

SUBURB FALCONS

Another Spring, and another nesting season almost over. I hope that a few of those nests may have been occupied by kestrels, since these, along with the now ubiquitous magpies, are a recent enrichment of suburb life. When I was a boy there were none here at all.

The kestrel must be familiar to everybody. A small bird of prey much given to hovering and general aerobatics. Of all its kin it has proved the most adaptable to changes in the British environment; while so many species' populations have shrunk with the diminishing habitat, be it woodland heath, marsh, the kestrel eagerly adopted man made cliffs, in the form of buildings, and man made wilderness, in the form of motorway verges, as new nesting and hunting grounds, while still relishing the sea cliffs and moors which his ancestors knew.

The first kestrel nest in central London since the 1870s was in the loft of St Paul's School, Hammersmith in 1931: every year since increasing numbers have been noted, bombed sites and ruins during the war having provided timely encouragement. A thousand years ago a kestrel would have nested on a cliff and its diet would have consisted of rodents and smaller creatures. Today she is happy sitting in a church tower, eating sparrows and spitting out the feathers.

The recent attempted "owl count" prompts the possibility of listing the kestrel nests in the Suburb this year: prime spots to



watch might be Central Square, Temple Fortune flats, the edges of Lyttleton Playing Fields, and the Heath extension. If you have noticed one please let me know on 455 9060.

One last bit of information: the kestrel is classified as a falcon, as is proved by her beautiful black eyes, and the fact that if you hold the inner membrane lining of her eggshell up to the light it appears buff in colour; not a lot of people know that!

CG

BROOKLANDS SPORTS



Staff not standing on ceremony, left to right: Mrs Spearman, Mrs Grennier, Miss Yaxley, Mrs Crowley, Mrs Abbott and Miss Jones.



Mathew, Yoshiaki, Stefan and Kariel at Brooklands Infant School Sports Day on July 4.



Sheila Abbott amplifies the voice of authority.



Robyn Barnett, who is in Owl Class, goes under the net.

BROOKLANDS INFANTS NEW HEAD

Mrs Jane Green, formerly Wilmshurst, Headmistress of Brooklands Infants School since January 1982 and previously Deputy Head at the Garden Suburb School, is seen here on the occasion of her leaving party with Mrs Sheila Abbott who is the new headmistress. Mrs Green is expecting a baby soon and is moving to Sussex where her husband has a new position.

PE



Free Church 75th

The celebration of the Free Church's 75th anniversary entered its second phase on June 16 when some 300 members and friends gathered together for an evening supper party. Some had come from afar including Mrs Ballard and Lady Wilson, a one time resident, who was accompanied by her son Giles.

After an excellent buffet, prepared by Jean Barraclough and many helpers, there was a dramatic presentation entitled "Then and Now" of the history of the Church. Earlier in the day an exhibition in the Elders' Vestry collated from Church archives by Peggy Turner, Eric Gudridge and Brian Stonhold; an up-dated re-run of the slide-tape "The Year in the Free Church", and a floral display in the church prepared by a team led by Pam Jameison and including the HGS Floral Arrangement Club had opened and remained so until the following weekend. On Saturday afternoon former Free Church organist Ronald Chamberlain's 2nd sonata was included in a recital by Dr John Winter, the choirmaster.

A commemorative morning service on Sunday, led by Peter Baraclough, was attended by local notables including the Mayor of Barnet Barbara Langstone, Peter Thomas MP and the chairmen of the HGS Trust and the Residents Association.

The service included a hymn written for the occasion by Muriel Grainger who also wrote the 40th anniversary hymn in 1950. PR



Michael Porteus, Peter Baraclough.



Keeping time.



Then and Now, the choir mini-skirted and Edwardian hatted. Then and Now, laying the foundations.



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