

A sculptor's view of St Jude

A large and dramatic figure of St Jude himself can now be seen in the south-west vestibule of St Jude's church, South Square. It was "unveiled" on St Jude's Day, 28 October. The striding, vigorous figure of the disciple, reputedly a cousin of Jesus, carries the club with which he was battered to death by the pagans he was trying to convert - one of the very few facts about his life which is known, hence his sobriquet "Jude the Obscure".

The statue is the work of Southway resident Alec Worster (a former churchwarden), whose gaunt figures portraying homelessness many residents will recall: they were displayed here in 1994 before touring Britain as part of the "Invest in Futures" campaign run by the Prince's Trust.

Alec Worster, after his education at Gordonstoun - which he enjoyed despite its reputation for rigour - and Oxford (where he read English), spent 30 years in advertising where he became a director of Ogilvy and Mather. Then in 1975 he began to study sculpture - first at the Suburb's Institute, later at what is now Guildhall University (where he won the Owen Rowley Prize for outstanding work) and at Middlesex University. He was a finalist in the World Wildlife Fund's sculpture competition in 1992, with a woodland "green man", and has exhibited widely. In 1997, Southwark Cathedral commissioned a group of Nativity figures from him which are displayed there every Christmas.

There are a number of churches dedicated to St Jude: ours carries on the name of the East End church of St Jude's

Bethnal Green (now demolished) where Samuel Barnett had been vicar before becoming a Canon of, first, Bristol and then Westminster Abbey. (There is a memorial to both him and Henrietta, founder of the Suburb, in the Abbey, though they are buried in Sussex). The dedication was appropriate to the Bethnal Green church, where the Barnetts worked so long for the very deprived local population, because Jude is traditionally the patron of lost causes, the last hope of the destitute and outcast, and of societies' misfits generally.

Until relatively recently, he was largely ignored - unpopular because his name was so like that of Judas Iscariot (sometimes, he has been known as Thaddeus instead). Then, in the depression of the 1920s, a Chicago priest working among poor Mexicans set up a statue of Jude which became a centre of devotion - city-wide and ultimately world-wide.

The cult has proved to be a channel for the well-to-do to reach out to the poor, just as many Suburb residents today reach out to help the East End poor through the social work of Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel - another Barnett foundation, to which the Suburb regularly gives support (via the Dame Henrietta Barnett Fund, the HGS Trust and the Fellowship). Long may the spirit of St Jude live on!

ELIZABETH GUNDREY

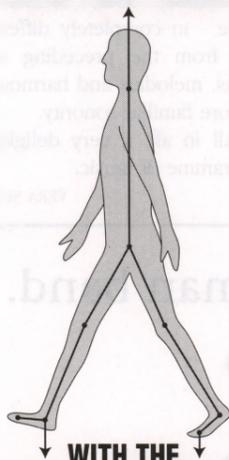
Sweet treats for foxes

Suburb foxes are looking a pretty mangy lot - but they can be helped.

The National Fox Welfare Society provides a homeopathic remedy that has been proven to work against the dreadful condition of mange in foxes.

Since the remedy is made of natural products there is no fear of overdosing and nothing to worry about if a non-infected fox or other animal takes the treatment. A few drops, supplied nightly on food left for foxes, will be enough to treat them. "Foxes love sweet things, cats don't, so administer the treatment on jam or peanut butter sandwiches rather than dog or cat food which may well be eaten by cats before the foxes get there" recommends the Society. Their number, which always seems to be busy, is 01933 411996 or write to: National Fox Welfare Society, 32 Bradfield Close, Rushden, Northants NN10 0EP.

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Alex Maunder BSc, MSTAT
79 Brookland Rise,
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123 Erskine Hill
London NW11 6HU

Sir

I read with astonishment the article 'Gardening: time to relax' by Diane Berger who shows complete ignorance on the question of trees. I trust that her knowledge of gardening is better than her knowledge of trees. The trees in Erskine Hill are the pride and joy of residents who have fought many battles to protect them from the likes of Ms Berger with her anti-environmental views. To describe the plane trees in Hampstead Way as 'monsters' merely illustrates her jaundiced thinking. The dictionary meaning of monster is "misshapen animal or plant, wicked or cruel". I cannot see how any tree can meet this description. If, however, by monster she means that they are large then I have very serious concerns over her views on aesthetics. In fact the only time that these trees and those in Erskine Hill came anywhere near to meeting her description of "monster" was when they were brutally and savagely pollarded.

