebrew means 'Dew of God'. She is survived by her husband Albert and her three children, Leora, Alex and Rebecca, her grandchildren and her brother, Leslie Goodman.



Photo: Family Archive

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## RA HIGHLIGHTS



## RA Summer Fair 2025

PATRICIA MAJOR

Gazebos were hoisted, community groups gathered. Barnet brass band played and residents danced about a Maypole. All were entertained by the fantastic Prof James and his timeless Punch and Judy Show. Many local dogs were awarded prizes at the All Dogs Matter show.

Donkeys were ridden, faces were painted and lots of coconuts were won. St.Jude's bar and BBQ did a roaring trade. Lola's Cakes sold out, the floral display in the HortSoc tent delighted. Balloons provided by Litchfield's bobbed in the breeze and many people went home with a plant or two.

In spite of the rain, the 2025 RA Summer Fair was a success. Thank you to our sponsors, Repaircare and Litchfield's, to the Residents Association and to the residents of Hampstead Garden Suburb for supporting our event.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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







Photos: Mike Eleftheriades and Peter McCluskie

# Trees & Open Spaces update

COLIN GREGORY

The Trees and Open Spaces Committee of the RA continues its work on street trees, monitoring residents' planning applications and keeping an eye on local open spaces. When Barnet plants a new tree its contractor is required to keep watering it regularly for two years, but in spells of hot, dry weather our new trees really appreciate any additional water you can give them. If you have a young tree outside your house please give it extra water in dry weather and encourage your friends and neighbours to do the same. As at the end of July our crowd-funding for street trees had raised £3,205 of the target of £5,000 – if you have

not yet contributed please do so at <https://sponsor.treesforstreets.org/crowdfunder/lets-keep-hampstead-garden-suburb-filled-with-trees>. Or you can scan the QR code. Every little helps! The Committee is keen to find new members who are interested in helping to protect the Suburb's trees. We are having an Open House afternoon at the house of one of our members – we hope in the garden – so potential new members can find out a bit about what we do, such as our work with Barnet and the Trust. The proposed date is Sunday 28 September from 3-4pm. If you would like to come along, with no commitment to future involvement, please email the Chair, Colin Gregory, on [trees@hgsra.uk](mailto:trees@hgsra.uk).



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 Website ..... [website@hgsra.uk](mailto:website@hgsra.uk)

Telephone (Voicemail) ..... 020 3488 9131  
 Postal Address ..... Fellowship House, 136A Willifield Way, London, NW11 6YD

SCAN THE QR CODE TO JOIN OR RENEW YOUR RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP



If you would like information on any the RA's committees, or would like to become involved in any of the RA's activities, then please contact us by email, phone or post





Sarah Sackman gets her eye in (Photo: Elaine Cole)



The trophy winning team (Photo: Keith Cole)

## Sackman plays hardball at Bishopswood!

NEIL BEHRMANN

Justice Minister Sarah Sackman is encouraging Gen Z women to play bowls. During her first game at Bishopswood Bowling Club in Hampstead Garden Suburb, the MP for Finchley and Golders Green led her inexperienced players against veteran bowlers.

Members of her justice department whooped with delight when their bowls landed close to a small white jack and won points.

Keith Cole, President of Bishopswood wants to encourage young men and women to join the club. His aim is to dispel the image that mostly elderly retired people play bowls.

"You need a lot of skill and strategy to win at bowls," Cole said. "We coached Sarah and her team and they soon learnt the basics. Britain's bowling champs are in their 30s. A 15-year old who started at seven is now in the national championship."

A club in Peckham, south London, has already become

fashionable for people in their 20s and 30s. They find lawn bowls even more enjoyable than pin bowling. Bowls is a sociable team sport. Try out Bishopswood and other north London greens. Another advantage is that old and young can play in indoor clubs such as Glebelands, North Finchley, during the winter.

Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Danny Rich made the annual visit to the HGS Rose Gardens in Northway Gardens on 12 June.

Photos:  
Peter McCluskie and  
Jane Ingram



## Mayor's visit to Northway Gardens



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# Two Suburb perspectives of the Antiques Roadshow



Lennox Cato examines the Campaign Chair (Photo: Malcolm Brahams)



Eric Knowles gives a valuation (Photo: Amanda Epstein)

BETTY MASON

**I**t was a great surprise when the local community learned that the BBC's Antiques Roadshow was to come to Stephens House and Gardens in Finchley.

So on 1 June 2025 all those who had applied for tickets successfully lined up to gain entrance to this unique event. The day was sunny and warm and the park redolent with white gazebos standing out on the bright green lawns, the park tended and looking beautiful, all in readiness for the show to start.

There was a carnival atmosphere – some ladies dressed in summer frocks and straw hats and gentlemen smartly turned out – some with straw hats too. There was a feeling of Downton Abbey about the place!

Soon the many experts began evaluating the great number of antiques people had brought, some with small packets but some with enormous pieces of furniture, all waiting to find out what their precious items were worth.

The Mayor of Barnet, Danny Rich, resplendent with his Mayoral chains of office, put an official stamp on the proceedings and, of course, Fiona Bruce was much in demand for selfies, which she graciously consented to.

Although the queues were very long for everything, the staff manning the café were able to serve coffees and cake in the morning, special ice cream with strawberries and baked potatoes for lunch in the afternoon and they are to be congratulated for not running out of anything, even bottled water or energy.

As the sun began to set, people slowly drifted away, leaving everyone feeling tired but happy at being part of this special event.



Photo: Peter Goulding



Diana and Malcolm Brahams enjoying the day (Photo: Catherine Melinek)



Photo: Naomi Franks

DIANA BRAHAMS

**A**s regular viewers of the Antiques Roadshow on BBC TV, my husband Malcolm and I were excited to learn it would be visiting Stephens House on Sunday 1 June 2025. We applied for tickets and sent along photos of some selected items, including our large folding Victorian campaign chair. This prompted interest and we were asked to check in (carrying our chair) at eight o'clock that Sunday morning.

Having logged in our chair, we waited until we were called for our filmed interview with their furniture expert, Lennox Cato. We had bought the chair 40 years ago from an antique shop in Islington (long gone). It had been covered with a shabby red Rexine – a synthetic shiny material popular in the 1940s and 50s – which we replaced with dark green leather to tone in with our colour scheme. Our splendid mahogany chair dated from around 1850 so the horrible Rexine upholstery had clearly replaced the original red leather, which Lennox confidently confirmed.

What a shame our beautifully constructed 175 year old chair could not offer us any more clues about its personal history, not even a maker's mark! We had rather assumed it had been made to order for a high ranking military officer to provide him with some comfort after his orderlies had pulled off his boots following a tiring day's riding or even a battle. It was clearly designed for a tall man. We wondered if perhaps it had seen action in the Crimean War or some other campaign and speculated that its original red leather covering had been chosen to mask any blood spills if its brave and dashing owner had been wounded in a battle.

We put this thrilling scenario to Lennox. Disappointingly, while he agreed this was possible, he thought it far more likely that our chair had been bought as a status symbol to suggest its owner might have impressive and important military connections or just to provide a talking point. He said he had seen others, but none quite the same as ours. Indeed, an internet search has not so far found one similar to ours, with its well-crafted mahogany, brass folding mechanism and elegant armchair design.

The BBC production teams were dotted all over the Stephens House lawns. Several cameras were trained on Fiona Bruce but just one camera was devoted to our interview. Nevertheless, the producer and technicians took great pains to get everything just right, asking for several retakes. We have no idea if we and our chair will be included in a future programme but being interviewed for the show was a fascinating experience.



Fiona Bruce and the BBC crew (Photo: Malcolm Brahams)



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Photo: Maria Schlatter

## Moth Breakfast and Big Wood Open Morning

MARIA SCHLATTER

All are welcome to join the Friends of Big Wood for our next community family event on Sunday 14 September 2025, from 8.30am to 12.00 noon (Big Wood Memorial Gate at the Temple Fortune Hill entrance).

