

# Another Proms success

Proms at St Jude's 2009, which ran from Saturday 13 to Sunday 21 June, was once again a great success. Despite the recession, we had sixteen concerts as usual, with artists as talented and diverse as cellist Julian Lloyd Webber, the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain and the Haydn Chamber Orchestra playing to sell-out audiences.

The two chosen charities, Toynbee Hall and the North

London Hospice, will benefit to the tune of £40,000. This is not surprisingly down on 2008, but significantly better than the nil share-out which we anticipated at the start of the year.

And so to 2010, when the festival will be held from 19 to 27 June. To find out how to become a Friend, with advance booking and other benefits, go to [www.promsatstjudes.org.uk](http://www.promsatstjudes.org.uk).

DAVID HARRIS



The Suburb's thanks are due to the hardworking Proms committee.

PHOTO: JOHN BARTON

# Horticultural Society Centenary



PHOTO: CESAR RODRIGUEZ DURAN

Well, what a Summer it has been for the Horticultural Society in its Centenary year. Record numbers bought their summer bedding and seedlings at the Plant Sale in May. A record crowd of 250 attended the Summer Show on 13 June, when Jonathan Ross and Jane Goldman, accompanied by two of their children, opened the show and judged the scarecrow competition with their usual panache and generosity. Meanwhile, next door in the garden of The Teahouse, four specialist plant nurseries sold their wares to eager visitors all day. All the entry money was donated to the North London Hospice. On 21 June 17 Suburb gardens were opened and visitors

came from all over London to visit, amazed at the variety of gardens and planting in such a relatively small area.

In July the celebrations were virtually non-stop. Congratulations to Irena Colomb, Chris and Wendy Parry and Adrian Dell, whose gardens won 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes in Suburb in Bloom. Irena will be presented with the Millennium Cup at the AGM in Fellowship House on 24 November.

On 18 July the society's main centenary projects came to fruition. In addition to opening the highly-successful Festival of Roses in Fellowship House at noon, Henry Kelly unveiled the new flowerbed outside Fellowship House, which

the society has undertaken to maintain for the foreseeable future. Thanks to a magnificent grant from the Residents Association, which funded the Centenary project jointly with the society, we were able to take over the flowerbed from Barnet and rejuvenate it in a manner fit for the 21st century as our gift to the community in which we operate. Smaller donations were received from Waitrose and the HGS Trust, as well as generous members, for this and the transformation of the raised flowerbed on Willifield Green by designer Stephen Crisp to represent over 100 years of gardening on the Suburb.

And in a season of firsts, 'best evers' and record numbers of participants, the heavens stopped raining again for the Horticultural Society's Grand Centenary Summer Party. In Lorraine Wilder's beautiful garden in Asmunds Hill, on a rare warm evening on 25 July, about 100 members and guests celebrated 100 years of Suburb horticultural activity by dancing the night away. Saturday 12 September again turned out fine for the Society's Centenary Autumn Show, our last-but-one centenary celebration. The warm weather brought in more than 250 visitors to wander round exhibits of fruit, vegetables, flowers, home baking and cooking and to listen to Grimdsyke Brass, a popular band from Harrow.

It was a lovely sight to see the large crowd sitting peacefully in the afternoon sunshine listening to the music, before retiring to the small hall in overwhelming numbers to sample the home-made teas.

The numbers were swollen by people attracted to the exhibition of apples identified earlier in the day by Martin Skipper, Ross Cope and his partner Kate, of the East of England Apples and Orchards Project at the Great Centenary Apple Hunt. Around 100 Suburb residents brought apples from their gardens, some of them old varieties donated to the original



occupants at Dame Henrietta's instigation in the early years of the Suburb. Over 140 apples were submitted, with 42 varieties being identified on the day. At least 10 more were taken back to Norfolk for further research and possible later identification.

The apple hunt and the band brought in many residents, including lots of young families, who had never visited the show before and were surprised at the variety of exhibits to be seen. Said Michael Franklin, Chairman of the Horticultural Society, "We were delighted to see so many new faces at the show. We hope they will come again, join the 17 new members who enrolled on the day and join in Horticultural Society activities in future. A brass band played when Dame Henrietta opened the show in 1911 and we thought it would be nice to emulate the founders for our centenary."

The final event in the society's centenary calendar is an illustrated talk at the Free Church Hall by Fergus Garrett, Head Gardener at Great Dixter, about his time with Christopher Lloyd. The talk is at 7.30pm on Tuesday 3 November, £3 for members and £5 for non-members. Tickets at the door or in advance from Yvonne Oliver, 4 Asmunds Hill, NW11 6ET, with sae and cheque payable to HGS Horticultural Society.

MARJORIE HARRIS



# The Admirable Crichton

The Garden Suburb Theatre had a tough time in the Open Air Theatre in Little Wood this year. Not very warm but certainly very wet, the actors and audience are to be applauded for their considerable fortitude.

J M Barrie's play, 'The Admirable Crichton' is a curious mixture of frivolity and serious comment on the master/servant relationship.

It is June 1900 and Lord Loam, who has advanced ideas, is giving a party for his servants. They are served by Lord Loam's daughters and family friends.

William Crichton, the Earl's butler does not wholly approve. Later the roles are reversed when they are all shipwrecked on a tropical island. Crichton takes charge and his attitude to the daughters and the Earl is very dictatorial. Lady Mary falls for

him and he forgets about Tweeny who he had proposed to marry.

In Act 3 they are rescued and when Lord Loams' mother, The Countess of Brockehurst, enquires as to what went on on the island, everything goes back to how it was – or does it? The play has an interesting and ambiguous end.

The play was produced by Tony Newton who strongly brought out the various themes in the play. Andrew Craze, as William Crichton was wonderfully pompous and lordly. A fine and rivetting performance.

It was a very strong cast and Kate Oates (Lady Mary), Rusty Ashman (Lord Loam), Georgia Lockwood (Tweeny) and Geoff Prutton (The Honorable Ernest Woolley) were all very good. The ladies's dresses were lovely too!

LEONIE STEPHEN

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