

Prom's at St Jude's celebrates its 10th anniversary



London Community Gospel Choir sing on Thursday evening, June 19

HGS will soon be alive with the sound of music with the arrival of the Suburb's eagerly awaited music festival, The Proms at St Jude's running from 13-22 June.

This year the Proms will be celebrating its tenth anniversary. The concerts, as usual, will take place in St Jude-on-the-Hill, which is not only of enormous architectural interest, being one of Edwin Lutyens' most distinctive creations, but also benefits from outstanding acoustics.

We have a most exciting programme this year. Once again we feature two Proms favourite: Stacey Kent and her band (13 June) and local musician Robert Max conducting the Covent Garden Chamber Orchestra (14 June); John Lill, the internationally renowned pianist (17 June). Then on 19 June we can hear the exciting London Community

Gospel Choir, UK's foremost gospel singers. Christopher Maltman, winner of the Lieder Prize at Cardiff Singer of the Year gives a recital on 15 June.

Last year Megumi Fujita stepped in at very short notice to play Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto, to great acclaim; this year (18 June) she is returning as part of the trio, which includes her two sisters; in a family concert on 21 June Henry Kelly, Classic FM's award winning and most popular presenter, will be narrating Peter And The Wolf on 21 June.

Choral Symphony

The programmes will include some of classical music's most momentous works: Beethoven's great Choral Symphony; his Waldstein and Moonlight Sonatas; Mozart's Piano Concerto in D, with pianist Zoë Solomon and the sublime Clarinet Concerto,

played by Sarah Williamson, prize winner in the Young Musician of the Year; Poulenc's Organ Concerto; Schubert's Die schöne Müllerin; Vivaldi's Concerto for 3 violins; Gypsy Rhapsody, a work composed specially for adults and children by Nick Planas, who will be one of the musicians. There will also be a World Premiere by Adrian Vernon Fish of a piece specially written for the Fujita Piano Trio. To end the festival, we will have our traditional flag waving 'Last Night' concert, including Elgar's Pomp & Circumstance, Jerusalem and Fantasia on British Sea Songs And much, much more.

Free concerts

Our free lunchtime concerts are a platform and springboard for young, talented musicians. We have been delighted to note that over the years the careers of a number of musicians who have played at our lunchtime concerts have really taken off. We are excited by the link we have forged this with the Southbank Sinfonia, a group of young professional musicians, who have recently left music college.

Suburb walks

New for us this year are the Proms Promenades – walks around the Suburb, with experienced guides, starting at the Garden Suburb Gallery and

ending at St. Jude's just in time for the lunchtime concerts. Ruth Smith will be leading a 'A Musical Mystery Tour' And 'The Artisans Quarter' will be lead by Stephen Brookhouse.

All the money raised by the Proms goes to charitable causes. Last year we handed over £20,000, which was divided between North London Hospice and Toynbee Hall. The latter is a charity started by Dame Henrietta and Canon Barnett, which offers a diverse range of help to underprivileged families and children in the East End of London. We are supporting the same charities this year.

There is music to suit all tastes. We provide light refreshments at lunch-time which, can be eaten at tables in the church, or outside, depending on the weather. In the evening, snacks, wine, beer and tea are available in the marquee. Stroll up to the Proms; meet friends; have something to eat and enjoy an evening of music in an unparalleled setting.

Finally, we are also looking for volunteers for a range of help from leaflet distribution, to help on the night.

Booking opens on 12 May. For details on any aspect of the Proms, phone 8455 8687. Or contact www.stjudes.org.uk

YVONNE BAKER



World champions on the Suburb

The Suburb can boast more high achievers – Farm Walk Tennis Club coaches, Jacky Boothman and Ellie Krocke, are the Ladies Veterans (50+) World Doubles champions. Ellie is also the Ladies Veterans (50+) Singles Champion. Jacky and Ellie have been at Farm Walk since 1999, coaching all ages and at all levels, helping club members and non-members to reach their full potential. They also run tennis courses for

children at the weekends and during school holidays. Farm Walk Club is tucked away in one of the Suburb's hidden places between Hamstead Way and Temple Fortune Lane close to Finchley Road. It has five all-weather courts and a newly renovated clubhouse in a green and tranquil setting. New members of all ages are welcome. For more information please contact Jane Brafman on 8455 8743.

Proms at St Jude's gains charitable status

Sponsorship opportunities at the Proms commence at £500. Can you envisage your company name or logo on the Proms marquee, or associated with the piano as John Lill plies his sublime craft?

Or have the satisfaction of knowing you have helped launch the career of a talented, young musician? Advertising

rates in our souvenir programme range from £100.00 for one sixth page to £300.00 for a full page. Do get in touch if you feel able to help in either of these vital roles, as a sponsor or advertiser. Or perhaps join our Friends scheme and become part of a growing number of local people, who show their support and appreciation of the Proms.

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'Top Dog' on the Suburb

As the entrancing sights and scents of Spring again remind residents and visitors to the Suburb what a unique and idyllic urban environment surrounds them, it is perhaps time to remember the extraordinary, and probably unique, woman who virtually single-handedly created this dream of modern living.

'The Dream' was that of Dame Henrietta Barnett, a clergyman's wife who devoted her life and prodigious energy to 'good works'. Born at almost the midpoint of the nineteenth century into a wealthy family – her grandfather had founded the Rowlands Macassar Oil Company – and described in her youth as 'pretty, witty and well-to-do' she soon devoted herself to Christianity and Charity Work.

At the age of 21 she accepted the hand of Samuel Barnet then a curate in West London although at first she thought of him as 'that kindly, elderly gentleman'. She eventually married him when he agreed to her insistence that they should work in one of the poorest and most deprived parts of London. He became a vicar in Whitechapel – notorious for the Jack the Ripper murders – and they stayed there for 30 years.

From that traumatic experience, the 'Dream' of the 'Garden Suburb' was born. Henrietta (she became a 'Dame' in 1924) desperately wanted to create an ideal – a sort of heaven on earth – as far removed as possible from the appalling, filthy, crime-infested streets of London's East End. Her vision was as lofty and idealistic as anything coming from that time, the late Victorian era, that produced such a fountain of philanthropic projects. She envisaged: "a huge estate on which all classes could live in neighbourliness together with

friendships coming about naturally without artificial efforts to build bridges between one class and another." It would be a place she said where, "We all work, wash and garden."

She personally negotiated with the Eton College Trustees – something unknown for a woman at that time – for the land; signed the deeds for the estate; and then lectured, canvassed and appealed for funds. The, at that time, colossal total of £200,000 was quickly raised. Henrietta herself cut the first sod in May 1907. The dream had been realised.

How did she – a woman with little formal education – do it, at a time when women still did not have the vote, nor the right to own anything except in their husband's name? Some of her qualities were described by a family friend: "She had the kind of charm that goes with immense vitality, plenty of imagination, a sense of the dramatic; extraordinary self-confidence and a conviction of the rightness of anything she thought."

In her vigorous lectures at the newly founded Dame Henrietta Barnett School for Girls, she urged young people always to tell themselves that they were A1, the 'Top Dog'.

And, above all, she had a dream; a dream that became the reality that surrounds us every day. Her ideals also survive in the Dame Henrietta Barnett Fund which helps young people who even in our Welfare State age have 'fallen through the system' and are seriously deprived or disadvantaged in realising their educational opportunities. The fund welcomes donations which should be forwarded to Simon Abbott at 1 Hill Close, Hampstead Way, London NW11 7JP.

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