Come and see who is flying around in Big Wood while you are sleeping! Dr Phil Sterling returns to give us another demonstration of the magical diversity of moth species that populate our wood. Phil volunteers for Butterfly Conservation and is a leading authority with a lifetime of study of moths and their ecology.

Of course, no moths will be harmed at the Moth Breakfast. Phil temporarily catches the moths in a light trap overnight and they are released during the morning. We

will be providing hot drinks plus home-made cakes (in aid of Big Wood and Little Wood).

The Open Morning will also include free nature activities, Big Wood KIDS information and a chance to chat to our volunteers to discover more about Big Wood and the work done to preserve it for the future.

The Friends of Big Wood Association exists to preserve, protect and improve our ancient woodland site, designated as a Local Nature Reserve. Big Wood is managed by Barnet Council in conjunction with the Friends of Big Wood. Join us! We always welcome volunteers at the Activity Mornings, but just being a Friend of Big Wood makes a big difference. You'll be the first to know about our guided nature walks, specialist talks and other family events. There is a small annual membership fee which goes towards looking after the wood. For more information, check out [friendsofbigwood.com](http://friendsofbigwood.com) or contact [friendsofbigwood1@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofbigwood1@gmail.com).

## Defibrillator update

GREN MANUEL

The HGS defibrillator network is taking shape. By the time you read this, the first unit should be installed at Fellowship House, as outlined in the previous defibrillator update. But two more units are now funded and underway.

The second unit to be funded is for the Free Church Hall. Much of the funding for this comes from our local u3a, with additional contributions from Fellowship, HGSRA, and the HGS Trust. This defibrillator will not only serve events on Central Square and local residents, but also those enjoying the many fitness classes and u3a activities held in the Free Church Hall.

The third public-access unit will be outside the Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue, and it has an important story behind it.

It is being funded by the family of James and Nicola Cohen, local residents who had a close family member die tragically in his 40s from sudden cardiac arrest in 2017. They and their children raised funds for the Oliver King Foundation, a charity that funds public defibrillators. The charity will pay for the unit, which will be installed and maintained by the Synagogue.

The unit will be installed on the exterior boundary of the Synagogue, where it will be available 24/7 for public use, like the others in the network, serving residents in the eastern part of the Suburb, including some north of Market Place.

Further discussions are underway for additional units. Once the network is more complete, there are plans to offer training in defibrillator use, plus other life-saving techniques such as CPR.



Photo: Melanie Eddis



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Photo: Daniella Levene

## HGS Community Harvesting

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.

So 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) contact [harvesting@hgsra.uk](mailto:harvesting@hgsra.uk).

Steven Rowe





In this series Suburb News spotlights the Suburb's local independent shopkeepers

SIMONE HALFIN

The minute I walked into Shiraz I was overwhelmed by the sight of so many magnificently decorated cakes, unusual biscuits, nuts from Iran and even homemade sugar free granola, which is made with honey. Owned by Sana Pishgoo who came from Iran in 2015, Shiraz Bakery is definitely a very welcome addition to Temple Fortune. The bakery is named Shiraz, as that is where Sana came from and she wanted Shiraz to still be a part of her life in London. Sana owned a café in Iran but it was when she came to the UK that she completed several courses – she has diplomas as a pastry chef, a chef, and for cake decoration as well as being a qualified Barista – something she is very proud of. Having tasted her coffee, made with a special blend of beans, it is delicious.

I asked Sana what made her set up business in Temple Fortune and she smiled and said it felt like a village; everybody seemed to know each other and her clients feel like her friends and family. Her café is a meeting place, people come and chat, discussing everything, which she loves to listen to, and she said it was a community. There are three permanent staff, but as they also provide events catering, staff are taken on as needed. Sana and her team cater for very large and the smaller relaxed at-home events. She has even catered for the previous Iranian Queen. It is possible to hire the café and hold private parties there too. Sana makes anything, from afternoon teas to middle eastern style buffets, whatever the client wants.

Vegetarians and vegans will be delighted to know Sana does not use gelatine in any of her products. She also uses her own fresh fruit preserves rather than jam for her biscuit fillings (unless jam is specified by a customer). Her favourite cake is her gluten-free chocolate cake topped with home-made apricot coulis and finished off with Belgian dark chocolate ganache. Her signature Basque cheesecake, which I sampled, is delectable, as are her signature biscuits, which are sugar free and filled with dates infused with saffron.

Shiraz Bakery and Patisserie is open Mondays – Saturdays, 9am to 6pm, and Sundays 9am to 5pm. For catering enquiries, contact Sana on 07428 441222 or email her at [info@shirazpatisserie.co.uk](mailto:info@shirazpatisserie.co.uk). Her website address is [www.shirazpatisserie.co.uk](http://www.shirazpatisserie.co.uk).



Sana welcomes you to Shiraz Patisserie (Photo: Shelley-Anne Salisbury)

# HGS REACH Air Quality update

GREN MANUEL

With our hedges, trees and green space, it would be easy to think that the air in HGS should be fresh and clean. But that would be wrong. Analysis of two years of data from the air quality monitor installed in the summer of 2023 at the junction of Meadway and Hampstead Way shows our air quality should be better. In fact, during the first half of 2025 it has been, on average, worse than the air on Euston Road.

Broadly, pollution at the monitoring station has been about twice the annual World Health Organisation annual guideline in 2023, 2024, and 2025 so far. (See table.)

So where does the garbage in our air come from? Here it's most useful to focus on the particulate emissions, known as PM2.5, tiny dust particles that are so small they can go straight into the blood via the lungs.

Imperial College's Environmental Research Group, which operates the London-wide air quality network, explains that pollution is like a cake with three layers.

**International pollution** is the bottom layer. It's not easy to do anything about this, except write to our MP asking for the UK to lead on global and regional pollution issues.

**Regional/city pollution** is the middle layer. There's a general level of pollution from London, sometimes trapped and concentrated by atmospheric conditions. Bringing this down requires city-wide action, such as ULEZ and the electrification of buses and taxis.

**Local pollution** is the top layer, and the one we can do most about. The worst offenders are wood stoves. But overall, it's road traffic that drives local pollution in HGS, as shown in the sharp spikes in the morning rush hour.

- We have a lot of shortcut/rat-run traffic. Do we as a community want to block roads to reduce this? This would make some HGS streets much more pleasant during rush hour.



- Should more of us drive electric vehicles? Prices are falling to the level of petrol cars. But even electric cars produce some pollution, such as from tyre wear. (HGS REACH has engaged with Transport for London about electrifying the H2.)
- Better yet, can we reduce local vehicle traffic? Can we cycle, walk, or use public transport instead of taking the car?
- Would we as a community support 20mph limits? Research shows slower traffic means less acceleration which means less pollution. But lowering speed limits only makes a difference if combined with traffic-calming measures such as road humps or chicanes.
- Can we change our online shopping behaviour to reduce the number of vans that come to our door? Should we as residents divert our spending to firms with electric delivery vehicles?

Some people may think pollution is just an inevitable part of city life. But multiple studies in the last decade have shown that prolonged exposure to mid-level pollution, such as that found in HGS, increases the risk of heart attacks, strokes, lung disease, dementia, asthma, and even reduced birthweight for babies. The pollution in the air in HGS is invisible, but the data from our air quality monitor shows it is very real.

The HGS air quality monitor, organised by HGS REACH, was funded by The Mayor of London and Bloomberg Philanthropies.

POLLUTION IN 2025 SO FAR	HGS (Meadway /Hampstead Way)	Euston Road (British Library)	Waterloo Station	WHO annual average guideline
NOx pollution	22	17	23	10
PM2.5	11	6.9	11	5

Table shows average micrograms/metre cube of each pollutant up to July 27



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## “Wonderful atmosphere” at this year’s Proms

RON FINLAY

It’s often the unusual concerts that prove the most enjoyable, and so it was this year at Proms at St Jude’s, when two West End actors took to the stage to narrate the life story of author Laurie Lee, with musical accompaniment. Stars Charlie Hamblett and Anton Lesser, as well as the Orchestra of the Swan, appeared in 1920s costume besides a screen showing images from Lee’s life, including his bucolic home and the Spanish Civil War. Appropriate music, beautifully performed, from Vaughan Williams, William Walton, Manuel de Falla and others made this an evening to remember.

