

Focus on young residents

Much of Suburb News is devoted to singing the praises of those who have spent their lives working for the Suburb in one way or another. Inevitably they are not usually all that young and one can hardly expect teenagers to show much enthusiasm for joining committees of people old enough to be their grand parents or to get too excited about litter or gardening. So from now on we propose featuring special achievements of the under 20s in our community. Please send stories for future editions. Meanwhile, two talented youngsters Beans Balawi 14 and Alexander Yap 16.



Alexander Yap has gained a place at The Royal Ballet Upper School, Covent Garden.

Alexander who lives in Brim Hill and is a choir member at St Jude's Church started ballet at 6 years old at Brookland Infant School. He attended The Finchley Ballet School under the guidance of Ms Helen Melissinou. They advised him join a boys only class at The Royal Academy of Dance in Battersea on Saturday mornings, taught by Mr Patrick Lewis. This was a great opportunity to meet other male dancers and to compare technique.

He went on to audition and was accepted as a 'Junior Associate' at The Royal Ballet School.

Many performances followed, starting with his very first stage appearance as The Changeling with Johan Kobborg and Alina Cojocaru in The Dream at The Royal Opera House. He was only 8 years old and part of his performance was to pretend to be asleep on a rock on the stage for around 30 minutes (some Changelings actually fell asleep). Alexander was in awe performing on stage with such amazing Principal Dancers. This followed with a part as a peasant in London Children's Ballet, The Scarlet Pimpernel. Then, aged 10, Alex was one of the lucky boys chosen to perform with The Bolshoi with a cast including

Vasiliev & Osipova at the London Coliseum. He was given a role in a duet in Le Corsaire. This was a truly unforgettable experience for Alexander. Amongst other performances he also appeared in ROH Sleeping Beauty, Nutcracker and, most recently, Peter and the Wolf.

At 11 he auditioned and won a coveted place at The Royal Ballet School, White Lodge, Richmond Park. Boarding there with 120 pupils, he found much camaraderie with his fellow colleagues and life at this juncture was a bustle of activity, from ballet classes to body conditioning and academics.

Alex said, "At White Lodge in the first year, the routine was hard. However, by the second and third years it became almost second nature. Then in year 10, the momentum changed, the preparation for GCSEs kicked in and there were many repertoires (short dances from ballets) to grasp. Year 11, there is so much going on, we are constantly pushed to the limit, this is also the year we must re-audition for Upper School Covent Garden. The pressure to earn a place there is

intense. Nevertheless White Lodge is a lifetime experience never to be forgotten and I will miss my friends and teachers a lot. It's like a family here."

Alexander had a second dream come true last May when he won a place to play piano on stage with acclaimed virtuoso pianist Lang Lang at the Royal Festival Hall in a massed piano day event.

Right now Alexander is doing what every other 16 year old is; cramming for his GCSEs in what will be his last couple of months at White Lodge, his home for the past five years.

Beans has appeared in the Style pages before as a very young actor and singer appearing in numerous films and TV series plus playing Michael Banks in Mary Poppins on the stage. From the Garden Suburb School Beans went to Westminster Abbey Choir School where he was head chorister.

He still serves in the Abbey but is now in his second year at Charterhouse on a music scholarship.



Wet summer needed

We all know there is a drought; there have been fourteen days without rain – the official definition; the hosepipe ban starts in a few days here; we have been enjoying sitting outside; the gardens are starting to look dry; and anyway we are continually told we must not use too much water.

However, the detail looks more interesting. Is it really the worst lack of rainfall within memory, (which often doesn't really seem to go back very far!)? Certainly the total for the

last three months at 3.7 inches is hardly more than half the norm of 6.9 inches. Along with the same period in 1992, these two winters were the driest recorded for North London since 1980. In January, 1992, 2000 and 2006 were all drier. In February, 1981, 1986, 1993, 1998 and 2008 all had less rain. While in March 1990, 1993, 1997, 2000 and 2011 were all drier. So it is only the three month period which is so unusual. Taking the last six months, the winter months, overall, only

1991/92 was marginally drier than was 2011/2012, due to last December's near average total. Last summer will be remembered as a wet summer so the dry autumn did not seem to present an immediate problem. Now, however, a repeat wet summer is needed this year if real water supply problems for farming and for wildlife are to be avoided. Let's hope, though, this ideal wet summer does not impact too badly on preparations for the Diamond Jubilee and for the Olympics!

