

# Faces and hands, portraits from the Gallery

The Garden Suburb Gallery is well known for the work of its artists who live on the Suburb or, in some cases, don't live here but are inspired to paint the Suburb. What is perhaps less well known is that several are established portrait painters with whom commissions can be arranged through the Gallery.

Judy Bermant, who has lived in Hill Rise for more than 30 years, has drawn and painted lots of Suburb residents since she took up portraiture, she is a member of the Contemporary Portrait Society and Printmakers Council. Early training was at St Martin's and, following a few years gap raising a family, Judy studied printmaking at the Camden Institute.

Some of her most striking portraits are of her late husband, the author and journalist Chaim Bermant, these will be on view at Joseph's Bookstore in May while a retrospective exhibition

of watercolours, drawings, prints, monoprints and etchings is at the Garden Suburb Gallery until the end of May.

Annie Walker's house portraits and Suburb views are much prized but it is portrait painting that has been an abiding passion since she painted her sister at 16. Sculpted portraits have included one of Michael Sobell which she says, "had the honour of being unveiled by the Prince of Wales."

"I have made portraits for as long as I can remember. My most mysterious commission was from a man at a Kensington party in the late 60s. He wanted a portrait of a princely figure in a turban, but he only had a small photograph of his client at the controls of an aeroplane, and he wouldn't tell me who his client was.

I did what I could with such limited information. After a few modifications he seemed satisfied

with the likeness of the clay model, which I then had cast into bronze. Mystery man paid me well, loaded the turbaned head into the boot of his BMW and drove away.

I installed the plaster cast in the garden where it still lies, half buried in the cyclamen. It became, inevitably, Ozymandias to the children.

Some years later my husband, working for an oil company, went on business to the Gulf. When he returned he announced, "That's not Ozymandias, that is Sultan Qaboos, ruler of Oman." Sultan Qaboos is, it turns out, no Ozymandias but an able and charming Anglophile who is particularly fond of Gilbert and Sullivan."

"Portrait painting," says Annie, "is very much a matter of attention to detail, getting a likeness is no different from capturing a landscape as you see it. Perhaps it's the sculptor in me but I always

think hands are a vital part of the personality." Recent portraits have been in pastel, "which I find a wonderfully flexible medium but if anyone wants a bronze portrait I still have the clay, the stand and all the tools."

Portraits of children with a very distinctive style are available from a new Gallery artist, Hisako Aoyagi. Hisako comes from Tokyo where she spent a very quiet childhood as an only daughter expected to be studious and to follow in her father's footsteps as an artist.

"Even when I was very little I was spending many hours alone practicing and learning the basics of drawing from my father."

At school her talent was recognised and she was winning prizes for her drawings and an oil painting was selected for exhibition at Tokyo's famous Ueno Museum of Art.

As soon as she was able to make her own choices Hisako

abandoned the art that reminded her so painfully of her childhood. However when her own daughter was three years old she had an urge to "capture this lovely period in a painting not a photograph" and enrolled for evening classes in oil painting. Two years ago Hisako's husband was transferred to London.

Wanting to give a new London friend a gift, Hisako painted her children, the friend was overjoyed with the picture and urged Hisako to use her talent for painting children.

*Garden Suburb Gallery, at the Temple Fortune end of Hampstead Way, 11-5 most days, 8455 7410.*

## Residents Association AGM (continued from p1)

Hatjoulis, co-opted to Council earlier, who had agreed to stand as Hon Treasurer. Their appointment was proposed seconded and approved by the meeting.

Turning to the elections for Council, Georgina Malcolm said, "During the year Anne Crawley and Mervyn Unger have resigned from Council. Anne to spend more time with her grandchildren, and Mervyn, who got himself elected to the Trust Council, decided he didn't have time to be on two councils at once. More recently, Jim Tracey found that the Council was not for him, but I'm pleased to say he is continuing his work for Membership and Penny Grossman, who has a very busy job, realised she just didn't have the time to spare for both her job and the RA."

### Achievements at risk

"We have also lost Ken Murrell from Roads & Traffic, I don't know how we will cope without Ken. As Chairman of Roads & Traffic he has achieved so much for the Suburb with traffic calming, the 20 mile an hour zone, the new street lights and so much more. No-one is such a determined letter writer, and for that alone he will be much missed." She presented him with a painting as a farewell gift. Thanking her, Ken Murrell said he was accepting it for the Roads & Traffic Committee and thanked Terry Rand as well as other members of his committee who he said had achieved a great deal. They had been proud, "after 30 years of Terry's campaigning," to see the pedestrian crossing on Faloden Way. They had worked well with

