

Chicken or Egg?



The Free Church on the Suburb started with the children. Junior Church is two years older than the adult church so during 2008 Junior Church is celebrating its centenary. This marks a hundred years from the first Sunday School set up in the area.

In October 1908 a Sunday School was set up to teach Christianity to the children of the newly growing Hampstead Garden Suburb. The children of the suburb met as one group in the workmen's hut in Hampstead

Way. By 1909 the numbers had grown to 91 children and the Sunday School moved to the newly built Institute. However in 1911 the Revd Bouchier of St Jude's wrote that the parents of children from St Jude's were asking for the, "definite teaching of the tenets of their own church" and wished to inaugurate their own Sunday School so in 1911 the HGS Sunday School was split into two. However they still meet together for joint services twice a year. Despite the split which

halved the number of children in each Sunday School, within a month the attendance figure of the Free Church Sunday School was up to 207.

1911 saw the building of the Free Church and March 25th was chosen to be children's day – the day on which the children would play their part in laying the foundation of the church. Eighty-six bricks were laid by the children and you can still see them, bearing children's initials in church wall facing Central Square.

On March 9th 2008 the Junior Church Centenary banner with four logos designed by the young people welcomed people to the Free Church Hall for the Centenary Cradle Roll Reunion Service and Junior Church Open Day. The Hall in Northway was opened in 1925 specifically for the Sunday School and it was fitting that the first centenary event was held in the Hall. There is a display about the hundred years of Junior Church in the Free Church.

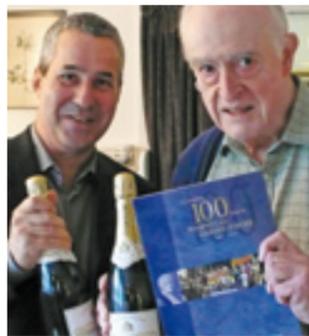
JENNY STONHOLD

The Suburb is good for you?

The Centenary lunch for long standing, and long lived, residents proved that there are many who have lived here for a very long time. Since then Joan Hannam's claim to have lived here longest at 91 years has been challenged by Lillian Jacobson who was born here 95 years ago and has lived in the same house in Temple Fortune Lane since 1955. We have just heard that Beryl Wilson of Oakwood Road, whose late husband was active on RA Council

in the 60s, has been a Suburb resident since 1934 and will be 100 in June. We wish her a very happy birthday.

But the record for living longest in the same house goes to Tim Neal and that means he wins the case of champagne offered by Godfrey and Barr in their advertisement in the Centenary Souvenir Programme for still living in the Baillie Scott Meadway house he was born in 86 years ago.



Ian Godfrey presents a case of bubbly to Tim Neal.

Proms at St Jude's

Tickets for this year's Proms at St Jude's, on 14-22 June, are selling fast. If you are planning to go but have yet to book, now is the time to do so or you may be unlucky. It is now possible to book by phone: 020 8458 1582. You can pay by credit card, or save yourself a £2 fee by sending a cheque.

If you do not have the booking leaflet, which gives details of all the concerts, you can get one from the Garden Suburb Gallery or by phoning 8455 8687. All the information is also on the website www.promsatstjudes.org.uk.

But let us whet your appetite by giving you a brief indication of

the musical treats to come. This year they include evening concerts by guitar duo John Williams (classical) and John Etheridge (jazz); Red Priest Pirates of the Baroque; Brodsky Quartet playing works by Purcell, Puccini, Schubert and Ravel; pianist Imogen Cooper playing works by Haydn, Bartok, Liszt and Schubert; award-winning Fron Male Voice Choir from Wales and jazz singer Stacey Kent.

As in previous years there are free lunchtime concerts, which are given by young musicians who are likely to be the stars of tomorrow. These include a family concert by the Nonesuch

Orchestra, with music by Purcell, Biber, Corelli and Walton. And if you have friends or family from outside the area coming to Proms with you, you may like to note that there will be another series of heritage walks around the Suburb. These have proved very popular in recent years.