Other musical highlights of Proms at St Jude’s 2025 included the accomplished Fibonacci Quartet playing Haydn, Smetana and Beethoven; the unparalleled percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie flitting between marimba,

vibraphone and snare drum; and, in a very different genre, the Transatlantic Ensemble bringing the audience to its dancing feet as they performed some of Fleetwood Mac’s greatest hits. Connaught Brass showed how versatile they could make their instruments; Nicholas Daniel demonstrated his prowess on the oboe; and the London International Concert Orchestra entertained a full house with favourite Italian arias on the Last Night.

The LitFest, kindly supported by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association, has really come into its own, selling double the number of tickets compared with last year. We heard, among others, from Sir Vernon Bogdanor about why Tony Benn, Enoch Powell and others were politicians who ‘changed the weather’; from Tracy Chevalier about her research on glassmaking for her latest novel set in Murano; and from



Red Sky at Sunrise with Charlie Hamblett and Anton Lesser (Photo: Mike Eleftheriades)

Sir Michael Palin about his Monty Python friends and his years globe-trotting. Philippe Sands had the audience captivated by the range of personal coincidences he encountered while researching his latest book on the influence of former Nazis in Pinochet’s Chile.

Another record of ticket sales was achieved for the Heritage Walks, with participants widely praising the quality of the guides and the range of topics and places covered.

The Family Festival, on a nice sunny day at the end of two weeks of good weather, brought Central Square to life with all sorts of music as well as the sounds of children (and adults) enjoying

themselves – whether banging African drums or trying out the Alpenhorn. Many thanks to Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust for its support of this day, as well as of the free lunchtime concerts, which brought good crowds into St Jude’s and the Free Church to hear up-and-coming young artists.

Fulfilling Proms’ educational outreach mission in association with the DaCapo Music Foundation, 400 pupils from local schools came together at the Schools’ Prom to perform songs on the theme of pictures, following weeks of workshops and rehearsals. Alice Espitalier-Noel, music composition competition entrant, aged 14, from The Henrietta Barnett School, saw

her winning entry performed by Dame Evelyn Glennie and the Fantasia Orchestra.

Summing up the experience, Kate Webster, Proms Chair, said the atmosphere at this year’s festival was wonderful. “We were delighted to meet our target of returning to pre-Covid audience levels, which puts us in a good position to do even better next year. I’d like to express my sincere gratitude to all the volunteers who help put this Festival together.”

Proms expects to be able to donate over £50,000 to North London Hospice and Toynbee Hall with the funds raised this year, including £3,750 through support from Fellowship House from sales of its book of poems, written by Michael Berg and illustrated by Shizue Takahashi.



Dame Evelyn Glennie (Photo: Mike Eleftheriades)



Fibonacci Quartet (Photo: Mike Eleftheriades)



Tracy Chevalier signing at LitFest (Photo: David White)



Michael Palin at LitFest with Georgina Godwin (Photo: Mike Eleftheriades)



Kate Webster on Proms Last Night (Photo: Mike Eleftheriades)



Selling flags at Last Night (Photo: Mike Eleftheriades)

# SUNDAY FUNDAY

**1st & 3rd Sunday Of The Month**  
9.15am - 10am  
The Inspire Centre, at St Jude on the Hill  
Central Square, NW11 7AH (Formerly The Church Rooms)  
For Info Contact Revd Em priest@stjudeonthehill.com

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# Events at Kenwood House

MARK KING

The UK school holidays and peak tourism season in London meant the numbers of visitors to Kenwood continued to rise this summer. Not least of the attractions is the pull of Kenwood's first ticketed exhibition in 25 years, Heiress: Sargent's American Portraits.

It only seems a short while since the exhibition opened in May, but already the message is evolving into 'last chance to see' as the exhibition must close on 5 October. Details and booking here: [www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/kenwood/kenwood-tickets](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/kenwood/kenwood-tickets). To book a group visit led by one of the English Heritage curators or a trained volunteer – or led by your own Blue Badge tourist guide – contact: [Kenwood.House@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:Kenwood.House@english-heritage.org.uk). You may also enjoy an English Heritage podcast about the exhibition that was released on 31 July: [www.english-heritage.org.uk/podcast](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/podcast).

And if you are looking for an enjoyable day trip out of London, a reminder that 29 paintings from the exhibition rooms at Kenwood are on display until October at Gainsborough's House in Sudbury, Suffolk. Further details here: <https://gainsborough.org/event/masterpieces-from-kenwood-the-splendour-of-british-french-painting/>.

**DOUBLE VISION: VERMEER AT KENWOOD**  
In 2023, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam held the largest Vermeer exhibition ever staged, bringing together almost all Johannes Vermeer's works from all over the world and conducting research into his paintings using the latest available technology. It shed new light on Vermeer's life, his materials and creative process. The Guitar Player did not travel from Kenwood due to its exceptional original condition. It

is the only Vermeer painting that is unlined and still on its original stretcher, both of which make it more fragile.

Now there will be a display that brings Kenwood's painting together with a very close duplicate painting, Lady with a Guitar, from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Advanced technologies similar to those harnessed two years ago have been deployed at Kenwood on 'our' Vermeer. Come and compare these two beautiful works that will hang in dialogue in the Dining Room Lobby. This unticketed exhibition, which will run from 1 September 2025-11 January 2026, will be free of charge and will be supported by funds from the Friends of Kenwood.

If you would like an advanced briefing about this Dutch 'Old Master', join the 27,000 viewers of Volunteer Explainer John Hayward's informative talk on the Friends' YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8iDnEAFYRU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8iDnEAFYRU).

**VISITS AND LECTURES ARRANGED BY THE FRIENDS**  
Following a very enjoyable walking tour of Constable's Hampstead in July, the next Friends visit will be a guided tour of the Giuseppe Penone exhibition at the Serpentine gallery in Hyde Park on 3 September: [www.tickettailor.com/events/friendsoftheveaghbequest/1784479](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/friendsoftheveaghbequest/1784479).

The Friends' monthly lecture programme restarts in September: <https://friendsofkenwood.org.uk/lectures-events/>.

**AND FINALLY...**  
Kenwood's many other amenities are still very much here for your enjoyment, including walks, Spotlight Talks, highlights tours, jogs, dogs, bird-spotting, refreshments in the Brew House and Steward's Room cafés, second-hand bookshop, and an exciting range of Heiress-themed merchandise in the house shop.



Photo: Suburb News Archive

## HGSu3a Open Day

MALCOLM BRAHAMS

HGSu3a, our local branch of the international u3a movement providing learning, exercise, games and social activities for those no longer in full time work, is holding its Open Day on Thursday 11 September. The event will take place at the Free Church in North Square between 11am and 1pm. Since it was founded in 2017 the membership of HGSu3a, which is registered as a charitable body, has climbed to over 750, served by 90 activity groups all run by volunteers. A single subscription of £37 covers all activities for 12 months. New groups established in recent months include Philosophy, Rummikub, Chess, French Literature and growing demand has prompted creation of extra Bridge, Art, Table Tennis and Walking groups.

Before deciding to join, visitors to Open Day will have an opportunity to hear from HGSu3a's Chair Carole Spiers and, in the case of the Arts and Crafts groups, view examples of their work.

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Vermeer's Guitar Player (Photo: Public Domain)





Hannah Wood and Rabbi Hannah Kingston launch Alyth's Shalem Service (Photo: Abigail Cox)

## Happy New Year and well over the fast

ABIGAIL COX

Every December, people draw up their resolutions for the coming year and magazines and media are full of New Year, New You features. The movement into a new year is usually associated with celebrations and a feeling of new beginnings. In contrast, the Jewish High Holy Days – Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur – mark a deeply sacred period in the Jewish calendar, emphasising introspection, repentance and spiritual renewal. While both observances revolve around the idea of a new year, they differ significantly in tone, religious significance and purpose. Rosh Hashanah, meaning Head of the Year, is the Jewish New Year. It typically falls in early autumn (September or October, depending on the Hebrew calendar) and begins the Ten Days of Repentance, culminating in the fast day of Yom Kippur.

