

FHA Fete founders finally retire

After organising the Family Holiday Fete for nineteen years Patrick and Joan Laurance have actually committed themselves in writing that this is to be their last fete, previous verbal commitments having come to nothing. They have every hope that it will continue under 'new management'.

The story of the fete is a fascinating one. Readers will recall that for the first nine years the fete was held in Hill Close with every house participating, a unique achievement in itself. Numbers then dictated that they had to move to the larger location of Central Square.

The first year they were delighted with the profit of £570 and last year their hopes of breaking the £10,000 barrier were thwarted only by bad weather. This makes them all the more determined that the £10,000 mark must be surpassed this year.

Preparations for the event commence within weeks of the previous one, with a call to the Football Association to ascertain the date of the next year's cup final to make sure that two such important events don't clash! In November all local churches and schools are notified of the date of the next fete so that fund-raising events shouldn't clash.

From January to F. Day (13

May) the Laurances' lives revolve round the fete. 160 volunteers to be contacted, an opener to be found, 250 firms to be written to with requests for goods, hotels and restaurants to be approached for Dinner for Two vouchers, arrangements for tables to be borrowed, programme advertisements to be acquired etc.

In 1993 local organisations were invited to participate at a small cost, to publicise their activities and this year the invitation has been extended (at greater cost) to the travel trade with four firms already booking space and several others showing interest. This year visitors will have the opportunity to plan their own exotic holiday whilst at the same time supporting those for whom a holiday is a first ever experience.

The Laurances are reluctant to reveal how they have managed this year to acquire the first visit ever of a Klingon to the Garden Suburb.

Although not prepared to commit herself in advance, Lesley Joseph has agreed to open the fete if work permits. Should she be unable to our Klingon visitor will stand in if an interpreter can be found.

Pat Laurance
Sounds as though Anneke Rice and her Challenge programme has some serious competition from the Suburb Ed.

On leaving the Suburb

According to David Attenborough and his camera teams, even plants migrate; and the animal kingdom, including humans, is more obviously mobile. The well-armed bramble creeps aggressively through the undergrowth and the Baileys, unarmed and we hope less aggressive, have crept from Hampstead Garden Suburb to the distant hills and valleys of London south of the Thames. It has been, and still is, a considerable wrench.

Tina and I first came to know the Suburb soon after 1945 because old friends of ours, George and Joanne Bower, lived there. When in 1965 we came back from Africa and began to look for somewhere to live, our first choice was the Suburb and within about six months we had located what we wanted at 114 Hampstead Way, bought it and moved in; we kept it from that time onwards even though for much of each year we were in fact in Hong Kong. In 1983 we finally left Hong Kong and became proper residents of the Suburb, but since 1965 we have always thought of ourselves as Suburb residents despite sixteen years in Hong Kong.

So, what do we miss? Well, people, of course, the range of friends and acquaintances, not to mention the nodding acquaintances we never really knew but simply met as we went to and fro. It will take a long time to build up an equivalent range and, at our age, time is in shorter supply than it was thirty years ago. We can keep in touch with friends, but this is no substitute for the daily round of chance encounters which make life on the Suburb so pleasant.

Lee, where we now live and which is about halfway between Lewisham and Blackheath, is part of a conservation area and physically attractive, although not so well organised and

protected as the Suburb. Most of the houses are roughly of the same period as the Suburb, late Victorian and Edwardian, with a sprinkling of later buildings. Many roads, and our road in particular, have plenty of trees and there are some well-kept front gardens. There are several good small parks and, of course, Blackheath itself, which is a lot more open and wind-swept than Hampstead Heath. Traffic could be a problem, but Lewisham Council goes in for traffic calming and this helps. On the other hand the Suburb scores heavily with its access to buses and the dreaded Northern Line, which we are beginning to view with near-nostalgia. South of the river we have buses and BR South-East lines but huge areas, including ours, have no such thing as the Underground.

The actual moving went well enough, although the expert from Head Office sent beforehand to see what was needed badly underestimated both the amount and the time required. Nevertheless the movers themselves were a cheerful, helpful lot and after comments on the incompetence and family background of the experts from Head Office, got on with it with a will. The real misery lay ahead, with the re-organisation and re-decoration of the house after we moved in; but that, as Kipling used to say, is another story. **Bill Bailey**

The Fellowship cares for older Suburb residents

300 older Suburb residents continue to use the many and varied facilities of Fellowship House. From Croquet to Keep Fit, Quizzes to Bridge, Music to Scrabble, with many other activities in between, there is something on at Fellowship House most days.

In addition, there is care for those no longer able to visit Fellowship House. This is a real demonstration that the Suburb is a caring community.