Since the Proms at St Jude's began in 1993 they have raised more than £300,000 for good causes. For 2008 any surplus at the end of the year, likely to be in the region of £50,000, will be shared between Toynbee Hall (75%) and the North London Hospice (25%).

Around the World in 80 Days

Jules Verne's novel inspired Terry Rogers to adapt it into a very jolly musical; just the thing to brighten the end of winter.

The Garden Suburb Theatre excelled themselves with this show.

It was well acted, good to look at and harmonious to the ear.

Phileas Fogg, who placed the bet, was taken by Rusty Ashman. In his travel he is accompanied by Passepartout, amusingly played

by Christian Radnedge. The other members of the Reform Club were an interesting group who appeared as different characters during the play. Jon Musker was particularly effective as an American Revivalist and Tim Solomons made a splendid Sumo wrestler. Inspector Fix, the dim detective who pursues Phileas around the world was portrayed by Simon Ramsey with much vigour. Romance was in the hands of Emma Pleass, who looked absolutely ravishing as Aonda, the Indian princess rescued by Phileas from death.

Frances Musker, Jeanne Solomons and Diana Darrer were responsible for the beautiful costumes for China, India, Suez and Bavaria. A really stunning display which drew gasps of pleasure from the audience.

As usual there were the delightful children dancing and singing to music arranged by Stiofan Lanigan-O'Keefe. A lovely show which gave great pleasure.

LEONIE STEPHEN

A joyful occasion

It was a joyful occasion when music and dancing in the streets accompanied a new Sefer Torah in a tour of Church Mount and Norrice Lea and back to the Synagogue. Hampstead Garden

Suburb is probably the only United Synagogue in the country to incorporate a Sephardi Minyan which holds its own monthly services while enjoying being part of the main Synagogue community.

In the words of Sephardi Minyan chairman, Victor Amar, "The celebration was all about togetherness – a celebration of diversity with unity – Chassidim, Ashkenazim and Sephardim, all celebrating together."



Birds in my Garden

The Oak Woodland at the end of our garden was a major factor in the decision to buy our house and the visits of the residents of Big Wood to our bird feeder are a great source of entertainment during the winter months.

This year Derwent May wrote in The Times that blue tits had a bad 2007 breeding season. Their cycle is such a precarious balancing act because of coordinating the feeding of chicks with soft-bodied, small caterpillars, an oak wood cycle which weather can slow down or speed up. The heavy rains of last year washed out many nests so this year we bought food especially for blue tits. At busy feeding times on our bird feeder we see blue tits, great tits, an occasional coal tit, a pair of long-tailed tits and a pair of nuthatches all swooping across the garden and lining up on the pergola for their turn to feed. It is an interesting pecking order.

In very cold winters a black and white woodpecker will come close to the house. Two of our favourite birds are a pair of dunnocks with neat pointed beaks, red legs and sparrow-like plumage. The unwanted seeds chucked out by the great tits and nuthatches in their search for sunflower seeds are pecked up by the ground feeders like chaffinches, robins, dunnocks and blackbirds in great cooperation.

The silent times with not a bird in sight amazes us. It is as if an unseen referee blows a whistle for a compulsory feeding break. Last week a sparrow hawk, a silent camouflaged watcher from a service tree branch caused a sudden empty garden. Then there are the grey squirrels. We have 'squirrel proof' feeders and have wired the lids firmly on, attempting to stop excessive squirrel greed. Last year a tiny

squirrel squeezed through the metal bars then seemed stuck for hours on end with no good exit strategy – most disconcerting even on a daily basis.

One year we had a very skinny robin in the garden and Em, at the library, suggested Wriggly Wrigglers, a company providing food for wildlife – not the most attractive parcel to receive. Skinny robin became very tame indeed and much, much fatter. And then there was

Gordon, a very bad tempered blackbird with white feathers in his left wing. For a while he was Flash Gordon but then his spiteful behaviour changed his name to Gordon Bennett and finally, just Gordon, the very disturbed blackbird. He stayed in the garden for two years and was one of the key players in the fascinating theatre of birdlife in our winter garden and the oak woodland beyond.

WENDY BRENNAN

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