Rosh Hashanah is not marked by fireworks or parties. Instead, it's a solemn celebration which blends joy with contemplation. It is believed to be the anniversary of the creation of the world and the day on which God opens the Book of Life to judge humanity. Jews greet the year with prayer, the sounding of the shofar (ram's horn) and symbolic foods such as apples dipped in honey, representing hopes for a sweet year ahead.

Ten days after Rosh Hashanah comes Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year. It is a day of fasting, prayer and repentance, where Jews seek forgiveness from God and from others they may have wronged. The day is spent in synagogue services, with many abstaining from food, drink, work and even physical comforts like bathing or wearing leather shoes. The focus is inward – on the soul, on reconciliation and on spiritual purification.

Alyth ensures there is a service for everyone within our community, including families; intergenerational; wellbeing and our new Shalem Service for families with children who have additional needs. For further information contact: Abigail Cox, communications@alyth.org.uk.

## What's on at the Garden Suburb Theatre

COLIN GREGORY

This Autumn the Garden Suburb Theatre has two plays coming up at Upstairs at the Gatehouse, its regular venue in Highgate easily reached by car or on public transport from the Suburb.

From 9-12 October Garden Suburb Theatre will be performing *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, by Dario Fo adapted by Tim Supple and Alan Cumming. A maniac with a predilection towards impersonating different characters has been arrested and is being held at a police station where an anarchist has 'accidentally' fallen from a fourth floor window. Over the course of a fast, funny and challenging play, corrupt police officers are manipulated into truth-inducing hysteria. As director Mark Overall puts it, the play has zero dull moments and he should know as this is the second time he has directed the play for the group. It was previously performed at the Institute (now Henrietta Barnett School) Theatre in November 1997. This time it will be performed at Upstairs at the Gatehouse at 7.30pm on Thursday 9, Friday 10 and Saturday 11 October and 3pm on Sunday 12 October. Tickets will be available from the Theatre's website and more information can be obtained at [www.gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk](http://www.gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk).

From 27-30 October Garden Suburb Theatre will be performing Wilkie Collins' detective story *Moonstone*, adapted by GST member John Colmans. On her 18th birthday Rachel Verinder inherits a beautiful diamond from her uncle – the 'Moonstone' – obtained in India in very dubious circumstances. After wearing the diamond at her 18th birthday party, it mysteriously disappears during the night. Has it been lost or stolen? If it was stolen who is the thief? First published in 1868, Wilkie Collins' novel is considered to be the first proper detective story in the English language. Performances will be on 27-29 November at 7.30pm and 30 October at 4pm.



GST's production of *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* at the Institute Theatre, November 1997: (l-r) Andy Farrer, Sarah Overall, David Brown, Colin Gregory, James Cooper, Jon Musker (Photo: Garden Suburb Theatre)

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### Local Talent on show at HGS Art Fair

We were delighted to welcome over 500 members of the community to our annual HGS ART Fair at Fellowship House on 17 and 18 May. We are a collective of over 50 local creatives, many of whom had stands at this event featuring a wide range of disciplines from painting to ceramics, jewellery to silk painting, glass to printing and much more. Our artist member and teacher, Vera Moore, entertained children with her free art activities all weekend and the homemade refreshments served by the WI Finchley raised over £1500 to benefit local charities. We believe that it is the opportunity not just to see and collect unique and handmade work but also to meet the artists in person which makes this event so special. We plan to run another fair later this year – so please watch this space!

Sue Haskel

Claire Goodman's Ceramics

Gail Philipp's Glass

Clara Hancock's Silk Scarves

Photos: Sue Haskel





Photos: Liz Hall



## An allotmenters lot!

LIZ HALL

Suburb allotmenters and gardeners are unlikely ever to forget the wonderful spring and summer we have had this year.

Last year the slugs took everything in their path. But this year, for weeks and weeks, all we have needed to do is to keep the weeds at bay, water our plants regularly and watch them grow.

There is, however, increasing anxiety about the long-term effects of such unusual weather. Where are the slugs and snails? The moths and butterflies? There are concerns about a declining bird population and about the pollinators – the insects, particularly bees and wasps – that keep our crops successful.

Most Suburb allotments are surrounded by dense privet hedges which – although the soil is too dry near them to grow vegetables – nevertheless provide an important ready-made refuge for local wildlife, especially birds. Small areas, of ground, not suitable for cultivation, are often set aside for growing flowers such

as foxgloves and lavender, known to attract birds, bees and butterflies.

The internet is full of information about looking after the wildlife of an allotment or garden. A proportion of quiet, wild, or untidy areas is essential. Natural debris will provide cracks and hidey-holes for insects if it is left on the ground.

I haven't spotted very much wildlife in our allotment this year – no foxes, no squirrels. The noisy parakeets seem to have arrived now, but the songbirds have been quieter than usual this spring and will have fallen silent by the beginning of August, when the breeding season comes to an end and their chicks are ready to fly. If you disturb the soil a bit, they are down like a shot to grab a worm. Most important for their well-being, this unusual summer has been a supply of fresh water, not only to drink, but to bathe in – a comical sight!

By the time you read this, our fickle British weather will no doubt have given us another surprise... but it will be a long time before we forget spring/summer of 2025.



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Photos: Dominic Rose

## Britain's Biggest Living Garden

DOMINIC ROSE

After 2024's unusually wet spring, 2025 has brought a particularly hot and dry start to summer, which has brought out blossoms and flowers weeks (if not months) earlier than average.

Anecdotal this weather pattern has acted as a bit of a boon to our local biodiversity, with an abundance of pollinators being seen, in stark contrast the huge shortage noticed last year.

The national conversation about biodiversity and the role that gardens and gardeners can play in supporting and transforming continues to gain momentum. A number of organisations have started to take an interest in Britain's Biggest Living Garden, with its twin aims of making HGS the most biodiverse urban part of the UK and acting as a national case study for how a community can work together to make a difference.

I am currently in the final stages of finalising an important partnership with the pan-European charity Earthwatch, to launch a study on these twin aims. This will involve widespread community involvement for the measurement of biodiversity as well as possible development of two trial gardens to rigorously measure the impact that garden management can have on biodiversity.

### HGS KIDS GARDENING CLUB

The club continues to meet every Tuesday from 4-6pm, with kids, families and volunteers ranging in age from two to 90 and a real sense of fun, learning and community.

Over the past few months the club has also taken on the clearing and development of a Woodland garden, just off Central Square next to the Inspire Centre. This garden, which was previously overgrown with brambles, now features a winding path, a stumpery full of ferns and a dry garden planted in a cast iron bath generously donated by a neighbour. It has already become a peaceful and beautiful place to spend time for many local residents and the club is already eyeing up new spaces for further expansion next year.

Meanwhile, the original Kids' garden next to St Jude's has really come into its own this year. The pond has a thriving population of



newts and frogs and now has its own waterfall cascading into it. The greenhouse and veg beds are bursting with produce including potatoes, carrots, beans, courgettes, tomatoes and impressive fully ripe aubergines.

The children (and adults) have taken great delight in the growing, tending and harvesting and at the end of each session all produce is shared around for members to take home and enjoy.

At the end of July we were excited to be visited by a cameraman for BBC London who filmed the session and interviewed some of the members – it will hopefully have already aired by the time you read this or shortly afterwards.

As always, any spare materials, tools or plants are gratefully received – email me at [biodiversity@hgsra.uk](mailto:biodiversity@hgsra.uk).

### FRIENDS OF LYTTTELTON

Thanks to the generosity of local donors, organisations and businesses, over £3,500 was raised to fund the installation and planting of ten large planters in Lyttelton Playing Fields opposite the playground. These were planted by a squad of local volunteers and children, with thanks to Café Gaya who provided refreshments, games and support. The plants were chosen to be pollinator-friendly and drought-tolerant and have already attracted a lot of positive feedback from passers-by. Given the success, a further fundraising campaign for additional planters may be launched in September.

