

featuring Steve Morris



Steve Morris has lived on the Suburb for the last 14 years and set up and maintains the Suburb web site at www.hgs.org.uk. He has worked most of his career in IT within the finance industry and more recently has started his own software business, balancing this alongside some local voluntary work.

He has always loved travelling and some of the more interesting destinations visited include China, Tanzania, Saudi Arabia, North & South Korea, Laos, Cambodia, Libya, Lebanon, Israel, Yemen, Mozambique, Madagascar, India and Tibet.

What was your best holiday?

There is no one best holiday, just an increasingly large 'top few'. Seeing the total eclipse in Madagascar in 2000 was a wonderful experience and the country is absolutely fascinating, with such a contrast between the arid south and the rain forests in the north. The unique flora and fauna

is a real bonus and the Lemurs are just so cute. I must also mention Ethiopia which was mesmerising. It is a really interesting country but it is the people that make it so special. Given all their suffering and a hard existence it was just wonderful to meet such nice, friendly and happy people – a real object lesson on what is important in life.

Best Hotel?

I prefer smaller local hotels to anything grand but my best would have to be the lodge we stayed at just on the edge of the Ngorongoro crater in Tanzania. It might not win any awards for luxury or cuisine, but sitting with drink in hand looking out on the wonderful views below and taking in the sounds and smells of the forest was just heaven.

What do you need for a perfect holiday?

An interesting destination, good company, a sense of adventure and it's nice if it doesn't rain every day.

What do you always take with you?

At least twice as much film as I think I am going to need! I used to try limiting myself to a film a day but it never works. The other thing is Imodium. It works really quickly on a dodgy stomach and can be a life saver on long journeys.

What is your best piece of travel advice?

Go with an open mind and when things don't go exactly to plan enjoy it anyway.

Where do you want to go next?

Well, I've just come back from a wonderful month in Latvia so I need to focus on work for the moment, but I'm seriously thinking about Patagonia or Peru as I've never visited South America.

Which was your worst holiday?

I can honestly say none. Everywhere I have visited has had something unique and interesting to make it special.

Which is the worst place you've ever stayed in?

Most of the big hotel chains. They take the soul out of places; once you are inside you could be anywhere.

What do you avoid on holiday?

Other tourists wherever possible. It drives me crazy when a big tour group turns up and everyone wants to be photographed, often several times, standing right on top of the main attraction. Better to just stand back and enjoy.

featuring Carlos Duran

Carlos Duran has lived on the Suburb for over 20 years. He is married to Pia Duran and has two sons, Xohan and Xavier and one daughter, Xulia. Here is his recipe for a classic Spanish tortilla.



Spanish Tortilla

Ingredients:

4 medium old potatoes thinly sliced and salted
Half a sweet onion thinly sliced
5 eggs
Olive oil
Salt

Preparation:

Gently heat half an inch of olive oil in a deep non-stick frying pan. Add the onion and heat until soft and add the potatoes. Cook over a medium heat for approximately 15 minutes, turning often to ensure cooking through and to break everything up a bit, but do not brown. When cooked, pour contents into a colander, draining out the oil into a bowl. Beat the eggs into a clean bowl, add the cooked potato mixture and stir. Heat a small amount of oil in the frying pan and pour in the mixture (the tortilla should be about one to two inches thick). Gently cook, shaking the pan occasionally to ensure the tortilla does not stick to the bottom. When the tortilla appears to be fairly cooked and firm it will need to be turned over. To turn, place a plate that is larger than the frying pan over it and turn the tortilla onto it. Add a little more oil to the frying pan and slip the tortilla into it. Cook for a few minutes, rest on a plate for a few minutes and then serve. Delicious both hot or cold!

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Turquoise street name signs

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At a packed meeting on 2 September, the RA Council unanimously adopted a report, prepared by its Conservation and Amenities Committee, condemning the new turquoise signs.

"The strength of feeling against these signs remains unanimous and there is considerable indignation at the failure of the Borough to consult bodies such as the RA when they were introduced," said Georgina Malcolm.

Cllr Brian Coleman, who is at the forefront in promoting the Barnet new look, told the RA: "Signs are not subject to traffic orders and therefore no formal consultation process is required." A Barnet spokesman was quoted in the Hendon Times as saying: "We don't need consent or planning permission to put them up and we are not taking any down, whether they are in a conservation area or not".

However the RA thinks that Barnet councillors have been poorly advised on this issue. In its report, the RA quotes from a government circular to local authorities, PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment, which has a special section on street furniture and states: "It is a key element of Government policy for conservation that there should be adequate processes of consultation and education". Barnet has not involved its own specialist Conservation Team in the decision, let alone the electorate.

On 17 June, RA treasurer George Hatjoulis raised the matter at the Golders Green Forum and Suburb Councillor Vanessa Gearson promised to look into it. George was asked

to put his concerns in writing, which he did.

Instead of sending a written reply, Cllr John Marshall set up a meeting which was held on 20 July between the RA, himself and Cllr Mike Freer, Chairman of the Finchley & Golders Green Environment Sub Committee.

Cllr Freer and Cllr Coleman are members of the Barnet Cabinet which makes most important decisions. None of the Suburb councillors, although they are all from the majority Conservative group, are members of this cabinet.

At that meeting, attended by about 20 RA council and committee members, Cllr Freer heard the unanimously angry comments about the unsuitability of the design and colour of the new signs in the conservation area. Cllr Freer said that he would submit an alternative design for use in the Suburb.

However he has ignored calls to suspend the introduction of the signs which continue to appear. Letters of complaint continue to stream in to the local press and to Barnet. Edna Weiss in letters to the Ham & High and the Hendon Times suggested that whoever designed the signs might be colour blind.

David Bogush went on to describe the new signs as "hideous" and continued, "These turquoise monstrosities have no place in Hampstead Garden Suburb." Suburb resident G. Gore complained to Barnet by e-mail: "I would like to lodge a complaint about the fact that as residents of Hampstead Garden Suburb we are subjected to strict limitations on what we can do to

our own homes but when Barnet wants to do something to our area they do not have to conform to the same standards."

In the Council's publication *Barnet First* an article states "this new style will improve the image of Barnet's roads." Peter Loyd, who lives a stone's throw from a new sign in Meadway Gate, commented: "It is out of keeping with the style of architecture and appearance here. It certainly does nothing to improve any image in this area."

The RA council meeting of 7 October invited ward Cllrs John Marshall, Jasmin Naghar and Vanessa Gearson to attend the next RA Council meeting on 4 November to discuss the issue. Cllrs Coleman and Freer, have also agreed to meet representatives of the RA and it is hoped that a settlement agreeable to Barnet and

the residents will then be reached. However conservation and amenity groups across Barnet are joining forces against the turquoise signs in the newly launched Alliance of Barnet Conservation and Preservation Societies (ABC PS) which will have its inaugural meeting shortly. The HGS Trust has also written to Barnet complaining about the new signs.

Read the full RA report at www.hgs.org.uk/ra/consam/

DAVID B LEWIS

New piano duet group

Are you a good sight-reader, and keen to meet with other avid duet players? We are starting a group that meets in members' homes. If you are interested, contact Gloria Moss on 458 2879.

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