She goes on to compound her ignorance by stating that "global warming makes it inappropriate for these trees to be planted in the Suburb because they drink copious amounts of water which dries out the clay soil". What she ignores is that one of the contributing factors to global warming is the widescale reduction and removal of trees. Ms Berger forgets the importance of these trees in for instance combating the noxious fumes from the North Circular and Finchley Roads. She argues for their removal for the sake of "the peace of mind and happiness of the community" which is affected because "the leaves as big as dinner plates litter the pavements making a trip to Waitrose more of an assault course than a pleasant stroll". Tough! I would rather the natural environment of trees and leaves than an environment bereft of them.

With regard to subsidence if one were to accept the proposition that trees cause subsidence then I fear that Ms Berger's gardening days will have to come to an end, as all vegetation takes moisture and consequently a scorched earth policy will have to be adopted so as to reduce the take-up of moisture. This would be patently absurd and I would ask Ms Berger to look at the many instances of subsidence in

circumstances where not a tree is in sight. The houses on the Suburb were built on shallow foundations, which makes them vulnerable to subsidence. Had they been built at the current building regulations depth, this problem could have to a large extent been avoided.

Yours
Siddiek Meer

79 Addison Way
London NW11 6AR

Sir

I write to congratulate you on your very fine newspaper.

I was particularly interested in 'Garden Suburbs Down Under' in the Autumn issue, as I come from Australia and, in fact, lived in Haberfield in 1949-50 while studying dentistry at Sydney University. No.28 Tressider Avenue, if I remember correctly.

I would not regard the house pictured in your article as 'typical' - it looks to me like an elegant example of the Federation style that may give the suburb its distinctive character, but many homes from the same period are architecturally a good deal blunder and less imaginative.

I was also more than a little surprised to learn that Haberfield was conceived as a "garden suburb". I was friendly with residents who had lived there from the 1930's and I never heard them refer to the area in those terms. By the turn of the century, a brick bungalow with a garden was well established as a middle-class norm pretty well everywhere in Sydney, so I would be interested to know what special objectives the founders had in mind. A mix of social classes, perhaps, as in the Hampstead Garden Suburb?

Nor do I recall any focal location in Haberfield for education and religious worship comparable with the HGS Central Square. Speaking of which, I thoroughly endorse the "Institute Statement" on page 6, and share its misgivings. I have done several courses at the Institute and greatly appreciate its historic importance as an integral part of the founders' vision. The very success of the Henrietta Barnett School has made it attractive to an elite who may otherwise have no connection with the Suburb and little appreciation of its traditions and aspirations.

Yours
Les Hiatt

3 Ruskin Close
NW11 7AU

Sir

A Litter Free Suburb

Thanks to all participating in the renewed efforts to keep our Suburb free of litter. This happens without meetings or formality. It discourages the dropping of litter, whilst many of us pick up the little litter that is dropped.

The Suburb Schools are now involved. I do need a few more Litter Wardens. It is a social activity that takes but a few minutes a week. Please give me a ring if you are willing to participate (459 2277).

A suggested routine for every one of us: -

- Pick up a piece of litter every day.
- Ensure that the area in front of your home is clear of litter.
- Do not leave your waste paper box permanently outside your home. Place it there only the night before collection day. Lids blow off, causing more litter, and wet waste paper is useless. For some reason, the waste paper collection teams do not collect from every home (e.g. they don't come into Ruskin Close in spite of regular reminders). If yours is an ignored home, do not put your paper box outside.

This will provide us with Neighbourhood Pride and will put our Litter Wardens out of a job. Absence of litter discourages its dropping.

Yours
John M Davis

117, Hampstead Way
London NW11 7JN

Sir

Shopping by Phone

Having seen your article in Suburb News, I am writing to recommend Grabams Butchers, 134 East End Road tel. 883 6187. The brother and sister who run it have been there for 30 years and have lately been joined by his son. All kinds of good quality fresh meats are available, also cooked meats and cheeses. They deliver in the Suburb.

Yours
Lady Cox

33 Northway
London NW11 6PD

Sir

Would it not be possible for every householder to undertake the small task of keeping the patch outside their property free of rubbish? This is only a little thing to do and yet would make a real difference to the appearance of our streets.

Yours
Selma Shrank

10 St Peter's Court
Christopher Lane
Sudbury, Suffolk

Sir

.....My copy of Suburb News is eagerly awaited, devoured and passed on to the Whitelaws in Oakham - you may find some people who remember the Drs Henderson and Whitelaw!

My copy originates from the Hannams then to my sister and on to me

Yours
Monica Collins

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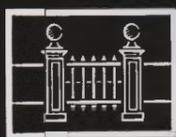
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