



# Suburb Style

Suburb Style editor, Deborah Warland talks to local residents

## A SCOTTISH REFUGEE

featuring Laurence Barron, interviewed by Mirren Gidda

When Laurence Barron moved down to the South-East in 2009 he had to be dragged kicking and screaming from the wide open spaces of Scotland. But now the Gardiner Professor of Chemistry at the University of Glasgow and Fellow of the Royal Society is a convert to the charms of the Suburb.

Laurence began, "I moved here following my retirement from the University and, if I'm honest, my wife had to drag me here kicking and screaming. I wasn't sure I was ready to live in London.

We chose the Suburb to be near our family – my daughter lives here and my son is in Tufnell Park. I loved the Suburb because it is a green oasis. The Suburb is so different from the majority of built-up, concrete London and its space and tranquility appealed to me."

After an active working life in academia, retirement does not seem to have diminished his search for knowledge.

"I studied at the Northern Polytechnic London University for my BSc in chemistry before obtaining my D.Phil in theoretical chemistry at Lincoln College, Oxford," explained Professor Barron.

"Armed with this doctoral research I went to Cambridge to conduct postdoctoral research in physical and theoretical chemistry. I then left the South for Scotland, having been appointed a lecturer in chemistry at the University of Glasgow. I was appointed professor in 1984, which was hugely exciting. I stayed there until 2009 when I retired as Gardiner Professor of Chemistry."

Those 25 years saw him go in a wide range of research directions. "Many areas interest me, ranging from astrobiology, the origin and search for life on other worlds, to the behaviour of proteins which can cause diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's," he said.

"My main area of interest is chirality, which refers to right or left-handedness. Many molecules are chiral-handed so they have a left hand and a right hand. Most drug molecules are chiral and the two forms may not have the same effects. For example, the drug Thalidomide was composed of both the right and left hands.

However, only one hand had the beneficial sedative effects, the other hand caused the abnormalities.

Drug companies now explore a drug's chirality and market the individual, beneficial hand. I was awarded the Chirality Medal in 2011 for my work, which was a huge honour."

I ask if retirement to the Suburb means that his questioning mind has now slowed down?

"I no longer have use of a laboratory but I still am active within the international scientific community. I referee papers and grant applications, collaborate on research and lecture around the world. At the end of May, I'm travelling to New Jersey to Merck's laboratories to speak about the chiral Raman spectroscopy I developed. I also regularly visit the Royal Society



Suburb resident, Laurence Barron

for dinners and talks – living in the Suburb makes that a lot easier than travelling down from Glasgow."

What are the Suburb's attractions to this refugee from Scotland? "I especially love the Suburb in Spring when the magnolias are in full bloom. My favourite place here is across Central Square, down Heathgate to the Heath Extension."

And there are other things to savour too. "I love the Proms at St Jude's and the associated literary festival and I belong to a walking group on the Heath."

The switch from Glasgow to the delights of the Suburb has been a highly successful experiment for Professor Barron. **S**

ADVERTISING FEATURE

## Insight



### Spring News at The Institute



With spring here at last and the uncertainties over The Institute's long-term future finally resolved, our summer term is off to a flying start. Institute chairman Greville Waterman recently revealed the location of The Institute's new home. From September 2013, The Institute will be entering into a strategic partnership with Bishop Douglass School, a thriving secondary school right here on our doorstep in East Finchley. While some of our art classes will be continuing at the Arts Centre – now the home of the Archer Academy – we clearly need more space elsewhere for our other classes. We have found this space at Bishop Douglass School which is located in Hamilton Road (off East End Road) N2 0SQ – within 5 minutes of The Institute. We are also in talks with Bishop Douglass over the construction of a new dedicated building on the school site.

So from September 2013 onwards, Institute classes will continue to run in N2 – either at the Arts Centre or in our new home at Bishop Douglass. This is obviously great news for all concerned – above all our loyal students who have stuck with us through a period of uncertainty and concern.

