

Suburb Style

Suburb Style editor, Deborah Warland talks to local residents

TO THE SUBURB BORN

featuring Stephanie Hurst

I first met Stephanie some time ago when we were both 'telling' in one of the Suburb's Polling Stations. Although we were wearing different colour rosettes, we struck up a friendly and interesting conversation in which she mentioned that she had been born on the Suburb. We got together again a few weeks ago.



"My parents married in July 1946, moved to London, and bought a house in Litchfield Way where I was born."

We went on to discuss what life was like on the Suburb in those days of ration books and austerity, "It was secure, friendly and a little dull. However, I had a very happy childhood where children could go out and play without too much fuss. It was a carefree existence climbing trees, playing hopscotch and discovering Bigwood. The coalmen would deliver large bags of coal for the stove in the breakfast room. We had gas fires in all the rooms and an open coal fire in the living room. In winter it was always cold. In the kitchen there was a huge larder facing north – there was no fridge or washing machine. My mother had a large contraption with a mangle we called Lizzie to wash

our clothes. Housework really took ages, we are so lucky to have so many things that speed things up today!

As for education, I first went to Annemount nursery school in Holne Chase where Miss Jamaiker was the headmistress. After that I went to Henrietta Barnett School." It was while Stephanie was at Henrietta Barnett that she witnessed her schooling highlight – the Grand Jubilee of 1957. "The Suburb was 50 years old. Bunting was everywhere and we were all so excited. Princess Margaret arrived in a massive Rolls Royce, and we stood along the drive in single file to greet her. Her diminutive figure appeared and we cast our eyes on her small white hat, huge billowing dress and white, high heeled shoes.

A year later in 1958 my world fell apart when my father came home unexpectedly to announce that he had been appointed as Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist to West Dorset. So we sold up and moved to Dorchester. I was pleased for my father, but very unhappy about leaving the Suburb, with all my friends and lovely school."

In 1984 Stephanie was delighted when it became possible to return to the Suburb with her husband Robert, who is a solicitor, and their children Fiona and Peter. She says, "I always remembered the happy times I had on the Suburb, and I knew it was a lovely place to bring up a family. We managed to buy a house in Southway and in 1987 Caroline was born. When my father died my mother decided she wanted to move back here and bought a house opposite her old one in Litchfield Way. She lived there till she died in October 2006. In 1991 I returned to teaching. I started supply teaching at Kerem School, worked as a tutor with the BBC on Grange Hill, and eventually did quite a few film, theatre and other television productions. I have always been passionate about education, and I believe that you have only one chance to educate your children properly. I now run a successful tutoring practice from home and I particularly like teaching children from the state sector to help improve their educational standards. Apart from looking after my family, this is the most satisfying work I have ever done."

When Stephanie has some time to herself she loves pottering in the garden, but she says she also likes more vigorous pursuits. "I try to walk or cycle everywhere. We are so lucky to have so many open

spaces – my favourite walk is through the Heath Extension to Kenwood and all the way to Parliament Hill, stopping for coffee in Swains Lane and back home. My husband is a well known figure on these cycle paths, pedalling away. It's his only source of exercise!"

She and Robert are members of Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue and enjoy all the cultural activities it has to offer." All our children had their Bar and Batmitzvahs there, and I attended the Hebrew classes." She also relishes her visits to the library in

Market Place, "I find it a delight. It has been there for as long as I can remember. The librarians are always eager to discuss any novel you have enjoyed reading." Stephanie helps the Residents Association in being a Ward Organiser for Membership.

Although Stephanie states, like everyone I interview, "Cars and parking spoil the Suburb" and is not pleased with the new Henrietta Barnett school building, she finishes our talk with, "The Suburb is a wonderful place and I would not want to live anywhere else." **S**

REGAL SUBURB KITTEN – MASTER OF THE HOUSE

featuring Tudor

I can't remember which star it was who memorably said that one should avoid acting alongside animals or children. However this came vividly to mind when I went to interview Tudor who told me about his first six months of life on the Suburb.

I'm a ginger kitten called Tudor who has been adopted by an elderly lady on the Suburb called Geri Atrica. My name is a bit unusual but it seemed a good choice as I was born in Hatfield where Elizabeth I was staying when she was informed that she would be Queen, and allegedly, she also had red hair.

I was in a litter of four kittens – our mother was a tabby but, sadly, I have never met my father. All five of us lived in the utility room and I came to Hampstead Garden Suburb when I was six weeks old. In those days I used to climb up the curtains and on to Geri's back, which she didn't take kindly to. It took me ages to find my way around the house. I'd never come across stairs before but now they're one of my favourite areas and I adore overtaking Geri as she comes down so slowly, taking one step at a time.

I eat in the kitchen where Geri has her meals. I jump on to the table where I watch Geri eat and try to steal her food. She gets very cross about this and orders me down, but I just jump up again. This is one area where I definitely have the upper paw!

In the evening Geri often sits in another downstairs room and watches a screen and I'm usually reclining on her lap. Upstairs there's a room with a smaller screen which I love sitting close to and following a small arrow with my paw. In two other rooms she lies down – one in water for a while and the other where she spends the night, as do I.

But, best of all I love the garden. The wonderful scents! You humans don't realise that each blade of grass, each flower and leaf smell so differently. At present, I'm not meant to stay out for long but I don't feel the cold because of my fur coat. Last week the grass was white. I was a bit afraid of the

snow because it made my paws wet but I found it easy to walk on and it tasted better than tap water, just as rainwater does.

All the gardens round here are separated from each other by hedges, but Geri's has a few gaps for me to squeeze through. There is so much more to see and do outside – birds flying overhead, leaves falling off trees and grey furry creatures with bushy tails who I would like to get to know. Only once have I managed to get out of the front door. That was such fun. No-one could catch me as I ran through the front gardens, behind bushes. Then I climbed up a fir tree which was a bit frightening but I had a good view from the top.

Geri says that no-one over the age of 25 should adopt a kitten as they are so energetic. Silly woman – I expect she was agile when she was younger. But I do love running away from her when I'm in the garden and she wants me to come in.

I think I can safely say that I'm now master of the house! **S**



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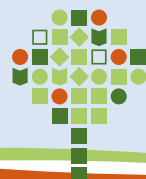
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