

HGSDS 100th PRODUCTION

For their 100th production, the society has chosen one of the most popular works from one of Britain's best playwrights — PYGMALION, by George Bernard Shaw.

The play is named after a sculptor in an Ancient Greek myth who carves his ideal woman out of a block of stone and falls in love with her. The play achieved even greater recognition when it became the basis for the musical "My Fair Lady". It tells the story of a phonetics professor who becomes obsessed with the idea of changing the speech of a flower girl to that of a Duchess.

Director John Woolf says that the appeal of this romantic comedy is the "age-old conflict of the sexes." He adds that the girl, Eliza is more believable than most of Shaw's female characters, and that "Pygmalion", written in 1913, is one of the first English plays about women's lib.

Playing the parts of Professor Higgins and Eliza Doolittle, are Bill Critchley, and Miriam Clark, both of whom are award-winners in the annual Barnet Borough Arts Festivals over the past two years.

Doolittle is being played by Robert Jayes, who also played the character in a 1958 production of the play which toured Denmark. Four performances were given in August and September to packed houses.

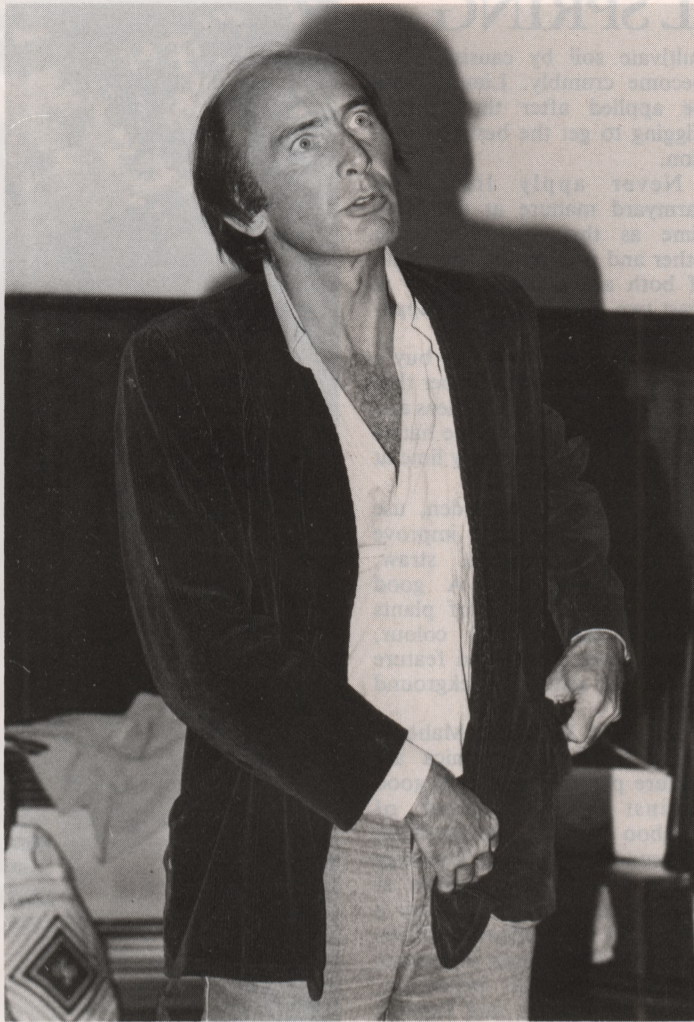
At the time, the Finchley Press remarked that "because he is rather slim for Doolittle, Robert is having to pad himself." This time around, Robert regrets that this will not be necessary!

The Denmark tour of 1958, was taken by one of the two dramatic societies in the Suburb at the time, the Play and Pageant Union. They amalgamated in 1966 with the other group, the Speedwell Players, because so many members were in both. Choosing a name for the Society was a problem, recalls Angela Elliston, who became the first Chairman of the joint society. "We had ever so many suggestions and we came to the conclusion that none were really suitable. In the end we chose this rather dull one — at least it explains what it is!"

The HGSDS continues to be one of the largest of its kind in London. The numbers and depth of talent allow for five productions a year — four on the stage at the Institute, and one each summer in the Open Air Theatre in Little Wood.

The Open Air theatre is one of only two in London, the other being at Regent's Park. It was built several years after the Play and Pageant Union began performing in 1916.