For now, there is plenty happening at the Arts Centre this summer term. We have a great range of short courses running in May and June – many of them with a seasonal theme.

In the kitchen, there is a delicious spread of 6 week courses starting in June. You can choose from a great menu including 'Ice Cream Desserts and Semi Freddo' - which will show you how to produce wonderful desserts using home-made ice cream - 'Novelty Cake Decorating', 'The Art of Patisserie' and 'Piping Techniques' which will teach you all about the preparation and use of royal icing for piped cake decorations. If you don't have a sweet tooth, there is plenty else to choose from too: 'Fish for Summer' will introduce you to a range of attractive fish dishes while 'The Delicious Low-Calorie Menu' will help you get into shape for the summer holidays while eating delicious low-fat meals. If you want to get into the holiday mood early, why not enrol for our new 'Tapas and Mezze' course? Visit our website [www.hgsi.ac.uk](http://www.hgsi.ac.uk) to see our full range of summer cookery courses.

If BBC2's Great British Sewing Bee has got you in the mood for stitching, we have a number of short textiles courses this term too. Choose from 'Crochet 101' on 10 May, 'Knicker-tastic Workshop' or 'Tie Dye Techniques' on 11 May, 'Introduction to Felting' or 'Introduction to Batik' on 18 May or 'Machine Knitting: Improvers' starting on 8 June.

Details of our summer programme of short holiday workshops will be announced soon. Check out our website [www.hgsi.ac.uk](http://www.hgsi.ac.uk) for full details.

We look forward to welcoming you at The Institute some time soon.



For further details ring 020 8829 4229 or visit [www.hgsi.ac.uk](http://www.hgsi.ac.uk)

The Institute is currently seeking a Clerk to The Institute Council to succeed Sylvia Pace who is stepping down in July. We are also looking to recruit a number of new members to The Institute Council preferably with property or legal expertise. These are responsible and fulfilling voluntary roles which will involve playing a significant part in the development of The Institute. If you are interested, please ring Anne Melbourne on 020 8829 4235.

## SUBURB RECIPE

featuring Deborah Warland

When I finished working full time (I had been in the magazine industry as a director of Conde Nast) I was approached by an American to help him with some ideas for launching a few lifestyle publications. One of the ideas that he and his Russian partner had was to launch a travel magazine aimed at the increasingly wealthy residents of Moscow and Leningrad. He subsequently dispatched to London a young woman called Anastasia who was going to run his company. The first time she came she stayed at a hotel in the West End but when she came over again I suggested she stayed with us on the Suburb. We have since become great friends.

Although Anastasia lived in Moscow she was staggered that London contained 'such a gem', as she called it, as the Suburb which was so close to the centre of London. We went on endless walks and she decided her favourite spot was Bigwood which she thought more interesting and unique than the Heath. She has been to stay with us four times now so that she could decide which is her favourite season here – in fact it turns out to be Winter. On the culinary front she could not get over the availability that we have in the UK in December of all sorts of Summer fruits. Her particular love is the raspberry, so I asked her if she would make a dessert for us. It's very easy to make and can be eaten hot or cold. The aroma when it's hot is quite stunning. **S**

### Anastasia's Russian Raspberry Pudding

#### Ingredients

- 450g raspberries
- 3 tablespoons caster sugar
- 275-300ml soured cream (low fat tastes as good as the full fat)
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon flour
- Sugar to decorate

#### Method

1. Turn the raspberries into a shallow, oval gratin dish and sprinkle them with 2 tablespoons of caster sugar.
2. Stand the dish in the middle of a slow oven, gas mark 2, 300°F, until the raspberries are hot through (if they are at room temperature this should only take 15 mins).
3. Beat the sour cream with the eggs, flour and the remaining tablespoon of sugar.
4. Pour the mixture over the raspberries and put the dish back in the oven at the same heat but nearer the top.
5. Cook until the topping is pale golden brown and firm – about 45 minutes.
6. Sprinkle with a little more sugar before serving.

