

# SUBURB CELEBRITIES

On January the 1st this year, Cyril and Violet Luckham celebrated their 14th anniversary as Suburb residents. Cyril will not only be familiar from his frequent appearances on the small screen — remember *The Forsyte Saga* and, most recently, *Strangers and Brothers*, not to mention numerous other appearances over the last 20 years — but he also devotes a great deal of his time to community and social activities. He is active in the Fellowship, gives talks in aid of Abbeyfield, and, together with Violet, participates in Suburb events. Many will have been delighted by their conversation performances as Henrietta and Samuel Barnett; by Cyril's talk on being an actor — and Violet's talk revealing the other side of the coin: on being an actor's wife!

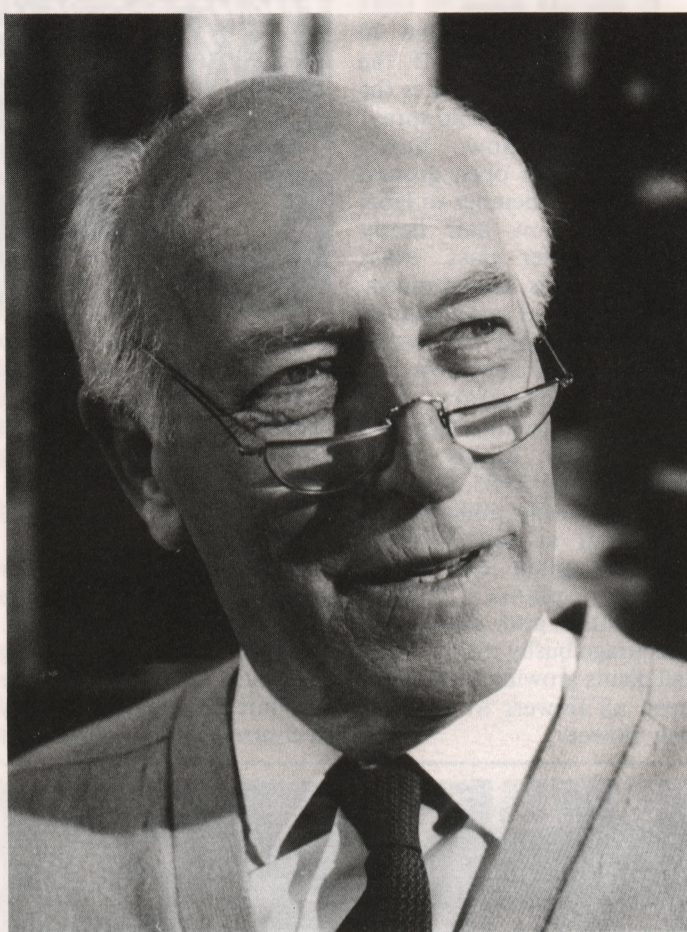
Cyril was born in Salisbury and went to sea at the tender age of 14. Invalided seven years later, he started out on his acting career at the Folkestone Repertory Company. There he met ex-Old Vic student Violet, and within a year they were married. Both marriage and acting career proved successful, long-standing enterprises: celebrating over 40 years together, Cyril and Violet hold something of a record in their profession.

After working with repertory companies throughout the

country, Cyril was finally encouraged by his wife to take the plunge into London's West End where he was last seen with Ralph Richardson in *You Never Can Tell* at the Haymarket. Since then, 20 years of television and radio performances have occupied him, together with the occasional film, and a growing commitment to people and causes.

'Evenings with the Luckhams' take place throughout the country, bringing to life characters such as Thomas Hardy and the Gaskells, and bringing them into direct contact with appreciative audiences, while their entertainments such as 'The True Pleasure of Gardens' are given in support of the Tradescant Garden Trust; and Cyril, an arthritis sufferer, takes an active part in helping other sufferers as Honorary President of the Barnet Branch of the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council.

