



Photos: © Ruth Smith

HGS Combat Stress update

MARJORIE HARRIS

A few months ago the Suburb committee fundraising for armed forces mental health charity, Combat Stress, realised that they had raised in excess of an astonishing £49,733 over the past few years.

Despite the need to cancel events due to Covid, the committee pledged to increase that sum to £50,000 by the end of this year. In September the Chair of HGS Combat Stress Committee, Ruth Smith, with friend Anne Cooper, set off for a few days of strenuous walking along the Jurassic Coast with the ambitious aim of raising £1,000 in sponsorship. Thanks to the generosity of Suburb residents, work colleagues and friends, Ruth and Anne's challenging hike has now raised £4,281.25. In their own words: "Mission accomplished – but not without incident. On our last day we inadvertently wandered onto private land and were politely escorted off by a gamekeeper! Although weary we're delighted that we managed to finish our walk without breaking any bones and with not too many blisters. A heartfelt thank you from us both for all your support and generous

donations for Combat Stress – it's greatly appreciated."

But that was not the end for Ruth and her HGS Combat Stress Committee. Unfolding events in Afghanistan were reigniting mental stress for armed forces veterans who had served there. Many were turning to Combat Stress for help and support, with their 24-hour helpline seeing a 100% increase in calls from veterans. Funds were urgently needed. So, a Pop-Up Fair in Chatham Close was quickly planned and took place on 9 October. Thanks to a wonderful army of volunteers, all the tables were set up – and the sun shone. A steady stream of people thronged Chatham Close throughout the morning. It felt great to see the HGS community out and about. Thanks to the generosity of the Suburb's bakers, who provided delicious home-made cakes and preserves, and Gail's, Temple Fortune, who generously donated a carload of bread, cakes, pastries and savouries, the event has now made £1,325.51.

Therefore the grand total raised by HGS Combat Stress to date now is £55,339.76!

A big thank you to all our wonderful volunteers and supporters for their generosity and continued support – we couldn't have done it without you!

There are still a few Combat Stress Christmas cards available. Contact ruthafsmith@hotmail.com.



What's new in the Virtual Museum

St Jude's Spire Weathervane & Time Capsules collection

MARJORIE HARRIS

In May 1911, Henrietta Barnett received an unusual 60th birthday present from her friends and acquaintances in the shape of a spire and weathervane for the newly-built St Jude's Church in Central Square. When they were dedicated two years later, on 8 May 1913, a time capsule with a letter from Canon Barnett and a 'photogravure' of a portrait of Samuel and Henrietta Barnett from Toynbee Hall, were encased in a metal tube and included in the wooden finial ball. Just over a century later, in November 2015, the winds of Storm Barney raged over Hampstead Garden Suburb and caused the cock and fish weathervane to disintegrate on to different parts of St Jude's roof. When repair work began, it was discovered that the original builders had also secretly placed their own time capsule there, with several unique objects in it.

The latest collection to be launched in the Virtual Museum reveals in fascinating detail the story behind both the time capsules and what was in them. In addition you can follow the history of the weathervanes, read about the campaign to raise funds for structural work on the spire, and admire the skilled work of the construction team. A replacement weathervane and modern time capsules, including one from the 21st century builders to match the earlier one, were blessed and reinstated on the spire this Summer, and this brand new collection unites and connects both ends of the continuing story of one of the Suburb's tallest and most important buildings from 1913 to 2021. It is illustrated with many fascinating photographs (<https://hgsheritage.org.uk/HomePage,What'sNew>).



The original, official time capsule (Photo: Marilyn Greene) Above, right: Bottle from the builders' time capsule.

HGS u3a boasts two Current Affairs Groups

MYKE JACOBS

From the moment the HGS u3a was launched in 2017 it has run two very lively current affairs discussion groups. Initially they met in person but moved to Zoom when the pandemic struck. Between them they have nearly 90 members each meeting fortnightly on alternate Wednesdays, so keen members can attend every week if they wish.

Malcolm Brahams is the leader of Group 1. He says "We discuss everything from Brexit to 'Megxit'." Normally the group discuss four or five subjects in the news but occasionally there is a themed session led by a guest speaker. Local celebrity Martin Bell was a guest at Group 1's meeting on 10th November. He led a discussion on sleaze in British politics as well as airing his views on other subjects including progress at CoP 26 and the breakdown of international order.

Marion Godfrey leads Group 2 which she describes as "a happy band of opinionated, yet polite, diverse group of members who are interested in current events, politics and moral conundrums (or is it conundra?)." Using Zoom, Marion has up to 22 members joining lively discussions usually ending on a light hearted note.

For details contact Malcolm, hgsu3apolitics1@gmail.com or Marion, hgsu3apolitics2@gmail.com.



Martin Bell

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