

memories at 19 Asmunds Place

sometimes walking the length of the Suburb, before boarding a bus to save the tram fares to spend on sweets or make-up. Edith's best friends during this part of her life were Celia Harcourt-Smith and Kathleen Michaelides. They played tennis at Lyttelton playing fields and at the Acorn Club in Oakwood Road. Celia and Kathleen were to become sisters-in-law and the three women stayed friends all their lives, meeting for the last time just a couple of years ago to celebrate Celia's birthday.

During WWII Edith became a part-time Leading Firewoman at Hendon station. In a strange way these were some of the happiest days of her life; there was excitement and danger to be dealt with and a contribution to be made. Edith's meticulous records of events in Asmunds

Place is a treasure of information; when sirens sounded and the 'all clear' heard; which firemen went to which venue. Edith received two medals for her work in the fire service; sadly these have been lost and her family know no accurate record of exactly what they were for.

Edith went to 'Cavalcade of Stars' at the Royal Albert Hall on Sunday 18 March 1945, put on by the Evening Standard as a tribute to London's part-time firemen and women and as late as 1993 Edith was still being invited to events to celebrate the work of the Hendon Fire Brigade.

After the death of her father in the 1950s Edith continued to run his painting and decorating business for a number of years and in the 1970s went to work for Temple Fortune Supplies; working in their shop and

helping with the accounts. During this time she continued to live with her mother and sister at 19 Asmunds Place, and after their deaths lived there by herself.

When Edith retired and frailty set in, her friends and neighbours and the Suburb Fellowship were wonderfully supportive and it was through sheer necessity and much reluctance that she moved to a residential home in Suffolk.

Dogs of all shapes and sizes were a constant source of joy throughout Edith's life and the present wheelchair trips around the small Suffolk town of Stowmarket are punctuated with stops to pat and talk to every dog that is met.

SALLY GREEN (EDITH'S NIECE)

Sadly, after this article was written, Edith Maud Cannon died on 5th September 2006.



Fifty years on - memories of the Suburb Jubilee



The residents of Hampstead Garden Suburb have arranged three major celebrations since it was founded in 1907. In 1928, Coming of Age Celebrations were promoted not only to celebrate the 21st birthday but to bring together the many new residents

joining the extensions of the Suburb, commencing near the bottom of Meadway towards Bishops Avenue and across Falloeden Way to East Finchley. During WWII, most pre-war social and cultural activities ceased and the 1950 Festival was arranged with the aim of re-kindling the flame of good neighbourliness and community enjoyment.

Planning the Jubilee for 1957 was a major undertaking. Sir John Braithwaite, a resident for most of 50 years was elected President. Edward Parry was an inspiring Chairman and I had the honour of being elected Secretary of the celebrations. Looking back, I do not know how I had time to work during those 12 months of preparations! As well as the General Organising Committee

there were seven committees arranging the various week of events from June 29 to July 2 and there was no doubt this was the right decision.

The Official Opening was by the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Cullum Welch, whose predecessor Lord Mayor Treloar had inaugurated the first cottages to be completed in Hampstead Way which are named after him. The visit of Princess Margaret was a highlight of the celebrations. Following a reception in the Institute, she visited the Historical and Arts & Crafts Exhibitions and Henrietta Barnett Junior School. Then a tour of the Suburb was made by car, followed by the two Mayors who had to change the order of precedence behind HRH as they crossed the boundaries of the two boroughs of Hendon and Finchley!

On Sunday afternoon there was a United Service of Thanksgiving at St Jude's. My father, Harold Darke who was the Chairman of the Music Committee, had composed the anthem 'A Psalm of Thanksgiving' specially for the occasion, sung by the combined choirs of St Jude's, the Free Church and the Society of Friends. Whilst the Jewish community was not represented at this service, the Jubilee Sermon was given by Dayan Dr Lew at the Synagogue in Norrice Lea on the Saturday morning.

In a brief article on memories of the Jubilee, it is impossible to comment on all the exciting events that took place across the Suburb during a week of wonderful weather. Willifield Green was used for folk dancing and a traditional

village fair. Various sports took place in Lyttelton Playing Fields which was also the venue for judging the children's fancy dress parade which had set off from Central Square. Music and drama featured throughout the week, including a Jubilee Concert in the Institute, Madrigals at Heathgate and five performances of 'Twelfth Night' in Little Wood. A highlight for me as architect was when Princess Margaret dug the first sod of Fellowship House with the spade used 50 years earlier by Henrietta Barnett at the inauguration of the Suburb.

One of the few criticisms of the Suburb as a neighbourhood of over 15,000 people is that it has no shops, pub or coffee house in Central Square, which has rarely acted as the centre of the community but, my goodness, it came alive for the Jubilee week. It was decorated with flags and coloured lights, a marquee was erected and residents came every evening to drink coffee and talk over the days events and listen to the skiffle groups. The atmosphere was fantastic. Market Place, then the Suburb's real shopping centre, had also been decorated by Finchley Council and the many residents had put out flags, bunting and balloons in their front gardens.

It was estimated that more than 6,000 residents came to Central Square on the final evening of the Jubilee celebrations. On the floodlit square decorated with hundreds of fairy lights, they came from all parts of the Suburb and cheered,

sang and joined in the live music that we had enjoyed every evening of the week of celebrations. As the day ended, Sir John Braithwaite mounted a rostrum and congratulated and thanked everyone who had made it possible. After singing 'Jerusalem' and the 'National Anthem' to the accompaniment of a recording taken at the United Service, the spilt Union Jack was lowered and on the stroke of midnight the floodlights were turned off. An unforgettable

week was over. It had indeed kept alive and active the ideals of good neighbourliness and community enjoyment.

MICHAEL DARKE



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