

GARDEN SUBURB THEATRE

Murder in the Cathedral, arguably T S Eliot's greatest and certainly the most frequently performed of his plays, is having a revival in the Suburb this summer, in the leafy surroundings of the Little Oak Wood open air theatre.

Written in 1935 for the Canterbury Festival, the play deals with the month leading up to the murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket by four of King Henry II's knights in the year 1170. Thomas had been Henry's chancellor but had angered the King by resigning the position when appointed Archbishop, on the ground that the roles were incompatible.

However, *Murder in the Cathedral* is not merely about the conflict between King and Church but is also concerned with the way in which Thomas is tempted towards martyrdom when faced with the prospect of his own death.

An apparently unforgettable

performance in the main role was given in 1937 by the former Suburb resident Robert Donat. Fred Griessen, the director of the Garden Suburb Theatre's production, has also played the part - at the Mountview Theatre School in 1972.

The production is also featured in this year's *Proms at St Jude's* on 28 June. The murder of Thomas Becket took place, of course, in Canterbury Cathedral, which makes St Jude's Church particularly appropriate as a setting for this play.

Please see *What's On* for details of dates and tickets.

Early last year we gave details of the Little Acorns project by which the Garden Suburb Theatre aims to raise enough money to restore the Little Oak Wood theatre. Since then various events, including a quiz evening, lottery and a gala night, plus generous contributions from, for example, the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Ltd and the Hampstead

Garden Suburb Charitable Trust, have raised £10,500 towards our goal. The first phase of planting of new shrubs is complete, the second phase is about to begin and we hope that the asphalt of the audience terracing will be replaced with York stone before the end of the year.

However, there is still some way to go before we achieve the £25,000 to finish the project, most especially the scenery store, which has been designed by a local architect to fit in with both the woodland surroundings and the architectural style of the rest of the Suburb.

Obviously we still need your help. Individuals or businesses who would like to help towards this worthwhile project should contact Terry Rogers, our fund-raising coordinator, on 0181-445 0227. Any contributions will of course receive suitable acknowledgement, whether on site or in some part of our publicity.

Debbie Lane



David Rose (Di Luna), Jean Aird (Leonora), Vivienne Trenner (Azucena), John Carter (Maurice)

Hampstead Garden Opera - *Il Trovatore*

At the Institute Theatre in March, Hampstead Garden Opera staged Verdi's *Il Trovatore*.

The *Ham & High* praised "a dramatic and energetic performance", notably:

"Vivienne Trenner's earthy tones brought gritty realism to the part of Azucena, the gipsy woman who mistakenly kills her own child and raises the son of a Count (a powerful John Carter).

Jean Aird's youthful soprano instilled Leonora, Mankro's lover, with a childlike innocence, making her eventual suicide all the more disturbing."

Production was by Angela Dixon and the performance with the Crowndale Orchestra was conducted by Derek Carden, who stepped in at short notice to replace Roy Budden, who was unwell.

The event was sponsored by Glentree Estates.

The group's next opera at the Institute will be *Eugene Onegin* by Tchaikovsky (11 - 14 October). Singers and dancers who would be interested in joining the chorus should contact David Rose 0181 954 6432.

Keith Martin

Restoring Northway Gardens

Since the establishment of Friends of Northway Gardens, a steering group has met in order to determine priorities for the coming year. These have been based on a detailed inspection of the Gardens and views of local residents. There are key priorities for the steering group to discuss with Mr Derek Norman of Barnet Council's Parks Department who has supported the group since its formation.

The long, term aim of FONGs is to see the return of a full-time gardener with sole responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of the Gardens. It's not long ago that the Park Superintendent, Mr Saunders, used to proudly survey

the work of a team of full-time gardeners. It was also noted that there is much local concern about the state of the public tennis courts. Other areas which the group will keep under close observation are:

- the general maintenance of lawns, edgings and all flower/shrub beds and borders
- graffiti
- the restoration of the putting green hut or the removal of the hut
- the replanting of trees in the section between the Bungalow and Electricity Board's Substation

There is clearly much work to be done but encouragingly there

has been some real improvement over the winter months; the autumn leaves have been cleared, the lawns are better mown, derelict bridges have been replaced and several new rose bushes are now in the rose garden. Over fifty households are registered as members of FONGs, which has been set up under the auspices of the Residents Association and inspired by Spencer Hudson, Chairman of Trees & Open Spaces.

Any resident wishing to register support for the aims of FONGs should contact the convenor, at 91 Northway.

Sally Lewis

The Great Banquet

The Great Banquet is the central event of Pentecost 1995. On Saturday, June 3, all over London, people from different backgrounds and cultures will sit down together to eat, talk, to share ideas and needs and to explore the possibilities of developing a stronger community spirit. A meal at the Banqueting House in Whitehall will be a catalyst, stimulating many meals in local communities across the capital.

Churches Together in Golders Green & District is organising a

picnic tea (and treasure hunt for younger people) in Central Square from 3.00 to 5.00 on the day. It is hoped the weather will be perfect but, in the unlikely event of rain, the Churches in Central Square and the Church Halls will be available for use.

Participants are asked to bring their own food and soft drinks. Tea will be provided. We look to Hampstead Garden Suburb residents for their full support and hope for a large gathering. See "Whats On" column.

Mary Stephen

HGS Theatre Club

The HGS Theatre Club will be FIVE YEARS old on 5 July 1995. It is one of the most successful Residents Association clubs, having about one hundred and forty members. Each month, between 40 and 50 members meet and are taken by coach to a London theatre or one within a hour's drive of London. Once a year there is a whole day's outing, such as Chichester Festival Theatre.

Members join for many reasons - to visit the theatre with pleasant companions - to have tickets booked and transport provided - to avoid looking for somewhere to park! Recent visits have included 'Under Milk Wood', 'The Rivals', 'The Venetian Twins', 'Three Tall Women' and 'Sweet Bird of Youth' in London theatres and 'The Killing of Sister George' at the Richmond Theatre.

On Thursday 18 May the Theatre Club has tickets for the new and highly acclaimed play by Tom Stoppard - 'Indian Ink' at The Aldwych, and on Tuesday 13 June we visit the Richmond Theatre to see the 'Magic Flute'.

The membership subscription is £6 a year and is open to all members of the Residents Association. New members should contact Ruth Gumb on 455 6490.

Jean Barraclough

Sunflowers for Hospice

Please help the North London Hospice make June a bumper fund raising month by promoting bright yellow artificial sunflowers - the national emblem of the Hospice movement.

We need offers of help from people willing to sell them at local garden centres and supermarkets. Also we would like to see a box of sunflowers for sale on the reception desk of every local company, shop and surgery. Phone Myra, Pauline or Theresa on 0181-343 8841 for further information.



Malcolm Linchis, Roger Enskat, Nigel Curzon, Keith Martin, Mike Chattin

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