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Suburb News

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Elizabeth Taylor supports Centenary Celebrations

World famous film star Elizabeth Taylor has agreed to become a patron of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Centenary Celebrations which will take place in 2007.

In a message to residents she says: "The happiest days of my youth were when my brother and I would run through the woods and feel quite safe. I wonder whether the Suburb is still like that now. I do hope so. It was heaven for this child and her brother."

Dame Elizabeth lived as a child with her parents and older brother Howard at 8 Wildwood Road. The wood she refers to is Turners Wood, a private nature reserve, accessed only through the gardens of the houses in Wildwood Road and Ingram Avenue which back on to it.

Jonathan Ross, named in 2005 by The Radio Times "as the most powerful man in radio", has agreed to record a new introduction to the film Hampstead Garden

Suburb which will be re-released on DVD as part of the Centenary Celebrations.

Suburb resident and medical expert Professor Robert Winston and his wife Lira have also agreed to become patrons. As has their neighbour, the man in the white suit, Martin Bell.

Other show business patrons who have lived in the Suburb are veteran actor Sir Donald Sinden; David McCallum, widely known for his role as Illya Kuryakin in the 60s cult TV show, The Man from U.N.C.L.E and now appearing in N.C.I.S. (Naval Criminal Investigative Service) on Channel Five; and Katie Boyle who appeared in many TV shows and presided over four European Song Contests including 1974 when Abba won with the smash hit Waterloo.

From the world of sport, there is Angela Buxton, who after being refused membership of the fashionable Cumberland Tennis Club because she was Jewish, went on to win the Wimbledon Women's Doubles in 1956 together with black American Althea Gibson. Angela has agreed to present a trophy to the winner of the Centenary Tennis Tournament: the finals will be held as part of the Big Birthday Party on Sunday 17 June 2007 in Central Square. The Tennis Club in Northway Gardens is named after her.

Political patrons include Peter Mandelson, the UK's European

Commissioner and son of Tony Mandelson who was a highly effective chairman of the RA for many years; Mary Wilson, widow of Prime Minister Harold Wilson who lived in Southway from 1948 to 1964 before moving to 10 Downing Street; and local MP Rudi Vis. Also former MPs Lord Janner and Lord Howie have become patrons.

From the world of business and charity, there is former Winnington Road resident Sir Martin Sorrell, Chief Executive of WPP, one of the world's leading advertising companies and current Winnington resident Dame Gail Ronson who collected her award for charitable services due to her involvement with Jewish Care. Sir Victor Blank, Chairman of Lloyds TSB and Lady Blank who live in Wildwood Road have also agreed to be patrons.

Writers include cookery expert Claudia Roden, novelist Michael Ridpath and former British Ambassador in Moscow Sir Rodric Braithwaite.

The 100th Anniversary Celebrations Committee, headed by David Littaur, is organising an ambitious programme of events. These will kick off with the Grand Opening Ceremony on 2 May 2007 on the exact anniversary and at the same location where Henrietta Barnett, the founder of Suburb, cut the first sod of earth to build the first pair of cottages in Hampstead Way on 2 May 1907.

DAVID B LEWIS



The HGS Horticultural Society Flower Show in June saw Jonathan Ross, who with his wife Jane is President of the Society, come to judge a scarecrow making competition. Chairman Marjorie Harris is clearly delighted with the occasion as are some of the competition winners.

Russian Music by candlelight

On October 22 at 7.30pm Proms at St Jude's will present a spectacular candle-lit concert of Russian music by Rachmaninov, Stravinsky, Chesnokov, Tchaikovsky and Tavener, by the acclaimed 18 strong vocal ensemble Tenebrae, directed by Nigel Short.

Tenebrae's members, which include Proms favourite, Grace Davidson, are drawn from outstanding musical backgrounds, such as the Monteverdi Choir, the choirs of Westminster Abbey and Cathedral and King's College Cambridge. Many of the singers have worked with leading specialist vocal groups, including I Fagiolini, The Tallis Scholars,

The Swingle Singers, The King's Singers, as well as The Royal Opera House and the ENO. This combination weaves together a huge variety of choral experience, giving the choir an exceptional range of vocal power and colour.

All this year's Friends of the Proms buying tickets to Tenebrae will benefit from reduced prices. If you are not a Friend, you can join now for next year, in which case you will also benefit from a reduced ticket price for Tenebrae.

To book tickets to Tenebrae, and/or become a Friend of the Proms, please telephone 8455 1025.

YVONNE BAKER

RA SGM

At a Residents Association special general meeting held in June RA members voted overwhelmingly to raise the amount recommended as a minimum subscription to the Residents Association for 2007/8 to £15.

Central Square clean up for fun!

A group of executives from Shell UK and the companies they work with in managing property, decided to get together during working hours to have a good time. You might think off-roading or paintballing but what they do is, in the words of Alex Shattock, who happens to live in Willifield Way, "something more useful and more socially aware. With our group bonding sessions, in the last three or four years, we have undertaken clearing up projects all over the country. We call them Good Cause Days." Aware of the state of the land around the St Jude's Church Rooms, bits

of which belong to the Trust, Freshwater and the church, and of the building itself, Alex volunteered the group of 30 people from Shell UK, Johnson Controls and W S Atkins to do a clean up for the Suburb.

Working with Trust manager Jane Blackburn and church warden Iris Elkington, who Alex says, "are great to work with," the group will, by the time they have finished, have cleared undergrowth from the whole area, cleaned the accumulated graffiti off the walls, painted the outside and repaired the verandah of the church rooms. "A good job for the Suburb, for

the church and a fun time for the group," said Alex.

At the same time the church rooms, which have been something of a liability for cash-strapped St Jude's, is being decorated inside by the Central Square Minyan, an orthodox Jewish group, who have for some years been using the rooms for services on Saturdays.

St Jude's had been hoping to sell the site which is held on a 999 year lease from the Trust but could not agree to the terms insisted on by the Trust for a variation of the lease.

RICHARD WAKEFIELD

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