

# SUBURB NEWS

THE HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION NEWSPAPER ■ WINTER 99 - ISSUE 62

## Henrietta Barnett School comprehensive threat

Government proposals to do away with selection in education could have far reaching consequences for Henrietta Barnett and for the Suburb.

Parliament has agreed that it is up to parents of pupils at the feeder schools to all three of Barnets selective schools, Henrietta Barnett, Queen Elizabeth's Boys and St Michaels Catholic Girls to ask for a ballot.

Already a Barnet group has completed the first stage by sending 10 names, interested in petitioning for a ballot, to Electoral Reform Ballot Services. The next stage is for ERBS to decide who is eligible to vote and for the anti-selection groups to get 20% of them to petition for a ballot. If they succeed, a separate postal ballot will follow for each school and the outcome will be decided by a simple majority.

Some feel, however, that this simply wont happen as there are so many and such widespread feeder schools involved and there is little evidence of any significant demand for change. Parents of girls already at Henrietta Barnett will have no vote and the school governors themselves are barred from attempting to influence the voting, but parent's associations have no such restriction.

Henrietta Barnett's PTA Chairman Patrick Phillips said "who knows what will happen? There must be a very large number of parents eligible to vote and a determined minority could push through a change. I can't disclose our plans yet but the PTA is giving serious consideration to what action we can take to counter what we see as a serious threat to the school".

Opinion on the Suburb is divided with some objecting ideologically to selection and others feeling that Suburb girls should have an automatic right to attend the local school. One parent said "Why should one of my girls have to travel all the way to Hendon while her sister walks to Central Square?". The school has however pointed out more than once that even with selection they do favour local girls but that successful Suburb entrants are more likely to turn down the offer and go elsewhere.

How practical is the idea of HB going comprehensive? It may well be that it just is too small. Comprehensive streaming could lead to more classes at

different levels and the school is stretched for space as it is.

One resident, herself a teacher but not at the school, said "Of course - the staff will change, at present its an easy and rewarding job, they're all clever girls; they respond to teaching, catch on quickly and if they need any help their parents will arrange extra coaching". A rather sweeping statement of course as it is certainly the case that many Henrietta Barnett pupils are not in a position to pay for extras, but going comprehensive could make for a very different teaching environment.

Garden Suburb Councillor Jasmin Naghar said "We must try to retain the status of Henrietta Barnett. I understand those who say local girls should be able go to the local school but if it became a comprehensive it would quickly lose its academic status and as a result fewer Garden Suburb girls might attend. In the long term it would not be beneficial for the Suburb".

RICHARD WAKEFIELD

## Humph back at St Jude's

Plans for the 7th Proms at St Jude's include a Grand Community Concert on June 17 featuring choirs from Alyth Gardens, the Free Church and St Jude's with London Collegium Brass. The programme will include the European premier of American composer Jack Gottlieb's 'Affirmations for Choir and Brass'.

There will be a superb concert on the 19th when Andrew Davis will conduct the Haydn Chamber Orchestra.



MICHAEL HOLLTON

Cllr Cathy McGuirk uses Henrietta Barnett's spade to plant the first tree donated by the Residents Association.

## Instant tree planting

Councillor Cathy McGuirk who chairs the Environment Committee at Barnet, presided over a tree planting ceremony in Hampstead Way on Nov 19 to mark the arrival of 30 street trees paid for by the Residents Association. Welcoming guests who included Anne Lippit, Barnets Director of Environmental Services, Cllr John Marshall, Chris Kellerman from the Trust and RA Trees Committee chairman Léonie Stephen, RA, Chairman Richard

Wakefield said "Much of the work the RA does for the Suburb is inevitably very long term, so it is extremely satisfying to be able to do something that has a real impact so quickly. Today's tree planting is the result of an idea which was floated at our AGM on March 27, agreed by the RA Council in April and later by Barnet and within 8 months the new trees are in. He said it had been a pleasure for the RA to work with the Trust,

who had paid for a further 10 trees, and Barnet's tree officers.

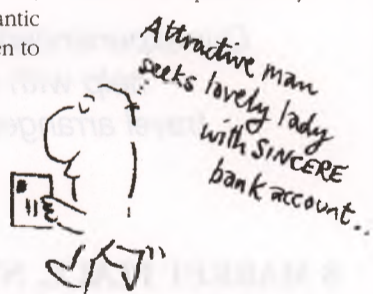
Cllr Cathy McGuirk said she was pleased at the way everyone had cut through the red tape and the way the Suburb was supplementing the number of trees Barnet could afford. She paid tribute to Georgina Malcolm whose original survey had highlighted the fact that more than 150 street trees were missing throughout the Suburb.

RICHARD WAKEFIELD

## Valentines at the Gallery

This year make a fuss of your loved one(s) by making a bee-line for the Valentine Show at the Gallery. Pictures, cartoons, ceramics and cards on romantic themes for all from the brazen to

the faint hearted. From January 30 to February 14. Garden Suburb Gallery, Temple Fortune end of Hampstead Way.



## Home Sweet Home

We at Glentree, who live and work in the Suburb regard it as our home and we would like to believe that all our clients feel at home with our service.

Buying or selling a house needs very careful handling and over the past quarter of a century we have endeavoured to provide the kind of service which is professional, understanding and sensitive to the needs of our clients.

We are an unusual company in that although we are locally based, we procure purchasers from a worldwide international network which may enable us to achieve a fulsome price for you, which we hope fully justifies the value to you of your home.

We have produced a guide to selling and renting your home and also one which refers to the various aspects of the recent listing of 500 properties in the Suburb of architectural merit.

If you would like a copy or just an in principle discussion, we would welcome your call.



SALES: 0181 458 7311 • LETTINGS: 0181 209 1144  
698 FINCHLEY ROAD, LONDON NW11 7NE

On each day of the Proms there will be a Young Musicians Platform lunchtime concert given by leading London Music College students.

The Last Night will see the welcome return of Humphrey Lyttelton and his band who had the audience jiving in the aisles during their last appearance.

The Proms will be raising money for the North London Hospice and the Henrietta Barnett Fund in aid of Toynbee Hall. The programme is subject to change.

To join the Friends of the Proms or to sponsor an event please call Susie Gregson on 458 1675.

## RA AGM - your chance to vote

The 87th Annual General Meeting of the RA will take place on 29 March 1999 at 8pm in Bigwood Hall, Bigwood Road, NW11. Motions for the agenda must be received by first post on 15 February 1999.

Nominations for the post of officers and members of Council must be submitted in writing, signed by proposers and seconders and have the consent of nominees.

These must be received by 19 March 1999.

Please send notice of motions and nominations to the Hon. Secretary: Graham Cunnold 55 Middleway, NW11 6SH.



Nicola Prince accepts a picture of the Suburb from Trust Chairman Eddie Caplin on winning a window display competition for her hat shop during the Residents Association's Market Place Week.

## RA volunteer needed

The Residents Association needs to find a volunteer to receive envelopes sent in by members with their subscriptions. Known as Membership Secretary you will need to open the post, list only the amount of each cheque, pass the lists and cheques to the Treasurer every now and again and pass the membership cards to someone else for entry on to the database. Please call on 458 6685 or 455 7100.



A resplendent Dr Mervyn Miller at Oxford Brookes University on being conferred a Visiting Fellowship. Dr Miller has been a Trust council member for the RTPi for more than 20 years and is an RA Life Member. See p 7.