Several ex-members have gone on to professional success, among them Michael Flanders (who tried out a lot of his material with Donald Swann in



Bill Critchley — Higgins
Miriam Clark — Eliza
in rehearsal for Pygmalion.

front of the society before presenting it to the public at large) and David McCallum, one of the men from UNCLE

The present society is over 250 strong, and continues to attract new members. Though not in financial crisis, the budget of the

Society is slender, and there is always one more item to buy.

There is also the handicap of not having the use of the Institute stage for rehearsals, which take place at members' homes, or at the Friends Meeting House in North Square, or the Youth Hostel on the Heath.

The Society has its roots in the earliest days of the Suburb, and adds credibility to the claim the



Suburb really is a village within a city.

Next February the Society is reviving "The Prince and the Pauper", a musical written for the society by Terry Rogers. We are looking for two boys aged between 10 and 14, who can be made up to look sufficiently like each other to sustain the illusion

of actually being lookalikes. Boys who audition must have unbroken voices.

Auditions will be held at the Friends Meeting House, North Square, in the Garden Suburb, on the afternoon and evening of Sunday, October 27th.

Further details: contact Kay Graham on 455-5080.



Whichever way you look
at it we are the

**HAMPSTEAD GARDEN
SUBURB SPECIALISTS**

Selling a flat or a maisonette

Ring us now! 458 8814

OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

20 Market Place, NW11

BIRDS

Since writing so enthusiastically about kestrels in the Suburb for the last issue I have not seen a single one. The article did prompt a torrent of phone calls, however, indicating earlier sightings of birds of prey, which would surely have been kestrels, mostly appearing as if from nowhere to snatch a sparrow, just conveniently stuffed with soggy bread, off the lawn. More the action of a sparrow hawk but still in keeping with our falcon's feeding habits. I think the conclusion is that kestrels have not bred in the Suburb this year.

A biproduct of kestrel consciousness is he dangerous habit of catching the dark shapes of fast flying birds in the corners of ones eyes and risking whiplash neck fracture to get a proper view. We were invited for drinks in a lovely garden in Heathgate recently and this happened to me. Was it a bird? was it a plane? was it a bullet? It was a bird.

It was a hobby speeding down Meadway (where else?) on its way to winter quarters south of the Med. Like a shooting star it was gone before I could point it out.

Many other phone calls related sightings of woodpeckers; these were of greater spotted woodpeckers and I would very much like to hear of either of the other species. Dr Page mentioned to me that he has a neighbour whose bird table is frequently visited by a lesser spotted woodpecker, but I have not seen one hereabouts, and they seem less adaptable to a non-forest environment.

A further most interesting call was from a resident living near



Northway Gardens, who walks often along the banks of Mutton Brook. He had noticed the fine stands of nettle. In the interest of wildlife conservation he somehow obtained larvae of peacock and tortoiseshell butterflies and released them onto the stingers, their natural and only possible food. He watched them grow from insignificant black threads to iridescent spiky blueblack caterpillars ready to pupate and soon became butterflies gracing our buddleias. Then the Council cut down the nettles and killed the caterpillars.

The Suburb is in many ways a bird reserve for species who can put up with living close to people. Surely it would be possible to plan to accommodate the very few breeding species of butterflies compatible with intensive gardening. CG

Best let your house or flat with confidence through us.

In the Suburb, as in all good London districts, we always have a demand for first-class properties.

Rather than risk a bad tenant, benefit from our contacts with overseas companies diplomats and academics.

Can you do better than go to a specialist firm, whose principal, John Birch, has over twenty years experience of rentals and who has lived locally since 1970?

Happily we not only find tenants but also give a comprehensive management service right through the tenancy.

BIRCH & CO
ESTATE AGENTS
VALUERS & SURVEYORS

DORVILLE HOUSE
14 JOHN PRINCE'S STREET
LONDON W1M 9HB

Telephone:
01-499 8802 (7 lines)
01-408 2318 (24 hours)

AT Templars the Chemists we set out to give our customers service and value for money.

We are open from 8.30 - 6.30 Monday to Friday, Sunday from 10.00 to 1.00 p.m.

We have a convenient rear entrance, which is literally 1 minute from the doctors at Temple Fortune Health Centre and limited parking space, in Temple Fortune Lane and if you can't get to us we will be pleased to deliver.

After hours and on Saturdays you can still speak to us personally on 263 8602.

TEMPLARS
CHEMIST

768 Finchley Road, Temple Fortune, NW11

Tel: 455 3509, 458 6214

After hours 263 8602