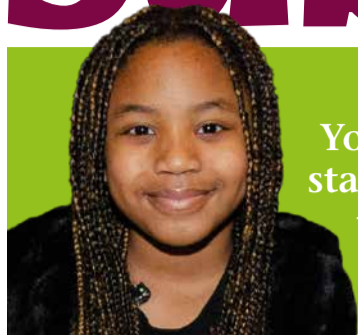


Suburb News

Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association



Young Suburbite stays up to enjoy the NYE party



RA Chair, Emma Howard's email bag, p8



Jean Neal is honoured to reveal all, p5

Should the Suburb stop the Fireworks?

Like many inventions, fireworks were created by accident... and by the search for immortality. Around 800 AD, a Chinese alchemist mixed sulphur, charcoal, and potassium nitrate hoping to find the secret to eternal life. Instead, the mixture caught fire and gunpowder was born. Legend has it that a little later, a Chinese monk, stuffed bamboo with the saltpeter-based gunpowder and launched it into a fire causing a modest explosion and an impressive bang, along with a bright spray of sparkling white lights. Fireworks were born. The Chinese used them to accompany many festivities as it was believed fireworks could expel evil spirits and bring about luck and happiness.

there was a firework display because of a 'letter' written by merchant Robert Laneham. His eyewitness account, frustratingly, doesn't go into any detail about the fireworks, but, he does write that the "blaze of burning darts, flying to & fro, streams and hail of fiery sparks, lightnings of wildfire on water and land, flight & shoots of thunderbolts: all with such ...terror and vehemence, that the heavens thundered, the waters scourged, the earth shook." He was certainly impressed. Lucy Worsley attempted to recreate the event in a BBC programme called: "Fireworks for a Tudor Queen" <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09cfwt4>

Fireworks were first introduced in England at the wedding of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York. Their son, Henry VIII, continued the royal tradition of celebrating with fireworks. Elizabeth I was absolutely fascinated by them, and this prompted Robert Dudley, first Earl of Leicester, to organise an extravagant event, costing the equivalent of £24 million in today's money, at Kenilworth Castle in a bid to win Elizabeth's hand in marriage. We know

Fireworks are still very much part of our lives today. It is difficult to imagine November 5th without them and the New Year's Eve fireworks seem to get bigger every year. This year in London, some 12,000 fireworks lit up the capital's skyline. And, once again, at St Jude's, here in the Suburb, a spectacular display was arranged by the Residents Association. The display was fully managed by a professional firm, risk assessments were carried out and there were plenty of

stewards on hand, ensuring it was both dazzling and safe.

Yet, for all their beauty, we ought to be mindful that there can be serious problems with fireworks. An obvious one is the noise which can terrify animals and young children. Fireworks are also known to be a main contributor of accidents during parties and celebrations. Then, of course, there is also the environmental impact.

This year, China's largest city, Shanghai, replaced traditional fireworks with nearly 2,000 drones which produced a stunning synchronised display. Fitted with multi-coloured lights, the drones flew high above the city creating shapes, text and even the figure of a man running across the sky. The effect was utterly amazing. Such displays have led to the prediction that China will herald the end of fireworks, just as it heralded their beginning.

This then begs the question, particularly in this age of climate change awareness, should the Suburb continue with its annual firework display using traditional fireworks? A spokesperson for the Residents Association said "Moving to a Shanghai laser style display is not yet a viable option for the Suburb, but we are looking into a low noise option for this year's New Year's Eve celebrations. This is a very popular event with people giving great feedback but we realise it is not everyone's cup of tea"

What do our readers think? Please email your thoughts to us at suburbnews@hgsra.uk

THE EDITORS



MICHAEL ELEFHERNADES

New Year celebrations

On December 31 the HGSRA held its final event of the year, the New Year's Eve Fireworks Party, in St Jude's.

As for many years, people quickly filled the church, enjoying drinks and snacks made and provided by local helpers who also served them. At 11.45pm everyone moved into Central Square to find a good viewing

position for the climax of the night. Luckily for once, the wind and rain held off.

As clocks struck midnight and the church bell rang, Platinum Fireworks launched their special, spectacular display, illuminating the night sky with multiple special effects.

Many thanks go to all the dedicated volunteers on the

night, both inside St Jude's and outside, as stewards and bucket collectors and especially to Father Alan Walker, vicar of the church, without whom all this would not have been possible. Finally, and most importantly, thanks to our generous sponsor, The Spaniards Inn, for their contribution for this event.

TONY BRAND



A stunning Chinese New Year Light Drone display.



(Above) Hardworking stewards take a break for a photo op. (Below) New Year revellers gather in St Jude's before the firework display.

The Reverend Alan Walker counts down to midnight.



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The 108th RA AGM

will take place on Monday 30 March 2020 at 8pm in the Henrietta Barnett School Hall, Central Square.

Nominations for posts of officers and members of the Council must be received by 16 March 2020. The nomination should be submitted in writing, signed by the nominee, a proposer and a seconder and sent to:

Christina Brownson, RA Administrator, PO Box 67700, London NW11 1NS

(The AGM agenda will be available on the RA website - www.hgsra.uk/about/aggm - by 23 March 2020)