

It's for you (hoo)

We married. We rented a flat. We bought a house in Brookland Hill. We joined the 35% of British households at that time (1970) with a GPO phone installed. Luxury. No more the chase to the phone box around the corner on a cold rainy evening to make a call. Now of course we and our kids carry the phone box in our pocket, which also includes far greater computing power than NASA used to put Neil Armstrong on the moon half a century ago.

Our lucky residents of HGS are treated to a nostalgic reminder of those early days by the six red phone boxes still in place on our leafy streets, forming a classic part of the Suburb's identity. These museum pieces are protected by a Grade II listing. They are in Hampstead Way (see photo), Meadway Gate, Emmot Close, Willifield Way and there are two in Northway. How many of us take them for granted?

Not for HGS the alternative use of these old phoneboxes. By 'alternative' I don't mean the dual use of advertising the services of Miss Whiplash, but libraries, coffee stalls, miniature nightclubs etc. Our phoneboxes represent a serious echo of the past with working payphones inside each and every one.

The K6 Telephone Box was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (he of Liverpool Cathedral and Battersea Power Station fame). It was commissioned by the General Post Office in 1935 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V. The construction is of cast iron with a teak door. The pediments to the domed roof carry a moulded Royal

crown. Between 1936 and 1968 60,000 examples of the K6 were installed around the UK. About 10,000 remain, 2,500 of which are listed.

Weather and vandals have not been kind prompting me to delve into BT's empire to find the holy grail – aka someone who could help. She eventually popped up in North Wales in the shape of Angela in BT's Bangor office. Last Autumn Angela kindly organised a BT repainting team to restore the box outside Fellowship House on Willifield Green and has now agreed to repair and repaint all our boxes this spring and summer. Thanks



to Angela and her colleagues, we'll hopefully soon be admiring the results.

In the years ahead the RA will take over the role of prompting BT for any necessary renovation work but it can only respond to HGS residents keeping a watchful eye. Email the RA at enquiries@hgsra.uk. It's for you (hoo).

ANDREW BOTTERILL



GODFREY AND BARR What's On's off

It will come as no surprise that our regular Godfrey & Barr sponsored What's On page will not be appearing in this issue.

But, Covid-19 permitting, David Littaur will be back at his computer soon, compiling What's On for our next issue.

Wordsearch

Apologies to all our Wordsearch aficionados out there, as we are unable to publish the competition this issue. Rest assured, it will be back for our next issue.

Answers to Wordsearch SN issue 141 are as follows:

Bo Derek, Peppa Pig, Cher, Hilary Mantel, Barbara Windsor, Julie

Walters, Theresa May, Jane Austen, Boudicca, Malala Yousaf, Marie Curie, Agatha Christie, Barbara Castle, Olive Oyl, Greta Thunberg, Anne Frank, Adele, Mata Hari, Angela Davis, Lady Brenda Hale, Yoko Ono.

The winner of this Wordsearch is Angela Croft.

New HGS Community Orchard

"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree." Martin Luther

The Hampstead Garden Suburb remains "the most nearly perfect example of that English invention and speciality, the garden suburb" according to Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, with its distinctive architecture purposefully enhanced by a variety of parks, ancient hedgerows, food growing spaces and areas of ancient woodland.

To this day, Barnet Council actively supports the preservation of the local green spaces on our Suburb, but because of financial constraints the focus is on developing partnerships with local communities to allow its important natural habitats and local facilities to flourish. The HGS Residents Association is keen to play its part in this initiative and wants to engage with both Barnet Council and local residents to create a positive impact for the benefit of the whole Suburb.

FRUIT TREE ORCHARD AT LYTTTELTON PLAYING FIELDS

A meeting of RA volunteers in 2018 put forward the idea of creating a community orchard. In discussion with Barnet Council the RA has now provisionally identified the south western corner of Lyttelton Playing Fields – out of the way of the sports pitches – as a suitable location for the planting of a community orchard, with interspersed wildflower meadow areas, to grow into a beautiful feature of the park.

