



## Times Past

My father, Francis Puffett, was appointed the first Clerk of Works of the HGS, accepting this position before the First World War. He, my mother and older brother lived in one of the very few houses available at that time, in Wordsworth Walk, where I was born in 1920. After the war my father became Managing Director of a local building firm and was responsible for the building of many of the lovely houses in Ossulton Way, Falloeden Way, Meadway etc.

I grew up in Wordsworth Walk, was christened, confirmed and married in St Jude's Church marrying the 'the boy next door', Albert Hardiman. My first marital home was in Erskine Hill, where my three daughters were born, and also, as I was, christened, confirmed and married at St Jude's Church. My home in Erskine Hill, was opposite the home of Charlie Chester (we were close family

friends) and in later years, in our widowhood, Charlie and I married, and I moved to his home in Kent, where I lived until his death in 1997.

I moved back to the London Borough of Barnet to be close to my family, but prior to marrying Charlie, my family and I had moved to Oakwood Road.

I was still living in Wordsworth Walk when the two landmines fell on the Suburb, the first on our beloved Club House on Willifield Green, and the second on Coleridge Walk. Thus, being right in the middle of these two bombs, my home in Wordsworth Walk was demolished. My parents and I moved back as soon as the house was rebuilt at the end of the War.

By the grace of God, my parents and I were away for one night – the night when the landmines fell, but I was there the following morning to join the King and Queen on Willifield Green!

I remember so clearly the night of VE Day, when so many of us danced round the huge bonfire outside St Jude's Church, and afterwards going into the Church for prayers of thanksgiving, conducted by Fr. Maxwell Rennie, the Vicar at that time.

Shown left is a photograph of myself, taken at the Suburb's 21st birthday celebrations. The message inside the card (painted by a then Suburb resident, Mr Robert Ramsay), conveyed greetings to all the residents of the HGS at that time. The birthday cake hat, carried 21 candles, and I am proud to say that I won First Prize in the fancy dress competition on that momentous day.

My maiden name was Joan Puffett, and there is to this day, a floral tub outside Fellowship House in memory of my parents, who both lived and died in their beloved Suburb.

JOAN CHESTER

## HGS Theatre Club

The RA's Theatre Club is now well established and flourishing. It is a boon to people who enjoy a monthly theatre visit but find that getting there and back takes some of the gilt off.

We began this year with a classic 'Mikado' at the Savoy Theatre, its ancestral home, followed by 'Feel Good', which we caught on its first appearance at the Hampstead Theatre. This well timed hilarious play about the goings on behind the scenes in an election campaign, is still

playing to packed houses in the West End.

We have since seen 'My Fair Lady' at the National, 'Life Times Three' at the Old Vic and 'Noises Off' at the Piccadilly Theatre. We also had an all day visit to the Watermill Theatre, Newbury in June. This was as good as a holiday weekend – lunch and tea in lovely country surroundings, a charming performance of 'the Importance of Being Ernest' in

the afternoon – and all for about the cost of an evening play in W1.

Of course there are occasional hitches. Our July booking (for 'Mouth to Mouth') was cancelled by the management at short notice – but I suppose that's show biz.

We try to offer a varied programme for our members. Any RA member who wishes to join should contact Ruth Gumb (8455 6490). The subscription is £8.

RUTH CASS

## Discussion Galore

You can join the select band of Suburb residents who swap information and discuss issues by E mail. They belong to the free HGS E Mail Discussion List.

The List works with E Mail. Normally E Mail is delivered to just one recipient. With the E Mail Discussion List the E mail is sent to the list which then redistributes it to all the other members. Eventually all 5,000 households on the Suburb could become members – at the

moment there are about 150.

The list can be very helpful. You can advertise things you want to buy and sell on a non-commercial basis. Or just ask for help. Or people just post comments or ask questions.

To join the list you need a computer with a modem and a connection to the Internet. You can join at the Hampstead Garden Suburb Web site at [www.hgs.org.uk](http://www.hgs.org.uk).

DAVID LEWIS

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## A Missed Opportunity

Sheila Seepersaud-Jones gave a talk in Fellowship House on 12 July. A talented artist in ceramics, she has lived on the Suburb for many years and the Gallery has, on more than one occasion, been proud to exhibit her beautifully crafted and hand-painted pieces. Sheila brought along several examples of her jugs, bowls and sculpted works and set them up in the lobby. Her talk was illustrated with vivid coloured slides of her work and also of

Guyana, where she was born: she gave a fascinating account of the extent of Caribbean influences on her sculptures. One of many remarkable aspects of Sheila's life is the fact that she plays a distinguished and active part in the nursing profession. Regrettably, only a minute audience attended; they were spellbound by the inspirational nature of the talk. The absentees missed the privilege of experiencing a real gem.

DAVID LITTAUR

## Visit to Toynbee Hall to hear Ted Heath

Visit Toynbee Hall on Tuesday 25 September by coach from the centre of the Suburb.

The visit will include a buffet lunch – last year this was excellent – a glass of wine and coffee, and also a talk from the Rt Hon Sir Edward Heath KGBE, and a short guided tour round Toynbee Hall.

Toynbee was of course the other great foundation of the Barnett's, along with the Suburb itself founded by Dame Henrietta. It was the first of the university settlements in the East End and

a pioneer of many important initiatives in British life, including legal aid and the Citizens Advice Bureaux.

The visit is being organised by the Dame Henrietta Barnett Fund. The cost of the visit will be about £20 and the coach will leave at about 11.15 for 11.30, and will leave Toynbee Hall about 3.00 for return to the Suburb about one hour later.

To book, contact Mrs Gillian van Gelder at 40 Northway, London NW11, telephone 8455 6664, or [vangelder@talk21.com](mailto:vangelder@talk21.com)

## Wordsearch Winner

The winner of the last wordsearch is Keith Sambrook. Keith has spent his life in publishing apart from four years in the Royal Navy. He and his wife Hana have lived in Farm Walk since 1963. Keith was concerned with international publishing especially in Africa and the Middle East. He has travelled widely and frequently in these areas. Since retirement,

he has been a director of James Currey Ltd, a specialist publishers of African and Caribbean Studies.

In addition he has a new career lecturing on Publishing and the Book Trade at University College and for the Institute of English Studies' History of the Book MA.

With his £20 book token, Keith will buy a reference book.



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