The Henrietta Barnett Orchard Garden also continues to thrive, and works will begin soon to dig the swale, which will improve drainage there and provide new habitats for biodiversity. Other improvement works for the park are in the planning, seeking to make Lyttelton a hub for local residents, park users and biodiversity alike.

### LAWN CONSULTATIONS

A reminder that I offer free lawn consultations across the Suburb for anyone struggling to maintain their lawn – especially with our new pattern of very hot summers and wet winters. If you would like a visit, please email me on [biodiversity@hgsra.uk](mailto:biodiversity@hgsra.uk).



Photos: Robyn Price

## Successful HGSHS Spring Show

CHRISTINE GEISSMAR

Visitors to the RA Summer Fair on 7 June were able to enjoy the Horticultural Society's Spring Show. Expertly organised by Robyn Price, the show brought together 210 entries from 49 members, from roses in bloom or vases of mixed garden flowers to freshly baked scones. Amid some slightly inclement weather, the wonderful display of flowers in the marquee brightened everyone's day.

The independent judges in the flower/vegetable growing and arranging, baking and photography sections were impressed by the high standard of entries, provided insightful feedback and awarded prizes for the best exhibits.

Questions were answered by the very knowledgeable Chris Page and many a visitor left a little wiser following his advice.

As well as the fragrant flower and plant display in the marquee, those wishing to escape the rain sought shelter in the Free Church, where a wonderful tea with many home-made cakes was served by volunteers under the leadership of Lorna Page.

We would love to see even more entries to the next show, from adults or children. If you think you could make a tiny posy, have a beautifully flowering potted plant, are a flower-arranger, have a vegetable or fruit you are proud to have grown, or maybe a photograph of cut flowers or birds in the garden to share, why not think about entering the show in September (Saturday 13th in the Free Church Hall, Northway). You don't have to be an expert, we welcome everyone, no matter your level of knowledge. Have a look at the Hort Soc website (<https://hortsoc.co.uk>) and see the full list of

categories as well as guidance on how to show your entries. The Hort Soc committee will also be on hand on entry night (Tuesday 9 September at Fellowship House) to provide advice and top tips on what judges might be looking for – we all learnt that the judge in June liked the soil on the vegetable roots washed off!

So, come and join in, it's a fun way to come together with other gardeners. To join, go to <https://hortsoc.co.uk/membership>.



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## THE GARDEN GIRL

CAROLINE BROOME

September marks the beginning of meteorological autumn here in the UK, creating a shift in tempo, the sense of an ending. In fact, Keats nailed it when he described autumn as the 'Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness.' Summer's all but over, kids are back at school, trees are changing colour. So we could all be forgiven for reluctantly turning our thoughts to the short, dreary days of winter ahead.

But don't put your sun loungers away just yet! September can be one of the most enjoyable months in the garden. September sun is not so baking as in the recent high summer months and these days, autumn doesn't really get going until way into October. So, September is a grateful pause between relentless high season maintenance and the Big Autumn Clear Up. It is often said that fools rush in where angels fear to tread, so resist the urge to start tidying up the garden. Instead, use this month as a period of reflection.

Ask yourself, what have you enjoyed in your garden this year? What do you wish you had more of, less of? Are you bored with the same old, tired looking borders, but don't know how to ring the changes? Why not try pretending you are looking around someone else's garden? You may find that you are able to be more objective. I've had many a light bulb moment doing just that.

Talking of light bulbs, as the nights draw in, add a new dimension to your outdoor space by festooning your patio with some waterproof solar string lights. It's still early enough to enjoy the outdoors after dark. A couple of blankets, some citrus candles to ward off any drunken wasps, a glass of something nice and it's time to settle down with some spring bulb catalogues. J Parker's are excellent quality and good value for money. [www.jparkers.co.uk](http://www.jparkers.co.uk). Traditionally, bulbs can be planted from September onwards, but I find it easier to wait until the summer displays are cleared before planting in October. Tulips are best planted in November. Plenty of time.

September is a great time to plan any changes you'd like to make. Nurseries and garden centres will have all their new season stock in this month so why not go along for some inspiration? Finchley Nurseries and Sunshine Garden Centre both have lovely tea rooms too. Why tolerate your ailing azaleas or pieris, which fail to thrive year after year? Why not replace them with something more suited to our alkaline, clay soil? If, like many Suburb residents, you love your hydrangea Annabelle,



Hydrangea Quercifolia Little Honey lights up a shady corner (Photo: Caroline Broome)

## September charm

consider introducing some other paniculata varieties. Limelight has conical greenish, white flowers and Pinky Winky has creamy pink flowers, both held on sturdy upright stems and able to withstand a certain amount of drought. Contrary to its Latin name hydra, meaning water, the oakleaf hydrangea quercifolia is quite happy in dry shade. Try medium sized Snow Queen, or compact Little

Honey, with its chartreuse foliage that will light up the darkest corner. Another winner for dry shade is hydrangea aspera Villosa, a tall specimen with oval, felty leaves and lilac lace cap flowers, perfect for the back of a border. If space is at a premium, there are dwarf varieties that are just ideal for containers. Plant them in October and enjoy their fiery autumn colour, before they gradually shed

their leaves over winter. <https://signaturehydrangeas.co.uk>.

October is also the ideal month to lift and divide early to mid-season flowering perennials, and will steal a march on Spring, when there is always so much to do in the garden. Hardy geraniums have a habit of spreading and smothering neighbouring plants. As they are generally quite shallow rooted, they are easy to dig up.

Then you can simply chop them in half or quarters, discarding the woody central section, and replant the smaller, single clumps.

With the prospect of a busy October ahead, relish this mellow month. September gives you time to dream and plan, so that you go forward with renewed vigour into the autumn.

Read my latest blogs by visiting [www.garden-girl.co.uk/the-blog](http://www.garden-girl.co.uk/the-blog).



Hydrangea Quercifolia Snow Queen (Photo: Caroline Broome)



Hydrangea Paniculata (Photo: Caroline Broome)

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# Weaponising Womanhood

the representation of women in Hampstead and beyond in the newspapers of WW2

The Virtual Museum has been offering year-long internships for HBS Year 12 students studying History for the past five years. Dan Harbord, Head of History, is our liaison with the school and he promotes the scheme to his pupils and girls apply for the position. We have taken several girls on since we started the scheme and we are also delighted to be able to pay the girls for their work. We are very grateful to the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust for giving us a grant to be able to run the scheme in the early years and delighted we are now able to finance it ourselves.

GAIA SIMPSON

The transformation of women's roles was an economic and wartime necessity. But societal expectations were never truly erased. Despite acknowledging the vital roles that women played in the war, representations in the media clung to outdated stereotypes reinforcing the idea that a woman's role was to remain within prescribed domestic boundaries. Lord Woolton, the Minister of Food, who established the rationing system, had this message for women: "It is to you, the house-

wives of Britain, that I want to talk to tonight... We have a job to do together, you and I, an immensely important war job. No uniforms, no parades, no drills, but a job wanting a lot of thinking and a lot of knowledge too. We are the army that guards the Kitchen Front in this war..."

While food management was undoubtedly important, some women felt strongly that they had a contribution to make beyond the kitchen.

One such woman was Hampstead-born poultry farmer, ambulance driver and shooting

instructor, Marjorie Elaine 'Venetia' Foster, MBE. Ms Foster was a champion shooter who had received plaudits from King George V for being the first woman to win the Sovereign's Prize (the most prestigious trophy in full-bore target rifle shooting and an achievement described by the Daily Telegraph in 1930 as an 'epoch making event').

At a time when invasion paranoia was rife, and well-to-do women scoured the skies with their opera glasses in search of enemy parachutists, Ms Foster campaigned for women to be allowed to join the LDV (Local Defence Volunteers),

later known as the Home Guard. Snubbed by the War Office, which wouldn't allow women to join the Home Guard until 1943, and then only in non-combatant roles, Ms Foster's response was to form her own organisation, the Amazon Defence Corps.

