

well into the Millennium. It is a tightly packed encyclopaedic work, lavishly illustrated (with an enticing cover photograph of the Unwin/Wade entrance to Heathgate from the Great Wall, and Lutyens' soaring spire of St Jude on the Hill) and spiced with anecdote and quotation, seamlessly blending the approach of the affectionate young outsider with that of the octogenarian resident caretaker.

Stuart was essentially a happy person, who never dwelt on his own misfortunes, although the illnesses and bereavements in his immediate family caused much heartache. He and Avis had already left their beloved Middleway and found a Parker and Unwin cottage at No.1 Temple Fortune Hill, when she died.

After a time, he found some students to share his home and much of his life, and these young people made him happy again. They nearly all had some connection with the musical world, and he loved to hear them singing and playing violin and piano. One girl revived his own musical talents and had him learning Mozart sonatas from memory. Another brought Placido Domingo home to tea only to find he was on a grapes only diet! The spread acquired hastily from Sherrard's lasted them all for weeks!

Afternoon tea was something of a ceremony with Stuart. Weather permitting he would be in the garden or on the Wakefield memorial seat by his gate, equipped with a tray of tea and enjoying the sun and company of passers-by. He also frequented Sherrard's where he was sure of a warm welcome and a treat or two. A special tea was arranged at the Trust Offices to celebrate his 90th birthday in July 1995 and he greatly enjoyed the feast and an opportunity to hold court. A resident, Miss Mary

Ambrose, has remembered how he quickly became the centre of a group on social occasions, but he was always interested in what others had to say. I remember myself an example of this endearing trait. There was a traffic jam in Piccadilly and Stuart was marooned with several others on a pedestrian island in the middle of the road. Within minutes he set up an impromptu seminar, using his ancient umbrella to point out that we were able to see from where we stood the work of England's three greatest architects - Christopher Wren's St James' church, Lutyens' Midland Bank and Norman Shaw's Piccadilly Hotel. He was still engaged in lively discussion long after the road was clear to cross.

The one house he designed in the Suburb, at No.24 Spencer Drive, was in a simple Art Deco style of white stucco, enhanced by elegant landscaping. This house suffered subsidence and has been completely transformed.

He delighted in his Life Membership of the Residents' Association - "Now I'm a FREEMAN of the Garden Suburb!" and regretted that a slight indisposition prevented him from travelling by car so that he was unable to attend the 90th birthday celebrations last year. I fancy his qualms about being a nuisance might have been put to flight if the visiting Rolls Royce had been despatched to fetch him, but that is hindsight.

He was enthusiastic about the Suburb Gallery, and tickled at the setting up and naming of the Toulouse cafe - no doubt he would have been a visitor to both if he had been able to stay. What his surviving daughter recalled as his "delight in life" was an infectious example to all who knew him, as was his courage in adversity.

His prodigious memory in his 'mind's eye' served him well as he became blind, and he used to say: "Oh - but I can still see everything in my head - including a whole lot of places and buildings that I believe I've never seen before! Now that's odd, isn't it?"

In all his writing and talking he was engaged in telling stories, seizing the attention of his readers and listeners with gentle homilies, quirky humour and a wealth of anecdote and experience - one to be wondered at and not forgotten.

DAWN ORR

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Success of resident writer

It's rare for any author to get a six figure advance for a book, and almost unique for that to happen to an unknown writer, with the MS of his first novel already several times rejected.

Suburb resident Michael Ridpath (of North Square) has now achieved that kind of success three times running. His latest thriller, *The Marketmaker*, has just been published by Michael Joseph and may well clock up worldwide sales of a million or so just as *Free to Trade* and *Trading*

Reality have already done. All are set against the heady background of mega-dealings in financial institutions - in the City, Scotland and, in his latest book, Brazil to which he went last year to research the setting. Like P D James, Michael finds location the single most important aspect in all his books - then specialized contacts, then characters.