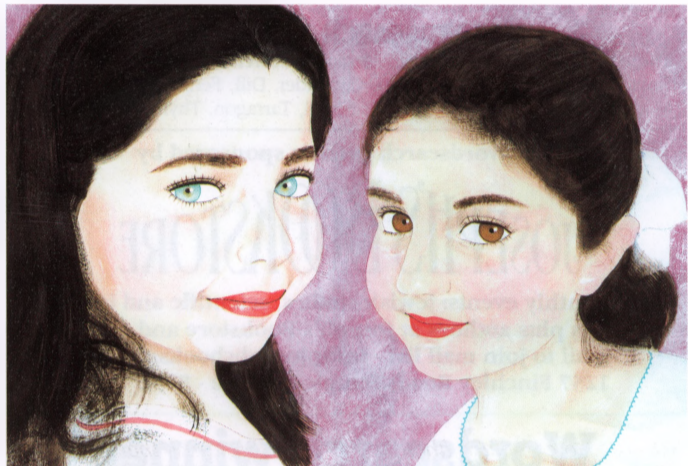
the Trust and had enjoyed a useful dialogue with and support from the local authority. "But," he warned "some of our achievements could be at risk as consultation with Barnet, in particular over changed plans for Temple Fortune, has fallen apart recently."

### Council elections

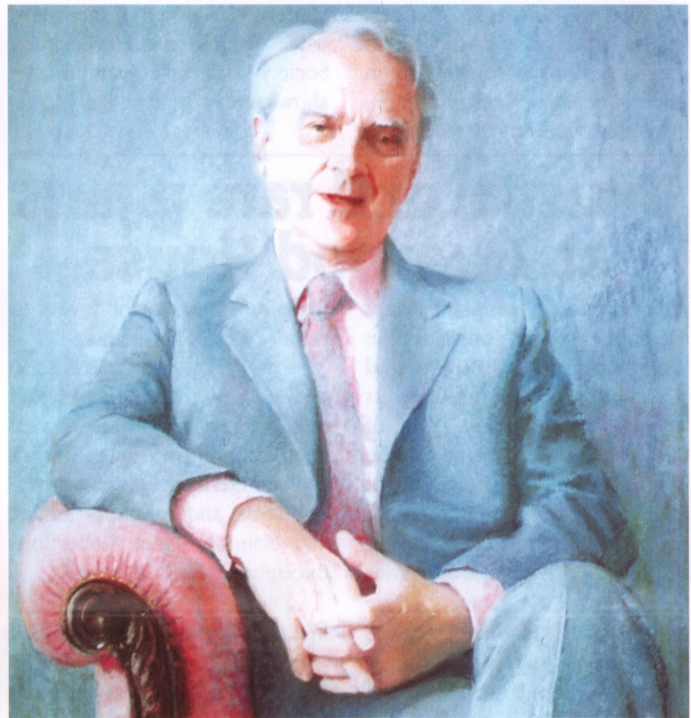
Council members retiring by rotation and re-elected were Denis Baron, Alan Brudney, Arnold Elliot, David Littaur, Douglas Thomas, Alan Walker and Peter Warland. Georgina Malcolm welcomed the return to Council of Eva Jacobs and said that, "we have a number of other energetic residents who will be co-opted in the next couple of months. I think it's good to have a change of personnel every so often because that way you get fresh ideas and new ways of doing things."

### Getting together

A lively question and answer session ensued with comments and suggestions from a good many of the audience of some 130 members was started with thanks from Eileen Whelan to the membership reps for collecting so much for Fellowship. The session was aided by the sound system generously loaned by Richard Colomb. Later sparkling wine, and refreshments from Sherrards, were laid on by the Events Committee and many took the opportunity to see the Suburb website demonstrated by Steve Morris. A bouquet of tulips was presented to Rosemary Goldstein who has been RA Secretary since the 70th AGM 21 years ago.



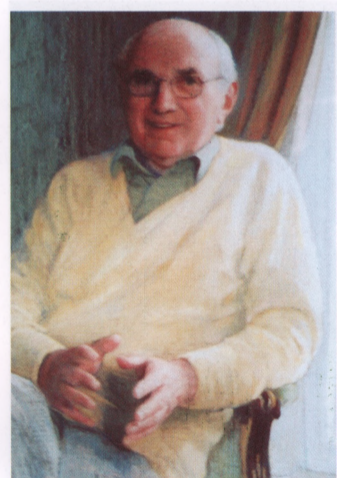
Portraits by Hisako Aoyagi



Lord Maclennam of Robart by Annie Walker



Caroline Gershon by Judy Bermant



HGS Abbeyfield chairman Michael Milner by Annie Walker



Frank Mossheim by Judy Bermant

## From HGS Trust

In the last issue of *Suburb News* our advertisement on corrected infringements included a door in Hampstead Way. Unfortunately our

photographer took a picture of the wrong door. We are sincerely sorry for any embarrassment this might have caused.

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