Able instructed by Ms Foster herself, the Corps was soon holding weapons training and drill classes across London.

On July 25th 1940, the News and Gazette reported that members of the local ADC branch were meeting at 87 Redington Road, Hampstead, to enhance their combative skills in case they should ever be required to root out fifth columnists or repel an enemy invader.

The chairman of the Amazon Defence Corps was reported to be Hampstead resident, Miss Juanita Frances, who oversaw activities including target shooting, gas mask drills, and throwing bricks into boxes to simulate grenade fire.

Luckily, the Hampstead cadre were never required to test their skills in actual combat with Hitler's hordes, but the willingness of the Amazon Defence Corps, and other women's organizations like it, to step up and be counted spoke volumes about how they saw their role in society evolving.

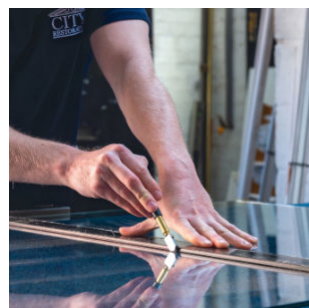
While their wartime experiences didn't bring about an immediate revolution in women's place in society, it certainly sowed the seeds for the change that would germinate over the coming years.



In 1930, at Bisley Shooting Ground, Marjorie Foster made history by winning the most prestigious shooting competition in Great Britain, against 99 of the empire's best marksmen. She secured a bullseye on her last shot with her Lee-Enfield rifle, becoming the first woman to win the coveted Sovereign's Prize. She was carried around the camp grounds in traditional fashion, aboard the champion's chair while treating herself to a cigarette. A personal telegram was sent by King George V congratulating her on her historic win. (Photo: Museum of the National Rifle Association UK)

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# Michael Bunney: Suburb Architect

COLIN GREGORY

Suburb Archives' collection includes not only items on paper, including letters, house plans and photographs, but also a wide range of other materials such as sound and video recordings, and a range of objects. These include a table owned by Henrietta Barnett and a picture she painted and a crown used by the Play & Pageant Union. This summer we were delighted by a new acquisition: a portrait of one of the leading architects working on the early Suburb, Michael Bunney.

The framed oil portrait has been generously donated to Suburb Archives by Margaret Catran, on behalf of her late husband John Nicolas Bunney, Michael Bunney's grandson. It was painted by his wife Edith Adelaide Bunney (1868-1948) in the early 1900s. It shows him in relaxed pose, studying a drawing in front of the fire at Bolton House, Windmill Hill, Hampstead, which they leased in 1901. He is sitting in an arts and crafts chair which is still in the family. Edith excelled in figure painting in oils but exhibited only in the 1890s before her marriage and seems not to have sold any of her works. She studied first at Calderon's art studio in St John's Wood, London, in 1885 then in Paris in 1889, and completed her training from 1892 to 1895 at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London, where she was taught by Alphonse Legros, a noted French, later British, painter, etcher and sculptor. She married Michael Bunney in March 1899.

Michael Frank Wharleton Bunney MBE, FRIBA was born in Venice in 1873, the son of the landscape artist John Wharleton Bunney. John Bunney was working in Venice for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, founded by William Morris. There, he painted watercolours for John Ruskin. Ruskin's comprehensive work, *The Stones of Venice*, on the art and architecture of Venice, first published in 1851, is still in print today.

Michael Bunney was sent to Fettes College in Edinburgh and then studied at the Architectural Association and the Royal Academy Schools. In 1890 he joined the architectural practice of Horace Field (1861-1948). Field grew up in Hampstead and went to University College School. He was a great admirer of the work of Richard Norman Shaw, one of the leading designers of Bedford Park, an important influence on Hampstead Garden Suburb. In 1895 Bunney became Field's chief assistant. Together they wrote *English Domestic Architecture of the XVII and XVIII Centuries* (1905, rev. 1928), which focused on smaller buildings of the period. Bunney took photographs for the book all over England with a whole-plate camera carried on the back of his bicycle, often with Edith as his companion (she was also a keen photographer who developed her own photographs). The book was described by Stuart Gray (former Suburb resident and co-author of the leading work on the architecture of the Suburb) as 'an invaluable compendium of undervalued buildings'.

Bunney went into practice on his own from 1902, first in Queen Anne's Gate and then, in 1908, at 33 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. In 1905 he took on Clifford Makins (1876-1963), who had also worked with Field, as his partner. The pair were among the principal architects of the early Suburb, designing some 90 houses (together and individually) between 1907 and 1914. I was lucky enough to live in one of them, in Linnell Close. It was a lovely house to grow up in, with lots of quirky touches such as small triangular windows in my attic bedroom either side of the fireplace.

Bunney's work on the Suburb reflected his knowledge of historical English domestic architecture gained during his time with Norman Shaw. He was just as comfortable working in a formal Queen Anne revival style, such as his designs for Linnell Close, as in a more vernacular cottage style, such as his work on Willifield Way and Meadway. Other roads featuring his designs include Heathgate, Erskine Hill and Bigwood Road.

His work was much admired by the Suburb's co-planner Sir Raymond Unwin, who called him "a great contributor to the architectural merits of the estate." Bunney also acted as Secretary to Hampstead Tenants' Ltd, one of the co-partnership companies that developed the Suburb. Bunney built his own house at 13 Meadway in 1909, and lived there for the rest of his life.

In his other town planning work he helped plan parts of Southampton and Esher as well as playing a significant role in laying out Romford Garden Suburb, now known as Gidea Park. Another interesting connection with the ideals of Hampstead Garden Suburb is his work on the Cross Keys Inn, Sedburgh, which his wife Edith bought in 1902. She



The oil portrait of Michael Bunney, donated to Suburb Archives by Margaret Catran, on behalf of her late husband John Nicolas Bunney, Michael Bunney's grandson. It was painted by his wife Edith Adelaide Bunney (Photo: Suburb Archives)

discontinued its liquor licence and ran it as a temperance pub. In her Will she left it to the National Trust (in memory of her sister Mary) who still operate it.

During the First World War Bunney followed Raymond Unwin with others in his team to the Ministry of Munitions, designing housing for factory workers such as Easttriggs, near Gretna in Scotland and receiving an MBE for his work. These munitions villages can be considered as examples of the first 'new towns' built by the State. In 1919, the year in which he became a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, he was appointed Deputy Architect to the newly created Ministry of Health, once again working under Raymond Unwin, who was appointed the Ministry's Chief Architect. Bunney continued working at the Ministry until 1922. In 1925 he designed, with Makins, the Shilling House in Fenham, Newcastle, arguably one of the earliest examples of Modernist architecture in the UK. He died at the young age of 53 in 1927.

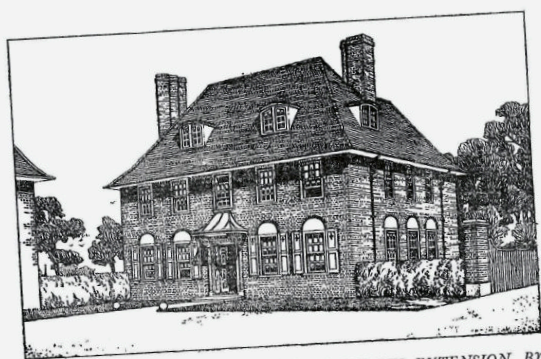
Michael Bunney's son, also called Michael and also an architect, continued to own the house in Meadway until 1985. When the house was being prepared for sale, a second version of the portrait by Edith, almost identical to the one given

to Suburb Archives, was found rolled up in the attic. Michael junior married another architect, Charlotte Gray. In 1936 they designed a house for themselves at 13 Downshire Hill in Hampstead.

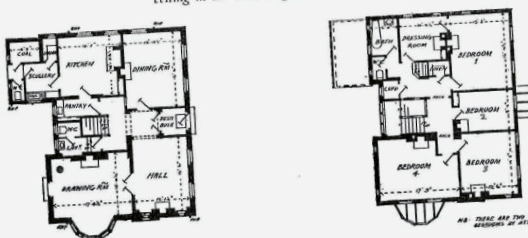
Michael Bunney's portrait is on long-term loan to the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust and hangs in their meeting room together with an information panel about him and other art works associated with the Suburb and its development. The Trust's research on Bunney has been invaluable in the preparation of this article.