DIANA IWI

Pavlova 2012

2012 marks the centenary of Anna Pavlova making Ivy House her home. Current residents, the London Jewish Cultural Centre, are celebrating the ballerina's life.

'An Intimate Evening with Anna Pavlova' at the Royal Opera House on Sunday 17 June will be a tribute to the great ballerina including dance by Principals and

dancers of The Royal Ballet and archival films of Pavlova herself. Doyens of the ballet world will speak and perform at Ivy House and on Pavlova Day, Sunday 24 June. Other events include The Royal Ballet Dance for a Day workshop, 3 June, an exhibition of Archive photographs at Ivy House from June to September,

Pavlova roses will be on display at the Chelsea Flower Show and there will be screenings of rare Pavlova footage at the British Film Institute in August.

Tickets for Pavlova 2012 events, apart from 'An Intimate Evening with Anna Pavlova' can be booked at www.ljcc.org.uk or 020 8457 5000.

A season of firsts for the Horticultural Society

There will be four 'firsts' in the Horticultural Society's Spring/early Summer programme this year, ranging from a children's fancy dress competition (and adults' mad hats competition) at the June Flower Show to a three-day outing to the gardens of Norfolk and Suffolk in July, and including a trip to Gardeners' World Live and a ceilidh as well.

The children's fancy dress parade and competition takes place in the garden of the Free Church Hall at 3.30pm on 9 June and, hopefully, will be judged by our President Jonathan Ross (to be confirmed). Bring your children, aged 0-16, dressed up as their flower, fruit or vegetable of choice. Adults (that's anyone aged 17+) will not be left out and can enter a mad hats competition on the same theme. You do not have to be a member to enter. Thursday 14 June is the date for our first-ever visit to Gardeners' World Live at the NEC in Birmingham at a

reduced cost of £37.50, which includes return coach travel from Temple Fortune and entry to this exciting show.

There are still a few places left on the coach for a three-day guided trip to at least six beautiful gardens in Norfolk and Suffolk from Sunday 8 July-Tuesday 10 July, with 4* hotel accommodation for two nights. There is now only double room availability, so bring your partner or a friend. The trip costs £349pp, which includes travel, hotel and entry to all the gardens.

With the RA's summer picnic taking place on Sunday

15 July, why not make a weekend of it by dancing the night away at the Horticultural Society's Ceilidh and Summer Party on Saturday 14 July in the Free Church Hall. Tickets cost just £22.50 and include a delicious catered supper. Non-members are welcome.

For full details of how to book for this and all the society's other events (which include the annual Plant Sale at Fellowship House on the morning of 12 May), please see What's On, phone 020 8455 0455 or 7334 or go to www.hortsoc.co.uk.

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He is a renowned Personologist in the Middle East, and appeared on numerous prime-time TV and Radio shows. He has publicly assessed the facial features and created personality profiles of famous people, such as former PM Sharon, Perez and Netanyahu. He assessed the features of Huzbala Leader Hassan Nasarala, Bill Clinton, President Bush and Obama. He appears in magazine and newspaper articles profiling famous celebrities in Israel, Europe and the United States. David also works in areas such as business consulting, couples, individuals who wish to improve relationships, also children with learning disabilities and behavioural problems.

David's Assessments have been acclaimed to have great accuracy. His audiences are amazed and mesmerised by his unique talents.

David Gavriel will be here
in London, May 20th

Venue: Fellowship House, 136a Willfield Way,
Hampstead Garden Suburbs, London, NW11 6YD

For further information contact Sophie: 07831 641199



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