

Letchworth - the first Garden City

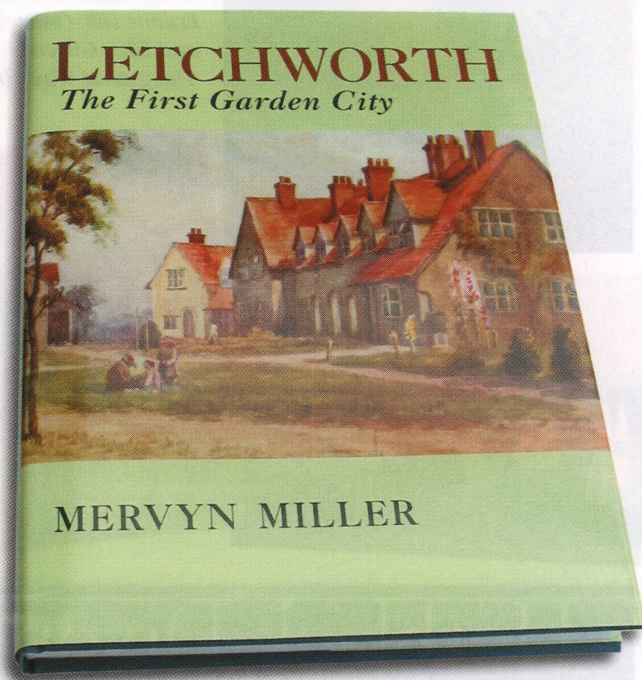
Predating the Suburb as it does by a couple of years Letchworth, the first garden city, celebrates its centenary in 2003. Well known to us as a long time Trust council member and now President of the Trust Mervyn Miller is also a member of the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Group and author of the 1989 book on Letchworth. To coincide with the centenary a new edition is now available. Letchworth has the unique distinction as the world's first Garden City, the result of Ebenezer Howard's vision, in which housing reform could be extended to the development of complete town with housing, industry and open spaces.

Letchworth set environmental standards for the 20th century. The concept of a planned self-contained town, spaciouly laid out and protected by an agricultural green belt, was

adopted as the basis for the state-sponsored post-1945 New Towns, and still represents a potent model for community design. The example of Letchworth has been studied worldwide.

Heralded as the definitive account of Letchworth Garden City on first publication in 1989, Dr Miller's book has now been completely revised and updated - indeed, recast and re-written, with much new material - while the illustrations have been greatly improved with well over a third of them completely replaced and all of them reproduced to a much higher standard. Redesigned and in a larger format, this new edition will be warmly welcomed as the First Garden City confidently approaches its centenary in 2003.

ISBN 1 86077 213 7 - £25
280pp illustrated hardback
www.pbillimore.co.uk



52 Club reunion

51 members of the Free Church youth club, which was formed in 1952, gathered together in the Free Church Hall, Northway on Saturday evening, 13 July to enjoy a Dinner celebrating the Club's Golden Jubilee.

The evening began with a slight feeling of trepidation as to whether faces would have changed out of recognition, but soon all the fears had gone and the evening was spent talking over memories of treasure hunts, weekend camps, the production of the annual pantomime and the libellous monthly rag called 'Focus', edited by 'Seymour Pepys'!

Many of the members had come from afar and had been housed by old friends. Most were able to attend the Morning Service at the Free Church and afterwards go back to the Hall, to finish off the food, wine and reminiscences.

Although the club closed in 1962, there has been a reunion on the Suburb every ten years, all organised by Joyce Mitchell (nee Ball).

The weekend raised about £200 which will go a little way to pay for the £100,000 cost of restoring the Free Church Organ to good working order.

JILL PURDIE

HENDON MUSIC SOCIETY A message to our Suburb supporters

As many of you know, we have had to move our concerts at short notice from our long-standing venue, Trinity Church, Golders Green. We have an excellent programme this season and hope we can count on your continued support.

The next three concerts (Saturdays at 7.45 pm) will be:

9 November 2002
TASMIN LITTLE (violin) JOHN LENEHAN (piano)
John Keble Church, Deans Lane, Edgware

7 December 2002
ENGLISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA WIND ENSEMBLE
Christ Church, High Road, North Finchley

22 February 2003
JOHN LILL (piano)
John Keble Church, Deans Lane, Edgware

Both churches are less than 20 minutes' drive from the Suburb and parking is easy. They are also well served by public transport.

Enquiries and full programme details:
telephone Geoffrey Pearce on 020 8203 2355

BOOK EARLY TO AVOID POSSIBLE DISAPPOINTMENT

I'm no natural exhibitionist!

I have never been one for entering competitions or exhibiting in flower shows, but as I am now active in the Horticultural Society and write this column, I thought I should put my money where my mouth is, so to speak, and give it a go.

When the handbook came out in January I really studied the categories for both shows and worked out my strategy. I could just imagine all those trophies with my name on sat proudly in the living room. I almost felt confident. What I hadn't taken into account was the weather.

I have found it almost impossible to produce anything looking at its best anywhere near the dates required. I chose gladiolas for the September show and yes, I did choose later flowering varieties, but because of the weather they were over three weeks before the show. I also bought chrysanthemums in plug form to produce for the September show. When they arrived they were cared for more than any child I know, re-potted when required and fed as the instructions said. I finally planted them in situ and...they were all eaten by slugs on the first night. All those months down the drain and no trophy at the end of it. As I am writing this article it is pouring with rain and the flower show is this coming Saturday.

I have been scouring the garden looking for something, anything, to enter and I must confess it's looking pretty thin on the ground. I suppose that's what gardening is all about and there's always next year!

