

Cypress hedges on the Suburb

One of the most attractive features of the Garden Suburb is the presence of hedges which unifies not just individual roads, but the area as a whole. From time to time and for various reasons, existing hedges have to be replaced and it then becomes a question of which variety to choose; normally residents require a species that is evergreen and fast growing thereby providing privacy in the shortest possible time.

Unfortunately the majority of gardeners and nurseries almost invariably recommend the 'Leyland Cypress' as being the most appropriate species - so why not?

The Leyland Cypress (*Cupressocyparis leylandii*) is a hardy variety of Cypress which will attain over 30.00m (100'0") in less than 50 years. Growth is very rapid and shoots of up to 1.00m (3'3") in length are not uncommon during one season; in the month of July and under favourable conditions it can grow up to 100mm (4") per week. This very rapid growth often appeals to those requiring instant privacy; however, there are many down sides to the choice.

First of all it is a tree rather than a shrub and therefore much more vigorous in its growth pattern, maintenance becomes very labour intensive in retaining a clipped hedge at a reasonable height, and often requires three or four cuts per annum. The girth of the trunk also increases in size by up to 50mm (2") annually, thus creating a noticeable line of large trunks accentuated by the gradually decreasing foliage at the lower level as time progresses. The sight of Leyland Cypress trees of over 10.00m (30'0") is quite common and this often originates from a badly neglected hedge.

The roots system is vigorous and creates a dense matrix of fibrous roots leading to extreme soil desiccation in a relatively short space of time. Because of the dry soil and hungry root system it becomes increasingly difficult to establish other more favourable and delicate plants anywhere near the hedge. This often defeats the object in creating conditions for a pleasant and attractive garden where the hedge is a very low key feature purely to demarcate the boundary and/or provide a backdrop to more colourful shrubs and plants.

The extreme soil desiccation can adversely effect nearby structures and contribute to subsidence problems. Leyland



Line of trunks in a cypress hedge

Cypress are classed by the Building Research Establishment as having a high water demand and are therefore to be avoided in close proximity to buildings. The changing weather pattern with dry conditions through winter and summer can also accentuate the problems with root activity affecting structures which often leads to subsidence.

It is therefore more advisable to plant an evergreen hedge using shrub varieties such as Privet, Elaeagnus, and Euonymus, or tree species such as Holly, Yew or Beech, which have either a

moderate or a low water demand.

From an aesthetic and purely design point of view Cypress hedges are generally frowned upon because they are not indigenous species, and were not part of the original design concept for the Garden Suburb. Cypress hedges also tend to die off for no apparent reason and form areas of brown die back and dead foliage, which is of course most unsightly.

It should also be remembered that Trust guidelines for hedge heights are 1.00m (3'3") for front gardens and 2.00m (6'6") for rear gardens. Most reasonable nurseries provide hedging plants of the more common varieties at the suggested maximum heights

and therefore the long wait for a hedge to establish need not be a consideration. It is very important to choose a hedge species which marries into the overall landscape and thus continues the homogeneous effect created in whole streets with the same hedge variety. To suddenly introduce an alien hedge species destroys the harmony of the landscape and is ill advised.

If you require free advice on hedges and varieties please contact the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust. **Anthony George**



Eddie Caplin, Gerry Mansell, Robert Vigars, John Marshall MP and Léonie Stephen

Trust Christmas Luncheon

In welcoming his guests Chairman Eddie Caplin said that he was pleased that the listing of so many Suburb properties had been announced. In this connection he particularly wanted to thank Mervyn Miller for all the hard work he had put in to make it happen, and John Marshall MP for accelerating the listing process.

Reviewing the year, he said he was glad that a traffic plan, joint with the RA, was on paper but there was a long way to go before implementation.

On the Institute question he said he hoped for "long harmony on Central Square. There are no

issues blocking settlement, it is a matter of goodwill."

He thanked Lady Howie for her time on the Trust Council and looked forward to working with new member Mervyn Mandell.

Turning to Robert Vigars, who is retiring from Ashdale, he said he "has been a true guardian of the Suburb".

Gerry Mansell made a presentation to Robert Vigars and said, "Not many know what part he has played in the conservation of the Suburb. As ground landlord for 27 years one might have expected him to be hardfaced but in fact he has been most enlightened. The Garden Suburb owes

him an enormous amount for his decision to transfer to the Trust the Ashdale leases on the Suburb which meant that the Trust had reverted to the power of the old Trust."

Robert Vigars said he had always enjoyed his relationship with the Trust and was sure he and his wife were going to enjoy the Suburb watercolour with which he had been presented.

