

Proms success

The 20th Proms at St Jude's Festival, which took place from 23 June to 1 July, has been declared 'a resounding success'. Several of the nine evening concerts were sold out, including the opening Opera Night and the Last Night, which continued to pull in the crowds as great Suburb events.

Local, home-grown talent was to the fore, with Grace Durham performing as mezzo-soprano soloist on the Last Night, conducted by Robert Max, and with Grace Davidson a superb soprano at the Diamond Jubilee concert.

Mastery of the piano was exhibited across the week in diverse forms: Panos Karan, playing Rachmaninov's 3rd with the Orion Orchestra; Elena Vorotko performing a free lunchtime recital; Julian Joseph with his jazz quintet; and 19-year old virtuoso Benjamin Grosvenor, showing why he was chosen to open the BBC Proms last year.

The Saturday lunchtime free family concerts made their mark with wonderful entertainment by the BBC Elstree Concert Band and Proms Patron Henry Kelly narrating Tubby the Tuba



Susie Gregson, Anne Gillard O'Reilly, Manvinder Rattan, Grace Davidson and Helen Roose

one week and Albert's Band – the ensemble of the Royal Albert Hall's Education Department – dazzling with music on a sporting theme the next. The free lunchtime concerts were sponsored by the Residents Association whose chairman, Janet Elliott, said "We were pleased to see so many, young and old alike, enjoying these very high quality concerts."

The pilot Literary Weekend received great feedback. Master chefs Yotam Ottolenghi and Claudia Roden conversed about food and politics in front of a capacity audience, while politics and corruption was the theme for Proms Patron Sir Rodric Braithwaite, discussing life in Moscow with Man Booker Prize shortlisted A.D. Miller. Another fascinating pairing was broadcaster Sue MacGregor with novelist

Gillian Slovo, sharing observations on their South African heritage and lessons learned.

Although this was not the sunniest of weeks Proms has ever enjoyed, the Heritage Walks on the Suburb and around the East End were well attended and provided a good mix of information and inspiration.

In a difficult economic climate, sponsorship was down. However, the 'bucket collections' at the end of the concerts raised several thousand pounds. The organisers expect to be able to donate over £50,000 this year to the Aspire Programme at Toynbee Hall and to the North London Hospice,

"We'd like to thank everyone who so generously supported us", said Chairman, Niamh O'Donnell-Keenan. "Many people thought this season the best ever and the atmosphere was tremendous throughout. Our pilot Literary Weekend seems to have been hugely appreciated, so we hope it may become a permanent feature."

Next year's festival will run from 22-30 June 2013.

RON FINLAY



PROMS PHOTOS: JOHN BATTEN



RA fights parking fines

Victims of Transport for London's CCTV traffic camera at the Market Place may be interested to learn that following RA representations to London Assembly, Member Andrew Dismore, the newly elected member for Barnet and Camden, has passed on our concerns about the camera to the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson.

In a written question to the Mayor on 13 June Mr Dismore asked, "Will you review the parking arrangements and enforcement at Market Place NW11, Falloden Way, to ensure that the parking controls are fair, are clearly marked and signed, and that some common sense is applied by Transport for London when using CCTV enforcement?" The Mayor replied succinctly but unequivocally "Yes".

The RA has since written to the Mayor thanking him for his undertaking and highlighting some of the egregious parking cases that have occurred in The Market Place since TfL started using CCTV enforcement in 2006. These have included untold numbers of parking tickets being issued for loading bay contraventions despite poor signs and confusing road markings which combine to make the bays hard to recognise. In what appears to be an exercise for raising as much money as possible and with little apparent understanding of the purpose of traffic control TfL also routinely issues tickets to legitimate loading bay users many of whom simply pay because they have neither the time nor the expertise to fight an unjustified parking ticket. TfL also seems to have introduced a new tactic recently

– issuing tickets to motorists who have merely paused in the Market Place while waiting for the car in front to vacate a parking space. TfL then claims that the waiting motorist has broken the law by 'parking' more than 20 inches from the kerb.

Anyone who receives a parking ticket in the Market Place, for whatever reason, should contact the RA's Roads & Traffic Committee on raparking@hgs.org.uk. We have helped prevent the payment of thousands of pounds in Market Place parking fines and we may well be able to help you successfully fight your ticket. We will also highlight the worst cases to our LA member and through him to the Mayor.

In a separate development around twenty businesses on the north side of The Market Place have sent letters to TfL demanding the withdrawal of the parade's two remaining loading bays because TfL's overzealous enforcement policy is causing the traders to lose business. Two well liked Market Place businesses have closed recently and the suspicion is that many of their customers were scared off by huge fines after inadvertently parking in the loading bays. In 2008 traders on the south side united with the RA to persuade TfL to withdraw a similar loading bay trap outside the post office. Removal of the two surviving north side loading bays would leave TfL with far fewer revenue-raising opportunities in the Market Place so strong resistance to the traders' petition is to be expected from the transport organisation.

GARY SHAW



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Playing fields saved

Barnet has withdrawn Lyttelton Playing Fields from the proposed pilot scheme to use parks for private events, such as wedding parties, discos and boxing matches.

Trust focuses on Suburb boundaries

Development of sites on the Suburb boundaries affects nearby residents and sometimes passers-by. The Trust has become increasingly concerned at the effect of the setting at the edges of the Conservation area, particularly pressure points such as Corringham Road and Temple Fortune Lane. It has recently lodged an objection to the design of a proposed block of flats next to the Health Clinic, facing the Farm Walk exit from the Suburb.

RA's Consam (Conservation and Amenities Committee) has lodged a similar objection, noting the detrimental effect on Temple Fortune Lane houses facing the proposed flats. This follows a Consam objection to overlooking from parts of the proposed Chandos development behind Waterlow Court and Reynolds Close.

This represents a victory for the initial objections from residents Martin Jaskell and David Bogush, the several hundred petitioners led by Kingsley Way's Dr Marc Balint, and the submissions by HGS Trust and the Residents Association with the support of Ward Cllrs John Marshall, Andrew Harper and Daniel Seal.

The RA organised a meeting for local residents on 7 December and collated an 18 point submission on their behalf to Barnet.

World on your doorstep

The multi-national event in the Free Church for the weekend of 14, 15 July attracted entries from dozens of countries and cultures and interest from hundreds of residents over the

weekend. Thanks to all those of differing cultures and nationalities who make up the population of the Suburb for bringing something to illustrate their backgrounds. "It was a fascinating exhibition

and the catering was wonderful," said one visitor.

Our thanks go to Ian and Georgia Tutton for inspiring and implementing such an innovative event.



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