



Suburb News visits Aylmer Parade Vet

I have to admit I always forget about Aylmer Parade. Situated where the A1 meets Archway Road and North Hill, you could blink and miss it as you drive past but Aylmer Parade appears to be having a bit of a renaissance.

The popular Russian deli (Dascha), the Shahi Pakwaan Indian restaurant and now the refurbished Aylmer Pantry are all just around the corner to where Dr Joshua Rusnak has opened his second veterinary practice (his first one in West Hampstead opened in 2001). Josh, as he likes to be addressed, greets me at the door of his very modern (and if I might say) chic new surgery. I am introduced to Josh's wife Alexandra, a GP in a West Hampstead practice, and her brother Jonathan Sacerdoti, a journalist and local ceramic artist – but more of that later.

Josh has a soft lilting accent that's hard to place. It turns out the accent is 'trans global'. Josh was born in Israel, moved to Chicago as a young boy and then on to Sydney where he trained as a vet. He finally settled in North West London where he lives with Alexandra, their three children and several pets, including Jamie, a two year old Fox Red Labrador. Apparently they had a cat who lived to be 21 so I'm thinking Josh must be an excellent vet...

Josh decided to open up Aylmer Parade Vet for several reasons. Firstly, as he says, "it's a lovely area"; secondly, "it's a really good position" right at the apex of HGS, Highgate and East Finchley, so there is a wide catchment of pet owners (Cherry

Tree Woods and Highgate Woods are pretty much across the road from the surgery so there's a good footfall of dog walkers); thirdly, he already has clients who live in HGS and who are now delighted to be able to see him closer to home. Because, let's face it, their relationship is with Josh and this ability to provide a truly personal service is key. In Alexandra's words, "Josh is a people person. He is understanding of his clients' needs and expectations."

Josh gives clients the benefit of his 27 years of experience in veterinary medicine in a 'straight forward' way but doesn't believe in the hard sell. He doesn't push insurance packages, tests, vaccinations etc. It's all about building the personal relationship, not the pressure sale. As he says, "it's their pet" and he simply advises what he feels is "the right thing to do... after that it's up to them." Josh is accepting of all forms of alternative medicine (even canine cranial therapy!) but at the end of the day, he favours the conventional approach to medicine. His practice motto is 'modern medicine, traditional values'.

An added bonus is Josh's post graduate training in surgery and radiology. He says he takes surgical referrals from other practices and, although the Aylmer Parade site has an operating room, he carries out the more complicated cases at his West Hampstead practice which is bigger and better equipped. I was given the full tour behind the aesthetics of the reception/waiting area and can confirm it's extremely clean and orderly.

Josh also works closely with animal rescue centres such as

All Dogs Matter (who are a few doors away on Aylmer Parade) and The Mayhew Animal Home. Josh says he understands "what rescue centres need from a vet." And as Alexandra says "Josh is good at working with a rescue dog's emotional needs. He is very calm and animals pick that up straight away." Josh grew up with Rottweilers so is no stranger to a potentially aggressive dog.

Like all business owners, Josh works long after the surgery is closed – our email exchanges were usually well after 9pm – but he accepts extra work is always involved in running an independent practice. He understands his clients like the fact they will see someone they know and trust each time they bring their pet to the surgery. As the sole owner he can put his stamp fairly and squarely on his practice and work closely with the surrounding neighbourhood. As he says, "I feel vets should be part of the local community and we hope to foster close links, as we have done for the past 20 years in our other branch in West Hampstead."

As I'm talking to Josh, I keep glancing up at the striking



Aboriginal artwork adorning the white walls of the waiting area and the beautiful ceramics displayed on bespoke shelving. Cue Jonathan Sacerdoti, a ceramic artist in his own right and the curator of the Highgate Wood Contemporary Art Gallery housed at Aylmer Parade Vet. The artwork and ceramics add colour and interest to an otherwise stark space. Jonathan wants to encourage local artists to exhibit here and bring the art "to the attention of a new audience." Having experienced waiting for countless vet appointments looking at the same cute puppy posters, I think he may be on to something.

SHELLEY-ANNE SALISBURY

The Aylmer Parade Vet, 17 Aylmer Parade N2 OPE. 0203 935 8811. vet@aylmerparadevet.com.



Virtual Museum comes into its own

Thanks to modern technology, while we are unable to actually visit the wonderful arts institutions around the world, we do have the opportunity to lose ourselves in a virtual world. Here in the Suburb we can immerse ourselves in the origins of the place we live in by visiting the Virtual Museum run by HGS Heritage: hgsheritage.org.uk. Most of the familiar Suburb organisations have 'rooms' in the museum where you can follow them from their beginnings to the present day.

On the home page click on What's New in the Virtual Museum to get to know the early people and places, read about the young Suburb men who gave their lives in the First World War or see postcards of where those who survived might have been hospitalised in the Club House (now Fellowship House) in Willifield Way. Did

your family go to Brookland School, Garden Suburb School or Henrietta Barnett School? Find out more about the schools' early history in the museum. A project just starting, and with a way to go, is the work the museum is doing to upload the 1911 census for Temple Fortune Hill, where census records are being matched up to photographs of the houses. So now you can look at the image of a house and find out exactly how many people were living there in 1911, their names and ages and what the adults did for a living. One day, it should be possible to do this quickly and easily for every house in the Suburb.

Do you have lots of spare time at the moment? Could you help the museum upload more information? If so, call Marjorie Harris, Press Officer, HGS Heritage (020 8455 6507).



Address									
9 Temple Fortune Hill, Garden City, Hendon									
Forename	Surname	Age	Year Born	Gender	Relation	Marriage Status	Years Married	Birth Place	Occupation
John	Armitstead	26	1885	Male	Boarder	Single		Kirkheaton, Yorkshire	Assistant Teacher
Charles	Wade	28	1883	Male	Boarder	Single		Shortlands, Kent	Assistant Architect (A.R.I.B.A.)
Emma	Woods	47	1864	Female	Head	Widow		Sudbury, Suffolk	
Emily Marion	Woods	22	1889	Female	Daughter	Single		High Gate, London	Dressmaker Assistant

Works to trees on your Suburb property



Tree work on the Suburb requires written consent from the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust under the Scheme of Management (for freehold properties) or the terms of leases. It is a criminal offence to undertake unauthorised works to trees on the Suburb (either pruning or felling).

Approval from the London Borough of Barnet is also required. See Barnet's website for details: www.barnet.gov.uk.

Before carrying out tree work, please telephone the Trust office on 0208 455 1066 and book an appointment for a site visit with the Trust's Arboricultural Consultant. Appointments can only be made through the Trust office. Appointments usually take place on a Thursday morning.

Once the Trust's Consultant has visited your property he will forward his recommendations for tree work to the Trust and the Trust will usually issue a decision in line with his recommendations. This process normally takes approximately two weeks from the date of the site visit. Consent shall only be granted to the owner(s) of the property on which a tree stands.

There is no individual charge for a visit from the Trust's Consultant as the cost is incorporated within the Management Charge or Ground Rent for your property.



862 Finchley Road, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London NW11 6AB • 020 8455 1066 • mail@hgstrust.org • www.hgstrust.org • twitter: @HGSTrust