Léonie Stephen, RA Chairman, on behalf of all the guests thanked the Trust for their hospitality and said that it was a great pleasure to meet so many people who were involved with the Suburb. **Richard Wakefield**

Top marks for Brookland School

Brookland Infant School is on top form, scoring high in all the national curriculum subjects, according to a school inspectors' report.

The report said that the school 'provided a warm, caring and stimulating environment which supports positive attitudes to learning with equal opportunities for all.' It praised staff, parents and governors, saying their joint efforts were responsible for creating an atmosphere where children were able to reach the highest standards across the board.

Brookland Infant School, Hill Top, Hampstead Garden Suburb, was visited by a team of inspectors from the education watchdog, Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) earlier this year and their report has now been published.

The inspectors were specially impressed by the pupils who were seen as shining examples of keen young workers and excellent listeners. They were confident and articulate, polite and helpful, and made a positive contribution to the high quality marks gained by the school.

Teaching standards were described as 'outstanding'. Well-planned lessons and high

expectations combined to produce first class results with English, science, physical education, music and design and technology being singled out for special praise.

And the inspectors did not confine themselves to academic standards alone. They looked closely at the financial and administrative running of the school, which they regard as having an equally important part to play in providing high quality education. Here too they found the same efficient approach and good management producing the strong support and back-up needed to maintain a well-run school.

Headteacher Sheila Abbott welcomed the report, saying that she was pleased the inspectors had 'recognised the contribution made by all the staff to the school's development. The staff, governors, parents and pupils are all proud of our school and the positive role it plays in the local community,' she said. 'We shall build on this report and continue to work hard to give all our children, whatever their ability, the best possible education in happy and secure surroundings.'

Ray McKay

Big fun walk

Following on from the enormously successful walk in March 1996, the North West Support Group of the North London Hospice centred at Fellowship House, Hampstead Garden Suburb, will be holding their 1997 Sponsored Big Fun Walk on Sunday 16 March 1997. It starts at 10 am at East Finchley Underground Station forecourt and the springtime trek passes through the London parks for 7.5 miles and ends at Westminster, with refreshments and celebrity stops en route.

Anyone wishing to take part, for either all or part of the way, should please contact Gillian on 0181 458 9044 or Vivienne on 0181 203 5131, for registration forms.

Special Announcement

Are you a Henrietta Barnett School old girl, who left in 1946/47/48, or do you know anyone who is?

A reunion is planned for 1997, and any information would be welcome.

Please contact: Cynthia Landis on 0171 286 1162 or Alma Smullen on 0181 202 8764.

Recently 10 Linnell Drive (Linnell End) was sold for £1.65 million. This is a large house at the end of Linnell Drive backing on to the Heath Extension. The house has 10 bedrooms and a private tennis court in the garden. For over 30 years it was owned by Mr Gammell. Previous owners have included the Packenham family and Antonia Frazer spent her childhood there.

Originally the house and a part

of the garden were on separate leases, although they were merged when the property became freehold. The new owner, Michael Keats, whose family live in Heathgate, is trying to prove that when the Suburb was laid out there was a separate building plot between 8 and 10 Linnell Drive and this explains why there were two leases. He has applied to Barnet to build a new 6 bedroom detached house

on this land. The application is being vigorously opposed by the Trust, Residents Association and all the other residents of Linnell Drive.

In the meantime Michael Keats has put the original house, less the land on the garden lease, back on the market for £1.75 million.

C M Kellerman

Late News

LB Barnet has refused planning permission for this proposal.

New and changed RA Committees

Please update the entry under Residents Association Standing Committees on page 17 of your current Suburb Directory 1996-1997.

Trees & Open Spaces

- * Spencer Hudson (Chn) (458 1288)
- Miss Georgina Malcolm (Sec)
- Peter Beesley
- Chris Dickinson
- Colin Gregory
- * Michael Holton
- * Mrs Sally Lewis
- * Tim Neal
- Mrs Léonie Stephen
- Douglas Thomas

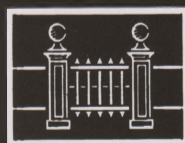
Events

- * Elizabeth Grundrey (Chn)
- * Gerlinde Bates (Hon Sec)
- * Jean Barraclough
- * Joan Beales
- * Dorothea Brandes
- * Irene Kloepfer
- * Caroline Lazar
- * Ruth Smith
- Léonie Stephen

A New Committee

The Residents Association now has an Events Committee which will be providing our community with a variety of future attractions - from social to sporting and musical to dramatic. Coach tours to stately homes and gardens? Lectures by distinguished speakers? Dinners or dances? What do you want it to provide, from next autumn onwards? All ideas and offers of help are welcome - on a postcard please, to the Chairman, 30 Southway, NW11 6RU.

It is this committee which will be running the Suburb's festival weekend, 21-22 June (see page 4).



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