He admits, as many authors do not, that much in his stories is autobiographical. Mark, hero of *Trading Reality*, read history

at Oxford before being recruited by the City in one of its drives to woo the cream of the arts graduates - as did Michael himself, which is how he became a bond trader for eight years and then an investment banker for three. "Studying history," he says, "is an excellent training in analysing information, which is what it's all about. Researching new businesses, weighing up a huge amount of data, and above all assessing personalities." He was instrumental in raising £100

million to put Covent Garden Soups on the map, and similarly backed Waterstone's meteoric rise.

Michael started to write as a form of escapism, then began to think seriously of producing a bestseller "one day". His instant success came as a surprise and led to a switch of career from financier to full-time author. He is just as disciplined a writer as he was a businessman, renting a City office to which he commutes much as before - though some thinking out of his plots is done walking on the Heath Extension.

Although he enjoyed the stimulating world of finance, he regrets the way staff are today so driven that they work all hours (now true in other accountant-dominated industries too) and family life suffers.

Self-employed, Michael sets his own hours and makes a point of often taking his young daughters to and from school himself; his wife has a two-day job in City banking. He feels the work ethic has now got completely out of control, with excessive pressure and fear of sackings dominating people's lives. Exposure of greed and ruthlessness is a theme that increasingly runs through his work.

Now that writing is no longer an escape from work but work itself, Michael has another outlet - he has learnt to fly (at Elstree). "There should always be fun and enjoyment in life," he insists. But he also finds time to be active on the Society of Authors management committee, crusading for better deals for the majority of authors, who do not make six figures in a lifetime, let alone from one book.

ELIZABETH GUNDREY

The Dame Henrietta Barnett Fund

The will of Dame Henrietta Barnett, the founder of Hampstead Garden Suburb, set up several trusts. Three were for the Barnetts' public lives, for Institute and School on Hampstead Garden Suburb, and Toynbee Hall in the East End. Three were for the purposes of the Barnetts' private lives, at school and college.

The three 'public' trusts have now been combined and updated, and the reformed Dame Henrietta Barnett Fund is being launched to promote education and to alleviate poverty. A new board of trustees, including the heads of the School, Institute and Toynbee Hall, has been appointed and will develop the work of the Fund so that Dame Henrietta's vision can be better realised.

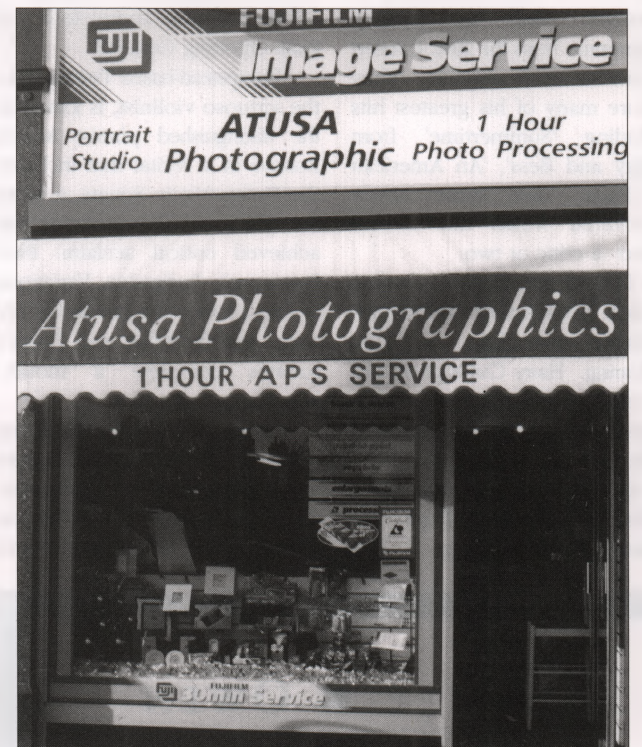
The available funds are strictly limited and are this year being spent on supporting needy students at the Henrietta Barnett School and the Institute and a very few users of Toynbee Hall. But this year there is also a special appeal to benefit the vital work being carried out by Toynbee Hall with children and young people (a leaflet is enclosed with this issue).

If you would like more information about the Fund, do please contact the Clerk to the Trustees, care of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute, or contact me direct as chairman of the trustees on 455 6537.

Thank you for your interest.

SIMON ABBOTT

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