

Hedgehog family find



What looked like an extremely dilapidated shed behind St Jude's Church Rooms turned out to be home to a family of hedgehogs. The shed used to store scouts equipment but had not been used

for years and was falling down. A working party, scout leaders Marion Lowe and Trevor Staines with Sarah Gibbins, her children Edward and Eloise and other parents including Vanessa Bell,

seen here, were clearing and demolishing the shed when a family of hedgehogs were found to be nesting under the floor. The base was left to give the hedgehogs time to relocate.

Gentle exercise better for you

"A health exercise which doesn't strain but does exercise is really the way to go," says Wendy Brennan who invites new members for the Jade Circle Tai Chi Club.

"Our membership includes a wide range of ages and abilities, each individual working at a level that suits them. The gentle, non-martial Yang Long form, Tai Chi is a real

health exercise. We teach a slightly simplified form and we always do preliminary all-over stretching exercises. We focus on posture, balance, circulation, flexibility and deepening the breathing. At the end of the session the relaxation and calm we feel is reflected in everyone's face."

Wendy continues, "All members help out in one way

or another and we are all volunteers; enjoying Tai Chi together is our motive, not profit. Rent, insurance etc means that, this year, we will charge £35 a term or £90 for the year. You can find us in the Free Church Hall, Northway on Tuesday mornings."

For more details, contact: Margaret on 8446 5052 or Wendy on 8455 7434.

Why the world comes to Erskine Hill

The latest fact-finding missions come from Singapore and Belgium to see how they do it in Abbeyfield House.

Over the years, Abbeyfield House in Homesfield, Erskine Hill, has received many visitors from around the world and most have come to find out more about our model of providing supportive care to older people. But there has never been such a large delegation as the study group from Singapore last May. It was led by Lim Boon Heng, Minister in charge of Ageing Issues, who was accompanied by 18 people from various Singaporean government agencies and voluntary welfare organisations.

The study group wanted to see how care and support is provided to people with different levels of dependency

and need in the Suburb's Abbeyfield, which caters for people needing some support but who want to maintain an active life in the community and do not need 24-hour care.

The group was welcomed by Abbeyfield's chief executive in the UK, Paul Allen, with other regional and local staff supported by local volunteers, John and Wendy Hewson, and Joan Chalk. They toured the house and garden and met most of the residents. The visitors were very interested to hear from the residents themselves and to find out what had motivated them to come to Abbeyfield and how they had found that experience. In turn, the residents were impressed by the courtesy and interest shown by the visitors and enjoyed the break from their normal routine. At the end of their stay one of

the Singaporean party, in a brief speech made particular reference to the 'love and care' evident at Abbeyfield.

Later in the same month there was another unusual visit. This time it was from a lady who had recently become a resident in an Abbeyfield house in Belgium and who wanted to see if there were differences in the way that the organisation operated in the two countries.

The Abbeyfield model of relatively small not-for-profit units rooted in their local communities has now been adopted widely in 13 countries on four continents. In each place the concept has been adapted successfully to meet local laws, cultures and needs but many of the issues affecting older people are similar, even in places as diverse as Italy and Japan. There is a great opportunity to share experience and develop the cross-fertilisation of ideas.

MIKE MILNER

Focus on Fellowship House films, concerts, talks and a whole lot more

Fellowship House reopens in September after the August shutdown with a greatly expanded range of activities.

A film club has been set up with films shown twice a month on a Thursday at 2.30pm. Non-members are welcome.

The programme and dates are advertised on Suburb notice boards and shop windows as well as being listed on the Suburb chat line. Details can also be obtained from the Gallery at Fellowship House. Future showings include the film 'I'm All Right Jack' with Peter Sellers and a cast of old favourites including Margaret Rutherford and the marvellous vintage version of Terence Rattigan's 'Separate Tables' with

David Niven and Deborah Kerr.

Another new venture this autumn is a series of Sunday afternoon concerts. Performed by professional musicians, they will be similar in format to the Wigmore Hall Sunday coffee concerts. The chamber concerts will last for about an hour and will be followed by drinks. On 7 November a violin/piano duo will be playing a piece composed by local resident David Matthews, who will introduce the piece in person.

Fellowship Hall only has space for an audience of 60 so these events will have a more intimate atmosphere than is possible in a large concert hall. Due to the restricted numbers, advance booking is

recommended. A leaflet on the series with booking form is available and can be collected from the Gallery or by ringing the Box Office on 8455 9840.

The popular Tuesday afternoon talks continue. On 12 October there will be a talk with music on the life of Jacques Brel and on 19 October Barry Millington will be interviewing local composer David Matthews, whose 10th Quartet was recently played at the St Jude's Proms. At the end of October, Dr John Reid will discuss the Victorian Musical Box – the mechanics and the music.

Leaflets are available about the full and varied range of Fellowship activities.

PETER FALK

St Jude's Autumn Walk

Readers and their friends, families and dogs who would like to discover green and secluded paths through North London's parks and woodland in autumn sunshine and raise funds for St Jude's central heating appeal fund are invited to join us once again for a six-mile sponsored walk, almost entirely away from roads, on Saturday 16 October, starting at St Jude's and finishing at Manor House underground station on the Piccadilly Line.

If you weren't able to do this fine walk last year, come

this time and find out what you were missing. Everyone who took part last year thought it was great fun and a happy social occasion.

St Jude's, centrepiece of the Suburb, is a Grade I listed building. Its 100-year-old central heating equipment is nearing the end of its useful life. We want to replace it with a state-of-the-art eco-friendly system, but this will cost in the region of £150,000.

We hope that funds raised through the walk will be matched by grant-giving organisations.

There is no registration fee, but we ask adult walkers to raise a minimum of £25 in sponsorship. If you cannot do the walk, please consider giving a donation by visiting the St Jude's church website at www.stjudes.org.uk or sending a cheque, made out to St Jude-on-the-Hill PCC, to 10 Middleton Road, London NW11 7NS.

If you would like more information, please email jennifer@radice.clara.co.uk or telephone 8455 1025.

JENNIFER RADICE



Harry Cooper, a long time resident of Temple Fortune Court, is toasted by relatives, neighbours and his carer on the occasion of his 100th birthday in August. (Photography Cesar Rodriguez Duran)

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