The chair Bunney is sitting on in his portrait, which belongs to Margaret Catran who gave Suburb Archives the portrait (Photo: Deborah Padfield)



HOUSE NEAR THE HEATH EXTENSION, BY MICHAEL BUNNEY AND C. G. MAKINS, A.A.R.I.B.A. The design was exhibited in the Royal Academy, 1908. The outside shutters and the front door are in oak left in its natural state. There is a green and white marble floor in the Vestibule and the frieze and chimney-piece in the Hall are decorated in plaster by Mr. Bankhart. The ceiling in the Drawing Room is similarly decorated.



The house on Linnell Close that Colin Gregory grew up in. The image, provided by David Davidson, is reproduced from the book *Town Planning and Modern Architecture at the Hampstead Garden Suburb*, 1909 by Unwin and Baillie-Scott.



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Make up drawer – before and after (Photos: Hilary Frohlich)



## Less stuff, more living

HILARY FROHLICH

**M**y husband, two sons, dog and I lived in our last house for 20 years, a spacious home with plenty of storage (otherwise known as places to hide lots of forgotten things). We even survived our pandemic toilet paper stockpiling with room to spare! Then, a year ago, we decided to downsize to our forever home in the Suburb. We love it, but at a third smaller than our previous home, it simply doesn't have space for two decades of collectibles or our lifetime supply of toilet rolls.

Being forced to declutter wasn't just necessary, it was life changing. Our new home feels more organised and peaceful and the mental clarity that came with living with less has been equally valuable.

### BREAKING THE 'JUST IN CASE' CYCLE

Downsizing also taught me to change my mindset. I've stopped 'just in case' buying or feeling I must always have a spare. Here are some tips I've learned along the way and the questions I ask myself before making a purchase, whether it's a kitchen gadget, new clothes, makeup, cleaning products, or anything that catches my eye. Before you tap and add to your cart or step into a shop, take a minute and think:

#### 1. Do I need this, or do I want it?

There's a significant difference between need and want. Take time to reflect on whether the item serves a specific purpose in your life or if it's simply a fleeting desire. Buy because you need it and only occasionally because you want it.

#### 2. Do I already own something similar?

One of my friends discovered she had purchased the same black cardigan three times because she couldn't find the original in her overcrowded wardrobe! Take a good look around before buying something you think you may already have.

#### 3. Will I use it more than once?

How many of us bought a spiraliser only to abandon it weeks later when we realised it was easier to cut vegetables with a knife? Be honest about how frequently you'll actually use an item. Also consider the expense. If a piece of kitchen equipment costs £200 and I will only use it twice a year, is it worth the investment?

#### 4. Am I being influenced by marketing?

Just because an influencer has it doesn't mean you need it. Remember that a 'bargain' is only truly a bargain if it's something you were already planning to buy. Don't fall for the marketing spin; brands spend millions on marketing to separate you from your hard-earned money.

#### 5. Can I return it if I change my mind?

Always check the return policy before purchasing. This gives you an escape route if buyer's remorse strikes.

### FINDING BALANCE

Mindful shopping leads to a clearer home and, for many people, a calmer environment. The goal isn't perfection, it's intentionality. Using the sleep on it rule can definitely help save funds.

I must confess I'm no angel. I still own things I don't strictly need, but I consciously choose to keep items that hold meaning, serve a purpose, or simply bring me joy. The difference now is that every item in my home has earned its place.

Decluttering can seem overwhelming, but if you take it slowly it can have a dramatic instant effect. Give it a try, choose one small area (a drawer, shelf, or corner) and remove anything you haven't used or looked at in the past year. Notice how this small change affects the way you feel in that space.

Hilary Frohlich runs Neat Home. Contact: [hilary@neathome.uk](mailto:hilary@neathome.uk), 07768 327965

JOANNA DABROWSKA

**W**e have had an exceptionally warm and delightful summer. July spoiled us with golden days and very little rain. Do buy English wines from this vintage as they might prove to be surprisingly good and even better when aged. One of the wines I believe is worth investing in for a couple of years is Oastbrook. Their sparkling wines as well as their Chardonnay and Pinot Noir (still wines) are definitely worth buying.

Here are a few tips for ageing wine without worry:

- Keep it out of the sun or any UV exposure
- Store it at a steady temperature – even if you don't have a wine fridge, try to keep it below 22°C as temperature fluctuations do the real damage
- Keep the bottle lying down so the wine is touching the cork. A dry cork might shrink and let oxygen in
- And last but not least – a good producer is key.

Now, off to the wines:

#### Mar de Frades Albariño Brut

**Nature NV** A delightful accident, shared with friends over a summer picnic. I had kept this bottle for two years in the fridge, totally forgetting about it. It's non-vintage but this one was from the 2022 release. When I first tried this wine two years ago, it was sharp and full of green apple, delightful with oysters and other seafood. After two years stored in the fridge, it had transformed into a gentle mousse, full of apricot, red apple, and lovely honey notes – perfect with East Asian cuisine and equally wonderful with pavlova of all kinds (ours was raspberry). I've now purchased three more bottles to see how they will age over the years.

Available at Tesco – £17.50

#### Marsannay Rouge (Pinot Noir), Louis Latour 2018

I bought this wine from Waitrose on sale in 2022 while training my blind tasting skills for the WSET Level 3 exam. I paid around £10-12, as they were clearing their

shelves. I didn't open it at the time (I happily passed the exam regardless) but when I did the wine turned out to be a surprise in itself. I don't usually choose Marsannay as my Burgundy, but it was (or at least was then) a great-value way to board the Burgundy train. Marsannay is not necessarily built for decades of ageing but in a good vintage – and 2018 certainly was – it will happily last ten years, and possibly 15. Other vintages to try are 2020 or 2022; I would encourage you to buy them now and put them in the cellar for a few years.

Available at Majestic – £30

#### Moulin-à-Vent – Château du Moulin-à-Vent

Beaujolais is one of my favourite regions. The grape here is no longer Pinot Noir (this is the kingdom of Gamay) and I am a big

fan of this underrated variety. All the Beaujolais crus are worth exploring but Moulin-à-Vent is among my top choices. The potential for ageing is at least ten-15 years to fully express this grape's charm. Last year I tried some wines from 1993 and it was fascinating to see how they had developed. Invest in good producers and you are in safe hands for your ageing experiments when you're not a fan of Beaujolais Nouveau (I am a big fan!). Available at The Fine Wine Company (among many) – £29.95

Note: I would be keen to hear from you and see how these recommendations pan out and whether you would like to share some of your favourites. My next column will focus on winter wines but the spring column could be all yours. Wishing you a lovely autumn.



## Joanna's wine column

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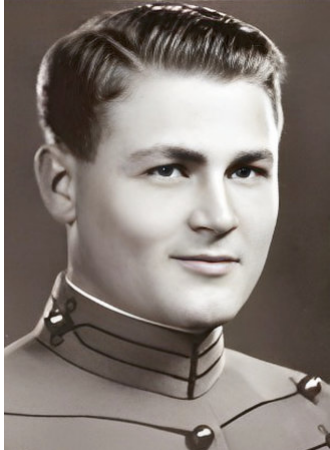


# An Irish-Greek meander

MARIE-CHRISTINE O'CALLAGHAN

A long time ago I acquired an Irish name and with it came a sense of tragedy which, according to Yeats, is part of being Irish as it acknowledges the dark side of life. This sense of doom was reinforced by my being made aware of Murphy's law which states: "anything that can go wrong will."

Listening to the news for the past months has certainly



Edward Aloysius Murphy Jr. (1918-1990) was an American aerospace engineer who worked on safety-critical systems (Photo: Public Domain)

exacerbated the sense of despair and the conviction that Murphy was absolutely correct. While contemplating the dire state of the world, I wondered who this Murphy really was and what catastrophic events in his life had made him formulate his law.