The committee contains representatives of many Suburb organisations and needs some new and younger blood. Volunteers willing to give a little time should contact me.

Additional to committee members, we can always use drivers, tea makers and general helpers at Fellowship House, and assistants for Jumble Sales and Bring and Buy Sales. The amount of time is very flexible. Participate for your own pleasure and the benefit of your neighbours. If you want to see and learn more, visit Fellowship House, 136A Willifield Way, for their Open Afternoon on the Sunday of the Suburb Weekend, June 25, 3.00 - 5.30 pm. A video produced for the last Suburb Weekend will be shown at intervals as well as other displays and croquet in action. Tea and biscuits offered free! **Ralph Baldry**

DENNIS PINDER

Many residents must have been saddened to hear of the sudden death of Mr Dennis Pinder, proprietor of the J A Pinder & Son hardware store. This family business has surely had the longest-established shop in the Market Place. My parents, my sister and I were customers sixty years ago, having moved into the district in summer 1933, and I can recall the father, Mr J A Pinder, giving me advice about ship-modelling when I was a small boy.

D P did engineering work for the war effort. He had a great love for engineering, he told me, but after the war he gave it up to rejoin his father, eventually taking over the business and running it successfully. Other shops in the Market Place came and went, but

his continued. His cheerful and attentive manner was familiar to two generations of housewives and D.I.Y. enthusiasts. He was always concerned that people should go about any given task the right way, without wasting either effort or money: he would point out the best methods, the right materials and tools - down to precisely the right size of fitting or screw required (which he would usually have in stock).

He seemed somehow to belong to an England where high technical standards were always expected, integrity in business taken for granted and courtesy and service not considered demeaning. The community of the Suburb has lost a very good friend of long standing.

David Hassell

With the sad death of Dennis Pinder, the Suburb and the Market Place have lost not only an amazing institution, but also a valuable asset and not least a good friend.

The Pinder Hardware Stores stocked the unbelievable and the spares of past eras. Dennis was a fund of knowledge on all kinds of materials and how they should be used. I often visited him for some impossibly remote item and if he didn't have it (very rare) he would be able to tell you where to find it.

I also got to know him over the Falloeden Way/Market Place traffic problems, on which he had very strong views. He was a true and valued friend of the Suburb and of the people who live here. **Alan Lawson**

How should the Suburb commemorate the Millennium and its centenary?

Wanted - As the Millennium approaches - Your Ideas, Schemes, Plans or Projects.

Within a few years of the Millennium, the centenary of the Garden Suburb will be celebrated. The advent of National Lottery and of Millennium funding offers the residents of the Suburb great opportunities to present proposals to enhance the social, cultural and architectural environment of our historic suburb.

We believe that consulting the community we serve is one of the best ways forward in gaining the support and approval necessary for whatever is finally decided. We hope this request for your idea, scheme, plan or project will intensify the continuation of a long-standing discussion about the present and future needs of

our Suburb: now at last there seems to be a real possibility of the fulfilment of one of those long cherished dreams or even a package of them . . . Before this happens, of course, lies a long process of assessment and planning. But first we have to choose and decide what we want to do.

Your idea for this could be the one, or could form part of a potential package. It is proposed that all suitable ideas submitted will be discussed and assessed by the RA with the Trust, as well as publicly in this newspaper and elsewhere as appropriate, before taking the necessary further steps of detailed planning and presentation to the relevant Funds.

Please send your ideas to the Editor or to the RA Chairman. **Carol Boulter**

Gourmet get-together

It was through these columns that I was introduced to this group of residents who meet in each other's homes for good food and pleasant company. The idea is that each member will host a meal about once a year and the cook is always happy to provide the recipes of any of his/her dishes. Guests are asked to pay a small charge in order to cover the cost of the food.

Of course the immediate appeal of a Gourmet Society will be to people who are genuinely interested in food but there is another reason for joining - to have the opportunity of meeting and getting to know our neighbours better. I would particularly invite newcomers to the Suburb to consider trying us out. It offers an excellent opportunity for you to be welcomed into the area. The

cuisine and company of residents from abroad (you might be only a temporary visitor) is always greatly appreciated.

The more members we have and the more varied our backgrounds, the greater the interest and range of our meals will become. Don't be intimidated by the thought that you will be expected to be an expert accomplished cook. It is your personal approach to home-made food which is cherished. Above all you must want to entertain, also to be entertained, and to be prepared to welcome others into your home.

Please contact our Secretary Mary Whiting 0181-458 1238 if you would like to join or have more detailed information. **Sheila Lévy**

Telephone 0181-458 4422



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