



Leonard (Len) Potipbar, known to very many on the Suburb, died in May in his 101st year. Len had been resident in The Orchard for about 20 years, was Show Secretary of the Horticultural Society for 17 years and one of its Vice-Presidents until his death.

To honour Len and to celebrate his long association with both the Horticultural Society and The Orchard, one of Len's own watercolours was purchased by the society (with the proceeds going to the North London Hospice). The painting has been hung in the lobby of the block where Len lived in The Orchard and was unveiled by Councillor John Marshall, another of the Society's Vice-Presidents, at a small ceremony and reception on 2 October.

Suburb Fellowship

Rumour has it that some residents are withholding donations to Fellowship because they think we are too well off!

On the face of it we are well off – mainly due to an almost embarrassing number of bequests recently. But bequests (unlike residents' donations) cannot be counted on – we may not get another for some years and our 'normal' income is not sufficient to support the high costs of maintaining Fellowship House and its grounds.

Fellowship House is a considerable Suburb asset: it is intensively used, at a modest charge, by all sorts of organisations and individuals, and is free to bona fide charities.

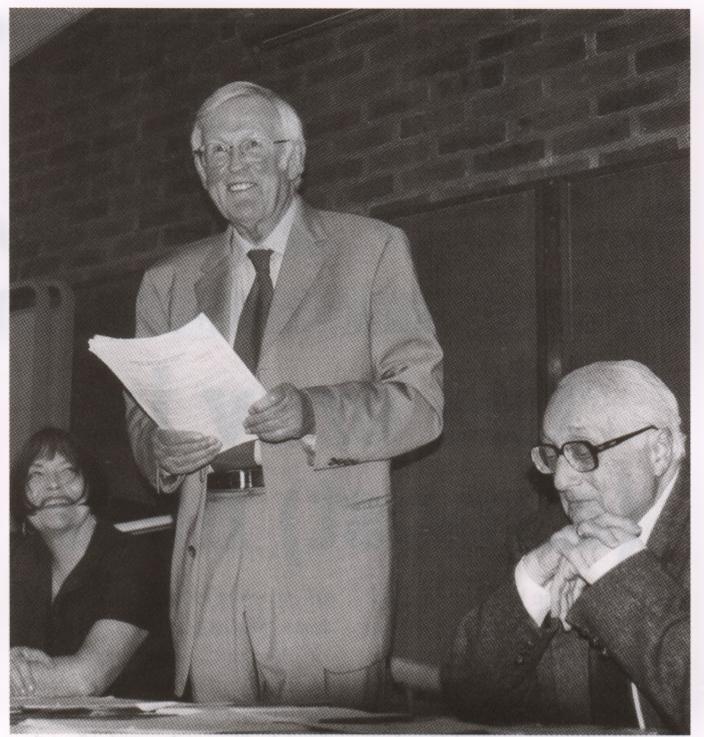
In the light of this extra money we shall be able to do things at Fellowship House

which will make the lot of our members, and our volunteers, rather easier. It is a pity we cannot use the money to buy volunteers! We really are in need of some new helpers to succeed a number of stalwarts who have either died or become too frail to help.

If you can offer a few hours once a month to help us (either by driving or helping make tea, etc. at Fellowship House) do please telephone me on 020 8458 2889: I should be delighted to hear from you.

On a lighter note, the annual visit of senior citizens from Toynbee Hall in July was its usual success. We commissioned a pictorial record of the event for our Archives and we were blessed with a lovely sunny day.

EILEEN WHELAN



Dr Chris Donovan (centre) with Jan White and treasurer Gerald Cane.

Hospice North West Support Group AGM

Mr Douglas Bennett, the new Executive Director, was the guest speaker at the AGM of the North West Support Group of the North London Hospice. He explained to the very many Friends of the Hospice at Fellowship House, where the group is centred, of the continued vital work of the dedicated staff and army of volunteers.

The recruitment of more nurses in order to make sure that all of the 25 beds are open was most important and also the extended specialist training programme for staff at the Hospice, together with clinicians from hospitals.

Dr Rudi Viz, MP, presented a cheque for £120,000 to Mr Bennett, being monies raised through the varied and popular fund raising functions over the past year, which included the major springtime event of the sponsored Big Fun Walk.

In thanking Chairman, Dr Chris Donovan, and his hardworking Committee, Mr Bennett assured the Committee and Friends that the money would be put to the best possible use at this centre of excellence in all aspects of care for the seriously and terminally ill patients where there is absolutely no charge to patients or their families.

Writers in prison

This month sees the launch of a new Suburb initiative: the 'Writers in Prison' support group described in the circular letter enclosed with this issue of Suburb News.

Martin Bell of Denman Drive, who is now (after a career in reporting from the world's trouble spots and then three years in Parliament) aiding UNICEF's humanitarian work, is Patron of this venture. He, more than most, knows the evils of repressive regimes where writers get flung into prison (maybe tortured or killed) if they dare to express dissident opinions.

The 'Writers in Prison' organisation, run by volunteers,

fights to get such prisoners released, but its success involves much work that needs funds.

It was after interviewing author Moris Fashi (Of North Square) for Suburb News last spring that I realised the need for a support group to tackle this problem. Moris has spent a lifetime at the front of 'Writers in Prison' activities and told me how much more could be achieved if funds were available. From this sprang the idea of starting such a support group and perhaps where the Suburb leads, other communities may follow! So do please respond to the appeal in Martin Bell's letter.

ELIZABETH COCKBURN

Mind in Barnet

GIVE A LITTLE, GAIN A LOT

Mind in Barnet's Befriending Service needs your help. The Befriending Service introduces volunteers to those in need of a friend and by offering them companionship they provide a better life to people who have a mental health problem.

To enable volunteers to carry out their role successfully, free training and continuous support is given: out of pocket expenses are reimbursed.

All that we ask in return is one hour per week spent with someone who is isolated. This may simply be playing a sport of mutual interest, going for a walk, chatting or having a coffee together; thus introducing someone to the local community and all that it has to offer.

This need not be a long term commitment – one year can make a real difference.

There are a number of men and women in the Borough of Barnet from different backgrounds, whose ages range from late twenties to over seventy, all of whom, for particular reasons, need a friend. Could you be their friend?

No experience of mental health issues is required – if you feel you have the necessary patience to befriend someone, please contact the Befriending Worker on 020 8906 7502 or 020 8343 5700 and ask for a Befriending information pack and application form.

Our next training session is scheduled to take place in December 2002.

If you would like to visit our website you will find us on: www.mindinbarnet.org or you can send us an e-mail at: admin@mindinbarnet.org

Donate your surplus goods

During the weekend of 30 November/1 December, please bring to 30 Southway (morning or afternoon), bedding, clothes, towels or curtains – for needy

over-75s. And computers, video recorders, etc. to be adapted for severely handicapped people. Everything will be most warmly appreciated.

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