The Luckham's move to the Suburb marked the end of the nomadic actor's existence. Living in rented accommodation they had always dreamed of the perfect little house — and they found it in No. 70 Hampstead Way in the delightful setting of Lucas Square. Their garden with its many feathered visitors is a constant source of delight to Cyril as a keen ornithologist. The Heath extension and



Kenwood provide them with countless enjoyable walks and the picturesque architecture of the Suburb is just another feature that enhances their environment. In Cyril's own words — in the *Suburb Yearbook* of 1980 — in praise of the Suburb and Lutyens, he would 'rejoice especially

at the distant view on the skyline of St. Jude's, the Free Church and the Institute. This prospect always lifts my heart when I return home from the noise and bustle of the West End'.

Many more happy years in the Suburb, Cyril and Violet!

## "MARIA MARTEN"

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Dramatic Society brightened the dreary end of February with a lively and most enjoyable production of "Maria Marten" or "Murder in the Red Barn", in an adaptation by Brian J. Burton.

Melodrama has to be taken seriously and producer John Woolf was on the whole well served in this by a strong cast. He also achieved some telling atmospheric effects in spite of the limited resources, both in scenery and lighting, available to him. The production was well-paced from the dramatic opening scene in the Devil's Glen, when the evil is begun, to the apotheosis of the heroine at the end.

The casting of the three principal roles was excellent; Paula Morris, as the Devil's tool, Nell Hatfield made a forceful, persuasive and dangerous gipsy and Simon Ramsey, as the villainous William Corder, wove his wicked wiles with great aplomb. He was particularly good in that although he responded to the very vocal audience, he did not come out of character. However, the undoubted star of the evening

was Maria herself, played by Fiona Riem with such sincerity and pathos that one was moved almost to tears in spite of the silliness of the plot. Small and fair, she made a lovely victim to the tall and heartless Corder. She also has a delightful singing voice — it made one wish for more than two songs! In the minor roles there were some very good portrayals, especially from Jo Hann as Maria's sister Anne; Javaid Punwar and Sharon Shine as the friends, Tim and Meg Bobbin, and from Sarah Falk as Mrs. Marten.

The excellent piano accompaniment was by Sian Evans and Timothy White, and the dances for villagers and devils were arranged by Roberta Smith. Setting was designed by Audrey Wesch, assisted by David Rance, and was cleverly devised so as not to hold up the action. John Woolf was assisted by Kate Atkinson. LS

## CHILDRENS' CASH PRIZES

As you can see in 'What's On', H., G.S. Horticultural Society's first show of the Season takes place at the Free Church Hall on Saturday, 30th June. Even if you have never exhibited before, why not try your hand this year. If you are not good at growing things but like to cook or bake, enter the cookery or preserving sections. There are also lots of classes for children under 14, with cash prizes. Handbooks and details of membership are available at the door at each show, or from Mr. Guppy (455-8953).

# The Trust and Planning Applications.

The Trust has been aware for some time that many residents on the Suburb remain unclear about what the Trust actually does and how it operates. To help remedy this the Trust has decided to take regular space in *Suburb News*.

In each issue there will be an article on some aspect of the Trust's work. These will include features on particular problems such as extensions, loft conversions, landscaping etc., and profiles of Trust Council Members.

For the first article we thought it might be useful to look in general terms at how the Trust processes Planning Applications.

Some residents are unclear why Planning Applications have to be seen by two separate Authorities: the London Borough of Barnet and the Trust. The answer is that the Suburb was developed as a Leasehold Estate, and the Trust and its predecessors have from the beginning had strict control over all designs, materials, use of buildings and provision of amenities. Even though many properties are now Freehold, the Trust's rights of control have been maintained



(by the High Court) to safeguard the standard of alterations to properties.

In addition, because the Suburb is so important in the history of British domestic architecture and town planning, it was designated in 1968 a Conservation Area — comparatively recently in its history — so that, for the time being at any rate, there is additional protection under planning legislation. But this has already been shown to be affected by the political climate, whereas the Trust works entirely free of any political or profit-making motive, serving only the interests of the residents and the national bodies who are represented on the Council.