I did have one small success and that was with Rudbeckia 'Cherokee Sunset' which I grew from seed. I had learnt from the chrysanthemum experience and made sure my little beauties survived. The colour range was fantastic, from yellow through to orange and then on to burnt



toffee tones. I felt extremely smug when I spotted the same plants being used in a bedding scheme at Great Dixter on the Horticultural Society outing there in late summer.

We had a great day. The first garden was 'Cobblers', a charming garden with a range of architectural plants in mixed borders. After a delicious lunch we moved on to Great Dixter. I dare anyone to say it is difficult to have colour in the garden in late summer/early autumn. It was colourful, vibrant and stuffed with treasures, including dahlias in shades of purple, red wine and orange. A plant which caught my eye looking like verbena bonariensis in height, but lemon yellow in colour, a plant to use in mixed borders the flowers bobbing head and shoulders above most other border plants. I found out later that it is called Patrina scabiosa folia. The seed is available from a nursery in Totnes called 'Secret Seeds'. However, I can't give you the phone number as it's a secret!

Early October is the time, weather permitting, to start

moving plants around if you didn't like the way your garden turned out, me for example. Or, if you like your garden just the way it is, leave well alone. I am going to move quite a lot as things never seem to do what I intended but that's nature and the beauty of gardening, so I shall keep trying.

Earlier this year my friend Stephen (otherwise known as God of the Garden) and Mark came to dinner. Stephen always casts an eye (his good eye) over the garden and to my horror he pounced on my many phlox - my pride and joy - and pinched out all the growing tips by at least three inches. I couldn't believe my eyes, had dinner been that bad. He saw the look of shock on my face and said sagely that they will now produce two flowering heads on each stalk and that it would make the plant more sturdy - to trust him as he is a gardener. Guess what - he was right. I had double the amount of flowers and the plants were sturdy enough not to require any supports. A word of warning if you are going to do this is to only do it when the plants are twelve inches high.

Well, I have a little bit of news which may interest some of you. I have taken on an allotment with my friend Anne. Yes, me who thought all veg grew in Marks and Spencer. This is unknown territory for us so we are starting small. The plots themselves are quite large and so, after a bit of a recky, we applied for a very compact area. The Allotment Committee will gladly give half a plot or less

and I believe there are some plots still available. It's quite sad really because in other parts of the country there are waiting lists but not it seems on the Suburb. Maybe people think it's too much like hard work which I am sure it will be. However, we have already cleared the overgrown area, strimmed to a manageable height, sprayed with Roundup (to clear the couch grass) then, three weeks later, it was rotavated and thickly mulched with heavy horse manure.

I am now looking forward to growing melons, pineapple and avocado by Spring! More on the plot next time.

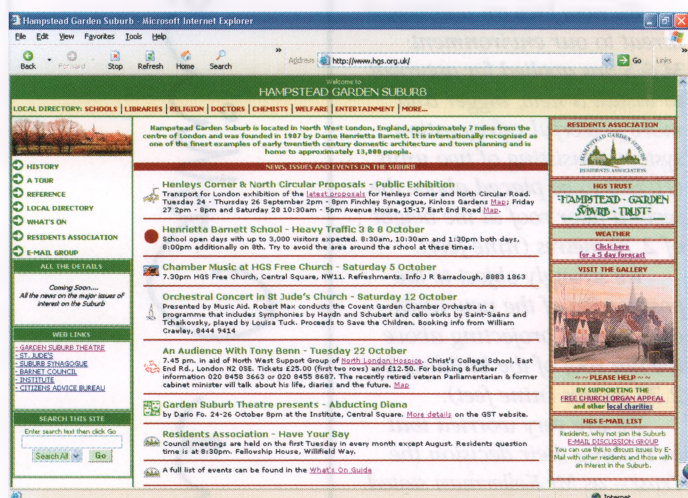
In your garden, once all the clearing, tidying and regrouping has been done and treated to a thick layer of mulch, there isn't a great deal to do. Don't forget when you plant up your containers with bulbs that they are covered in chicken wire or the squirrels will have a field day. I saw a little squirrel the other day with a pair of binoculars around his neck just waiting.... Chicken wire is available from the little hardware shop on East End Road at the top of Ossulton Way and, whilst up there, you could get your mower serviced and sharpened all ready for next year.

In the meantime I'm sure Santa will bring me something horticultural this Christmas, maybe the RHS's new Encyclopaedia of Gardening. I hope you have enjoyed your garden this year and that you are revitalised for next year.

Good Gardening.

DIANE BERGER

New look HGS Web Site



The Hampstead Garden Suburb web site, www.hgs.org.uk, has been up and running for over 5 years. The amount of information held has grown significantly and, to make access easier, the home page has just been completely re-designed.

The site now has a full range of Trust planning guides and there is an on-line version of Whats-on, which includes events and changes that come in too late to go into Suburb News - worth checking if you are planning to go to an event. Recent additions to the site include details from the public exhibition of proposed changes along the North Circular road. There is also an e-mail

discussion group with over 100 members that enables residents to discuss Suburb issues and to get recommendations on builders etc. If you have access to e-mail just go to the web site for details of how to join in.

Coming soon will be a for-sale/wanted notice board, details of recommended local tradesmen, and many other features.

For anyone interested in statistics, every day the site is accessed on average by 140 people from over 20 countries looking at up to 2000 pages.

If you want to keep in touch with local issues between editions of Suburb News take a look at the web site.

STEVE MORRIS

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