London's long-established tradition of community orchards has seen a welcome revival in

recent years, promoting wellbeing and social cohesion with fun and educational events such as apple days. Orchards connect with the important local food growing practice established in the Suburb's busy allotments and horticulture. The Suburb's founder Henrietta Barnett donated fruit trees for every garden, many of which are still productive – now either in their biodiverse 'senescence' or as grafted descendants.

BENEFICIAL NATURAL HABITATS & FACILITIES Community orchards are useful, delightful, additions to our urban landscapes as well as fun places to learn and engage communities. They promote wellbeing and are a fantastic way to rediscover our hugely diverse fruit heritage (2,500 UK apple varieties alone), as well as educate especially the younger generation about sustainable food production and healthy eating.

Surprisingly orchards are also priority biodiversity habitats under the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan. They are excellent for wildlife, partly because fruit trees age faster than other trees and soon develop veteran habitat features, such as nest holes for birds and bats, and deadwood for ecologically significant fungi, lichens and insects. Interspersed with wildflower plots, orchards generally support a wide range of important species, including some rare bees, beetles and butterflies.

According to The Orchard Project charity, community orchards are part of the solution to counteract climate change; they absorb greenhouse gases, cool

the urban environment, take up excess rainfall in times of flooding and build community cohesion through social events and hands-on skills courses.

HGS COMMUNITY ORCHARD GROUP

The aim is to set up an HGS Community Orchard Group, preparing for the planting of fruit trees and wildflower areas during the winter season of 2020-21 or the following year, depending on the coronavirus crisis. Once planted, the trees will need a bit of extra care during the first years, including watering and weeding, but should become largely self-maintaining in subsequent years.

With the help of specialist social benefit organisations such as The Orchard Project, we plan to run skill building workshops, including effective tree pruning, and to create enjoyable activities for residents and local schools.

All kinds of support will be appreciated, from helping to create the community orchard group, to hands-on volunteering with planting, tree and wildflower meadow maintenance as well as harvesting, organising or simply enjoying the Orchard events.

The RA intends the Orchard to be part of a range of local improvements in Lyttelton Playing Fields, which includes the planting of 20 ornamental trees to date, proposals to install a new outdoor table tennis table as well as work to improve the tennis and netball courts. If you are interested in participating or finding out more, please email trees@hgsra.uk.

MARIA SCHLATTER



HGS U3A open for learning

Challenging times bring many possibilities to be creative. So, despite all the uncertainties that the Coronavirus has caused, we are very fortunate to be able to continue with many of our U3A Interest Groups. We have grasped this window of opportunity to be imaginative, inventive and ensure that we can maintain many of our groups, so we are very happy to report that HGS U3A is definitely open for learning.

We are grateful to those Group leaders who are continuing with their groups; indeed 26 are still functioning, which is a fantastic achievement considering.

We are now operating many virtual groups through various online portals. Whether members want to join in the discussion with a Book Group, brush up on or learn a new language there is

a vast array of subjects to enjoy. Members can even find help with our Decluttering group; likewise members can continue to keep fit by following the video that our Pilates teacher has produced for us and equally our Yoga teacher. There are a whole range of activities to keep us engaged with our members and guarantee they will not be bored at home.

We also now have a dedicated Facebook page, where we can keep up to date with news and tips for our members. Equally they can join in the conversations. For example, Eric who leads our horticultural group is updating us with tips for the garden. Liz who leads our craft group is encouraging us to knit. Our Pilates teacher has ensured we still keep fit, by kindly

producing a video for us and so has Anna our Yoga teacher. The list is endless, and more groups are emerging.

Our U3A has become part of the local community and we know that many of our members value the groups that they attend regularly. Although this period may seem overwhelming at times, U3As across the UK are ensuring that their members keep busy, entertained and most importantly connected, even it is virtual.

You can check us out at: <https://hgsu3a.uk/>

DAPHNE BERKOVI



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Please help make *Suburb News* your newspaper. Articles, letters and news items welcome, send to the publisher with High Res pictures at suburbnews@hgsra.uk

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