



The Save the Children Committee take a well earned break after a hectic morning's fund raising at Fellowship House. Wendy Parry, Joan Rees Phillips, Steve Wright, Peter Peterson, Gail Peterson say they would welcome one or two more members to help with their work. Call Gail Peterson 8455 74721

Brentham

(continued from p6)

Garden Suburb became an annual event in 1915 – and quotes an Ealing resident saying that these were eventually discontinued because “Hampstead had nothing to offer in the way of a suitable venue...and had great difficulty in finding athletes to meet our fellows”). Aileen Reid also details other, perhaps less competitive, events at which Hampstead Garden Suburb and Brentham co-operated like the way we provided walk-ons for their pageant in 1912 and the way we seemed to have shared out the early royal visitors. In 1911, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught opened their clubhouse one May morning and later the same day were here, revisiting ours which had been opened the previous year!

Much of what we are told about the planning and building of Brentham is relevant to Hampstead Garden Suburb: G. L. Sutcliffe, Co-partnership Tenants Ltd. Architect from 1910 was employed there first but built more here in the end. As a grande finale, in an appendix,

there is a “Brentham walk” to round things off and to locate all the happenings described in the preceding two hundred odd pages.

The book has been published in a novel way – this story itself is quite an inspiring tale – and those who thought up the idea and worked hard to see it fulfilled deserve praise too. Shares were sold in advance of publication and all share holders are listed in the book – a truly co-operative venture for a book about what started as a co-operative housing scheme. Among the pluses attributable to the genesis of the book, the Editor's introduction identifies the renewal of links with Hampstead Garden Suburb. Reading it, one gets a better understanding both of what those links were and are and of the underlying pursuit of improvements in social and living conditions which united us with our sister suburb in the beginning. A hundred years later, we still have a lot in common.

ROZ ARCHER

Available from the Garden Suburb Gallery for £30.

The Henrietta Barnett School Association reunion

The Henrietta Barnett School Association (formerly the Old Girl's Association) is holding a supper party on Monday 19 March in the main school hall. This event is held annually for anyone who attended the school. In particular it is a special reunion for all those who left 10, 20 and 30 years ago. This year, people who left 50 years ago are organising a special reunion at the event.

If you would like to attend, please telephone 8450 2036.

Congratulations

Thea King, clarinetist and pianist who with Neil Black and Janice Knight formed the Suburb Reeds in the RA's acclaimed September Millennium Music concert, became Dame Thea King in the New Year's honours list.

The life and adventures of Nicholas Nickleby (part two)

The Garden Suburb Theatre presented the second half of David Edgar's adaptation of Dickens's great story last October, and one supposes that the time gap between the two parts did not trouble the audience too much. They know their Dickens.

Once again the directors, Richard Kinder and Val Gregory, skilfully guided the cast through the numerous adventures to the ultimate happy ending and brought out some really interesting performances.

Changes in the original cast strengthened some parts. In the Nickleby household Zoe Crick and Andy Sutcliffe as Kate and Nicholas were both stronger and more developed. Simon Ramsey as Mr Crummles was joined by Liz Amiel as his doting wife. They are surely among the most humorous and lovable characters that Dickens created. Eugene Smith portrayed the appalling Mr Squeers with relish and was ably partnered by Ashley Collins as his wife and by Mandy Ribekow-Evans as Fanny. Among other notable performances were Roger Rose as the miserly Ralph, Susan Shine and Colin

Gregory as the Witterleys, Fred Griessen as Newman Noggs and Declan Leary as the lascivious Sir Mulberry Hawk.

However, the outstanding piece of acting came from Tony Abreu as Smike. He presented a very real person and the death of this sadly abused young man was truly heart-rending. Altogether a good evening from this enterprising theatre group.

LEONIE STEPHEN

HGS Theatre Club aims to please

This has been the most successful year ever for the HGS Theatre Club; it seems we got the mix of plays exactly right. It is not unusual for us to have a waiting list of between 10-20 people each month over and above the 53 we take to the theatre by coach from Temple Fortune. This was very much in evidence when we went to see Simon Callow's solo performance in 'The Mystery of Charles Dickens' on December 7 – a real 'tour de force' and hugely enjoyed by the group.

November saw us at a revival of Noel Coward's 'Fallen Angels' - his first play - starring Felicity Kendall and Frances de la Tour. Their drunk scene in the second act had to be seen to be believed, it was such fun!

But perhaps our finest hour was the early special-price booking for best stall seats for a new play 'Stones in his Pockets' by Marie Jones with only two Irish actors, Conleth Hill and Sean Campion. They had us rolling in the aisles and all this for £18 including the coach! This is the hottest ticket in the West End at the moment and I urge you to see it.

Our all-day summer outing in September was to a new venue for us, namely the Watermill at Bagnor near Newbury and we were not disappointed. It is a charming theatre set in pretty grounds by the river. We had a delightful lunch followed by the matinee performance of a Russian play 'Our World' by Aleksei Arbuzov which was very well received. Then we had tea before setting off home and all this for the princely sum of £27. This is an event eagerly looked forward to by our members each year.

2001 will see our small committee trying to find the usual eclectic mix of theatre for our enthusiastic members. We start with the D'Oyly Carte production of 'The Mikado' at the Savoy on 10 January and this should certainly chase away the winter blues. We have also been fortunate in obtaining special-priced preview tickets on the 12 March for the National Theatre's revival of 'My Fair Lady' with Jonathan Pryce as Professor Higgins and the popular recording artist Martine McCutcheon as Eliza. This should be 'a must' and is eagerly awaited by all of us.

Our grateful thanks go to all our members who give us such loyal support and we, in turn, promise them that we do at all times 'aim to please'.

VALERIE R CODRON

Free Church Christmas gift service



The Free Church Christmas Gift Service depicted a modern day youth club that questioned the relevance of the nativity story and found it had meaning for them. Gifts of toys and a collection were received by a representative of the Camden Service Unit which helps parents who can afford few presents

(Above) Diane Bates, Lizzie Mo, Laura Bates and Amy Topbam

(Below) Russell Hughes, Alice Mo and Matthew Topbam



Suburb rainfall

The last three months of the millenium year 2000 resulted in several rainfall records. October rainfall of 7.4in was the highest monthly total recorded in north London for 21 years, although the 1987 October total of 7.4in came very near. However, it is the three-month period from September to November totalling 17.6in that is the real record as it is nearly 2in more than the previous record for any three-month period. This was from December 1994 to February 1995 when 15.7in fell.

Similarly, the four month period from September to December showed 21.5in nearly 3in more than the next highest, 18.6in in the four months from December 1994 to March 1995. So it is hardly surprising the ground is sodden as little water is extracted for use by vegetation in winter when the higher rainfall occurs. In the summer when plant life is growing fast and using all the soil water there have been no three-month

periods with exceptionally high totals over the 21 years. We might think our soil should now hold enough water to keep us going for months. However, experience teaches us that it will soon be forgotten when the sun warms the soil and the plants start really growing and using the water.

Another record was the annual total for 2000, which was 41.3in, 4.5in more than the previous record of 1998. Three wet years running have raised the annual average to 29.6in. We are now nearing the Manchester average, an idea which will not be welcomed to most readers in our southern suburb.

There have been runs of years of well above average rainfall before in North London, notably from 1992 to 1995. Probably, most of us hope that the present run will prove to have been a three-year one rather than a four-year one bringing another wet year ahead.

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