It turns out that Edward A Murphy Jr was not an Irishman at all. He was an American aerospace engineer who worked on rocket sled experiments at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in the USA. A rocket sled is a test platform that slides along a rack propelled by rockets. It is used to accelerate equipment considered too hazardous for testing directly in piloted aircraft. His law was actually a guidance to his engineers to design components that could not be used mistakenly, as they should always assume worst-case scenarios.

So, no Irish sense of doom, no catastrophic event but good sense working practice. Perhaps, we should then look at the world in a different way and not expect everything to go wrong, but instead develop and treasure a sense of purpose and hope.

I became Irish, but I grew up Greek, steeped in the myths of Ancient Greece. A myth that

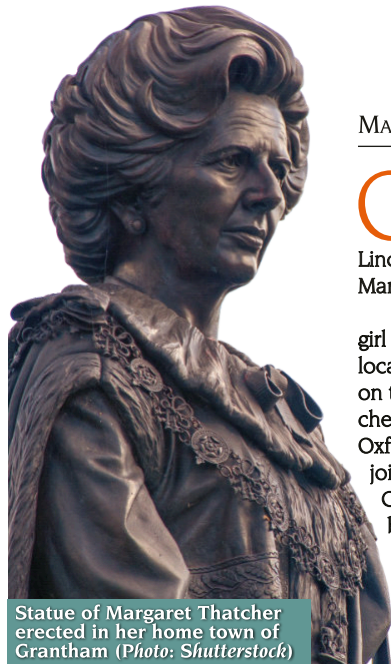
resonated with me was that of Pandora. She was created by the gods and blessed with beauty and numerous talents; her name means all-gifted. When she was sent to Earth, Zeus, with his twisted sense of humour, gave her a jar\* which he warned her never to open. Needless to say, Pandora eventually opened the jar releasing a swarm of evils. Horrified, she quickly put the lid back but the only thing left in the jar was *Elpis*, the spirit of Hope.

Pandora's story can be seen as an explanation of how all the calamities were unleashed upon humankind, but that hope remained in the jar offers some comfort, allowing us to dare dream of brighter days, to notice the rose growing from a crack in the concrete and to remember that the future can be better especially 'when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.'

*\*You probably know the myth as Pandora's box but in the original Ancient Greek Zeus gives Pandora a πίθος (pithos) which is a large jar used for storing wine, oil, even bodies. It was mistranslated to box, probably in the 16th century, and has remained so ever since.*



Pandora's box is an artifact in Greek mythology connected with the myth of Pandora in Hesiod's c.700 BCE poem Works and Days. Hesiod related that curiosity led her to open a container, thus releasing curses upon mankind. Above, a watercolour by the Dutch painter Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (Photo: Public Domain)



Statue of Margaret Thatcher erected in her home town of Grantham (Photo: Shutterstock)

MARIE-CHRISTINE O'CALLAGHAN

One hundred years ago, on 13 October 1925, a baby girl was born in Grantham, Lincolnshire. She was called Margaret Hilda Roberts.

Margaret was a clever little girl who won a scholarship at her local grammar school and went on to win another one to study chemistry at Somerville College, Oxford. While at university she joined the Oxford University Conservative Association becoming its President in 1946.

After graduating, she worked as a research chemist for BX Plastics and joined the local Conservative Association. In 1949, she was

the Conservative parliamentary candidate for Dartford and met Denis Thatcher who became her husband two years later. Margaret Thatcher then trained at the Inns of Court School of Law, qualifying in 1953 as a barrister specialising in taxation. The same year her twins Carol and Mark were born.

Thatcher had been wanting a Conservative safe seat for a while. In 1958 she was selected as the candidate for Finchley and was duly elected as MP in the 1959 general election.

When the Conservative party, led by Edward Heath, won the 1970 general election she was appointed Secretary of State for Education and Science. Later that year, when she was asked if she would like to see a woman Prime Minister, she famously replied: "I don't think there will be a woman Prime Minister in my lifetime."

The next election, in 1974, was won by Labour. Heath resigned from the leadership and in February 1975 Thatcher was elected as the first ever woman Conservative Party leader.

At the next general election in 1979, the Conservative Party, led by Margaret Thatcher, ousted the incumbent Labour government, gaining a parliamentary majority of 43 seats. The election was the first of four consecutive election victories for the Conservative Party and Thatcher became the United Kingdom's and Europe's first elected female head of government, marking the beginning of 18 years in government for the Conservatives.

Margaret Thatcher held the position of Prime Minister for 11

years, which made her the longest serving PM for 150 years. She served as the MP for Finchley for 33 years until she became Baroness Thatcher in 1992.

During her long political career Margaret Thatcher was called many things. Perhaps the most famous was 'Iron Lady'. She was first referred to as such in a 1976 article in the

USSR newspaper The Red Star. She must have had an interesting sense of humour because, in a speech to the Finchley Conservatives a few days later, she said: "I stand before you tonight in my Red Star chiffon evening gown, my face softly made up and my fair hair gently waved, the Iron Lady of the Western world."

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# Living with an electric car

IVAN BERG

"What's it like then?" said a neighbour. "Like a car," I said, "except it doesn't make any noise, and I don't have to put any expensive petrol in it."

That's the short of it. The long of it is that I wanted to experience owning and driving an electric car. I thought it would be interesting and possibly helpful to non-believers and the way to write about switching from an internal combustion engine motorcar, (ICE), to a battery electric motorcar (BEV). (Reader: If you already own a BEV please go back to the gardening section.)

By the way all the following refers to the BMW i3 BEV – but all BEVs operate in a similar way.

I got in. There was no key, just the fob in my pocket that the car recognised. I automatically put my foot on the brake pedal, having been driving an automatic car for many years, and pressed the Start/Stop button located next to the steering wheel. The driving and information screens lit up.

I clicked the drive selector into D – also next to the steering wheel – and pressed the accelerator pedal. The car didn't move. A red warning popped up at the bottom the driver's screen telling me to release the handbrake. My Jaguar did this automatically. I released the handbrake, pressed the accelerator pedal lightly and drove off, just as I would have in my ICE gas-guzzling Jaguar. The differences? Instant acceleration and the feel of strong engine braking, called regen, that converts energy lost in braking into electricity that charges the battery.

And no gas to guzzle. Instead of a full tank I have a fully-charged battery. Instead of £90 and 15 miles a gallon city driving, I paid £3.30 at a low night-time rate of 8p a Kilowatt hour for 190 miles.

Okay, I would pay a lot more if I plugged into a Barnet Trojan street charger at around 45p a Kw hour, but that also includes a very unfair VAT element at 20%. My on-street charge cost for a full charge would now be £18.90. A fast-charge at a commercially

operated fast-charge point would cost 75p Kwh, so £31.50. Still less than half the price of petrol.

So, the costs of charging a BEV are very unfair for city drivers. If you live in a house with a garage or driveway you have the advantage of the lowest charge rates. On-street parkers and flat-dwellers are forced to use on-street charging – always assuming you can find a charge-point that's free. Of course, things level out once you go on a long trip and will need to use commercial charge stations.

I haven't talked about 'range anxiety', because it's largely irrelevant as the number of

chargers on the network increase. Just two per cent of AA call-outs for 2024 were for BEVs that had run out of power, and AA vans can now provide a quick 30 mile charge in around 15 minutes.

To sum up: living with an electric car is easier than living with an almost 20-year-old gas-guzzling Jaguar that never actually became a Classic in the way I had hoped. My electric car is cheap to

run, is livelier – I was about to say friskier – is exempt from the congestion charge, at least until 25 December when the £15 charge applies (Merry Christmas!), and, as I am unlikely to undertake any long trips, a perfect city car. Nevertheless, I found myself looking at an auction for a 2007 Jaguar X150 XK8 Convertible which could have been mine for less than half the price of my BMW i3. The V8 in me still rumbles!



Garage charge point. Note the domestic 13 amp plug (Photo: Ivan Berg)



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