It was considered that since the Suburb is so important in the history of both British domestic architecture and Town planning a separate organisation was needed for its conservation and preservation. Other conservation areas are also protected by local organisations, such as the College Estates

in Dulwich. By having two separate and independent authorities look at all plans, the Suburb benefits from a higher standard of overall design control. The Trust can take a much broader view and evaluate factors which are outside the remit of the local authority. In most cases the London Borough of Barnet and the Trust will come to similar conclusions on applications, but there are instances when the two authorities diverge. For example in looking at plans, Barnet cannot take purely aesthetic considerations into account.

The objectives of the Trust are not to stop residents from changing their houses but to ensure that changes are done in a harmonious way and in keeping with the spirit of the original design. The Trust recognises that the Suburb is not a museum, but a living community and in modernising their homes residents want larger kitchens, family rooms, more bathrooms, and utility rooms and would often like to utilize attic space for additional accommodation. In most cases these alterations can be designed within the guidelines laid down by the Trust, and without spoiling the character of either the individual house or the neighbourhood. The Trust is here to serve the community and ideally it would like to approve all applications.

The number of refusals can be kept to a minimum if certain simple procedures are followed.

1. Even before employing the services of an architect it is a good idea for the home-owner to have an informal chat with the Trust architect, Mr. Wilfred Court. He will outline in general terms the Trust's policies towards the particular kind of alteration required — extensions, loft conversions, garages etc. At the same time he will tell the owner which sort of designs might be suitable in terms of size, materials, detailing etc.

2. If the house-owner decides to go ahead with the alterations, his architect should keep in touch with the Trust while he is drawing up the plans. Mr. Court is willing to attend site meetings with architects to discuss points of detail and help with the choice of materials etc. Through the close involvement of the Trust the chances of a successful application are greatly improved.

When an application has been received an indemnity

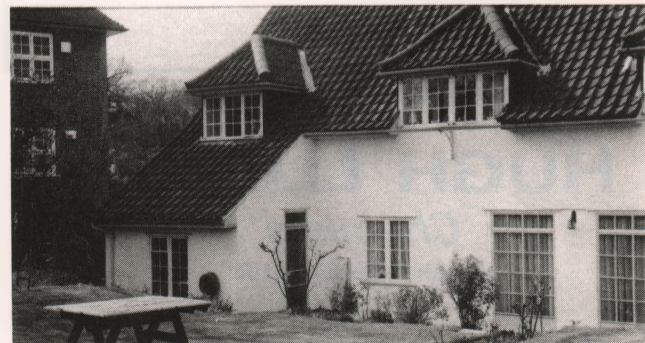


The New Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Limited  
862 Finchley Road, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London NW11 6AB  
Telephone: 01-455 1066 & 458 8085

form is sent out and neighbours are notified. They have two weeks to write back with their objections. Once the relevant fee has been paid the application is considered by the Property and Plans Committee of the Trust which meets in the middle of each month. All decisions have to be ratified by the full Trust Council which meets on the last Tuesday of the month.

In evaluating planning applications the Property and Plans Committee takes into account a number of factors. These include the report of the Trust Architect, the views of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee and the London Borough of Barnet, and letters from neighbours. The whole process from submitting the application to the final decision of the Trust Council takes around two months. When an application is refused reasons are given and from these the applicant can often deduce the kind of changes that are required to make the plans acceptable.

The Trust has been criticised for being too harsh and unreasonable and for being completely unrealistic in its



conservation policies. To those critics we answer that under the Scheme of Management, the Trust has a legal obligation to uphold certain standards and that if it became too lax it would be accused of not doing its job properly. Obviously the Trust has to strike a delicate balance between these opposing views and while accepting alterations insist on the highest standards.

We hope in future that the Trust will move closer to the community and be seen as a definite asset to the Suburb by fostering good designs and workmanship. It is assumed that most people come to live in the Suburb because of the delightful houses, which have remained relatively unspoilt and most residents would be horrified if we allowed indiscriminate 'improvements' to take place. By working closely with the Trust we are confident that the whole community will benefit so that in 100 years there will still be a Suburb of which our grandchildren can be proud.