

275th Flower Show

On a warm sunny day, 220 visitors flocked to the show. It was a much smaller show than usual as everything in the gardens was so late this year. Nevertheless, it was a good show with the usual happy atmosphere. There were 39 individual adult entrants, but only about 140 entries as compared to 227 in 2012. There were no soft fruit entries and very few vegetables. Roses and cut flowers too were scarce. Photography has become very popular and attracted 17 entries. Once again, there were only 7 children's entries, but they were all delightful and had lovely comments from the judge.

The Fancy Dress and Mad Hats competitions were a big hit. Nine children and four adults paraded in the Free Church Hall garden. They were judged with his usual charm by Jonathan Ross, who brought along his little French bulldog, Professor Snowball. This year's children's theme was 'Dress up as a Biscuit, Cake, Chocolate or Sweet'. There were some really brilliant costumes and Jonathan had difficulty choosing between them. There were prizes for everyone. Special mentions went to Jemima Blendis (2 yrs) a gorgeous pink Cupcake; Akira (5 yrs), Arthur (4 yrs) and Ben Blendis (2 yrs) perfect Liquorice Allsorts; Rosa Coury-Reid (4 yrs)

a wonderful Jammy Dodger; and baby Artie Mercie (4 mths) a little Jaffa Cake. First prize in the Mad Hats competition went to Janet Towers for her magnificent 3-tier Cake on a hat.

Best Pot Plant and Best Overall Horticulture certificate, plus a special Judges' Certificate of Merit, were awarded to David Read for his wonderful flowering cactus. Best Cut Flowers: Patricia Larsen's Vase of Cut Flowers; Best Vegetable: Chris Page's Asparagus; Best Cookery: Judy

Blendis' Summer Pudding; Best Preserving: Yvonne Oliver's Chutney. First prizes in the children's classes went to Rosa Coury-Reid's Painting of a Rose; Joseph Coury-Reid's Miniature Garden; Olivia Redman's Gingerbread Man; and Melissa Redman's Miniature Garden and three Iced Fairy Cakes.

There were, as always, delicious cakes for the teas - very many thanks to Barbara Perry and her seemingly tireless team of helpers, who must have been

exhausted by the end of the afternoon. Thanks also to Barbara Kogut for running the raffle. And a big thank you to everyone who helped on this very busy day - too many to mention individually but you all know who you are.

The Autumn Flower show will take place in the Free Church Hall on Saturday 7 September. The Grimdsyke Brass Band will be back by popular appeal.

YVONNE OLIVER



PHOTOS BY NIGEL SUTTON

Annual Plant Sale

On a bright Saturday morning in May, a large queue of gardeners appeared at Fellowship House for our annual plant sale. The gate opened promptly at 10.30 and the rush was on to bag the best-looking plants.

The pelargoniums were sold out in half an hour and by 11.30 there were only a few items left for the late-comers. The tomato

plants proved again to be best-sellers. Let's hope the blight will be less prevalent this year and that we can all enjoy the fruits of our labours.

Next year we hope to increase the range of more interesting plants for you to buy. Many thanks again to the team at Finchley Nurseries.

MICHAEL FRANKLIN

Rainfall records

After many must have wondered if it had got lost, summer finally arrived in the first week of July. Despite much faltering, our seasons can still be felt to be basically correctly named.

As for rainfall, what a contrast with last year! For the first six months of 2013, a total of 11.4 inches compares with 16.3 inches in 2012 - two inches below average. From April to June there were only 4.4 inches, 2.6 inches below the norm. The past winter, in contrast, was very wet so the ground was well saturated. By now, however, it is well and truly drying out. June's

rainfall of 0.76 inches is less than half the average, one of the lowest recorded. Still, it is wonderful that we can at last enjoy being out in the gardens of our Garden Suburb, relaxing while watching the bees enjoying the clover, buttercups and self-heal in the un-mown lawn, enjoying the sight and scent of the roses which seem to have grown so well, even if so belatedly, and deciding that the purple toad-flax is so tall and dark this year that it could not possibly be called a weed; it is just in a different place from last year.

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Insurance Company threatens Bigwood

Bigwood is an ancient woodland site, laying in the Anglo-Saxon hundred of Ossulstone referred to in the Domesday Book of 1086. It is one of the few remaining woodland areas in Greater London and was long ago identified as an ancient woodland site by English Nature. In the late nineties English Nature further protected the site by designating it a Nature Reserve because of the unusually large number of rarer Wild Service trees growing there and the wide range of other species.

Four mature trees in the wood are now threatened by the insurance company covering 61 Temple Fortune Hill. They have employed solicitors to 'persuade' Barnet to cut down four trees near to the property stating that the trees are causing subsidence problems.

If any of the trees are felled it would greatly diminish the beautiful aspect of the wood when approaching the memorial gate entrance which can be seen in the accompanying photograph.

Although the HGS Trust is not directly responsible for Bigwood, the Bigwood Committee asked the Trust for their views as they are very active trying to preserve the environment in the Suburb. In many previous cases the HGS Trust's consultant engineer has warned that removal of mature trees predating built structures can lead to heave damage. Such heave damage can be of greater magnitude than subsidence damage. House owners in the immediate vicinity, the Trust says, would be wise to seek clarification that their insurers will indemnify them from heave risk over an extended period if nearby trees predating their property are to be removed. The trees in question were there

long before the house and the architect and ongoing insurers were fully aware of this. The current insurers seem to be using the proximity of the trees as a smoke screen to avoid carrying out proper underpinning work and are ignoring the real dangers of heave not only to no 61 but also the surrounding properties if the trees were to be felled.

Bigwood is controlled by Barnet so no planning application is needed. The Bigwood Volunteer group is pressing Barnet to resist all demands by these eco-vandal insurers to cut down the trees. We understand that the damage to the property is limited to the adjoining garage and patio and the main house is not, as yet, affected. The Group has suggested to Barnet that any action by the Council should be limited to perhaps reducing the crown of the four trees by say 25% and erecting a root barrier. We are being assisted in our efforts to preserve Bigwood by Cllr John Marshall, who has made the leader of the Council personally aware of the threat to the wood.

We have recently failed to persuade both Barnet and the Trust to refuse permission to cut down a magnificent oak over 150 years old just outside the edge of Littlewood. We hope Suburb News readers, who value our environment and wish to preserve it, will write to the council expressing their outrage at the threat to these magnificent trees.

Anyone who would like more information can contact the Bigwood Volunteer Group by going onto the RA or Trust website and following the link to Bigwood.

BIGWOOD COMMITTEE & VOLUNTEER GROUP

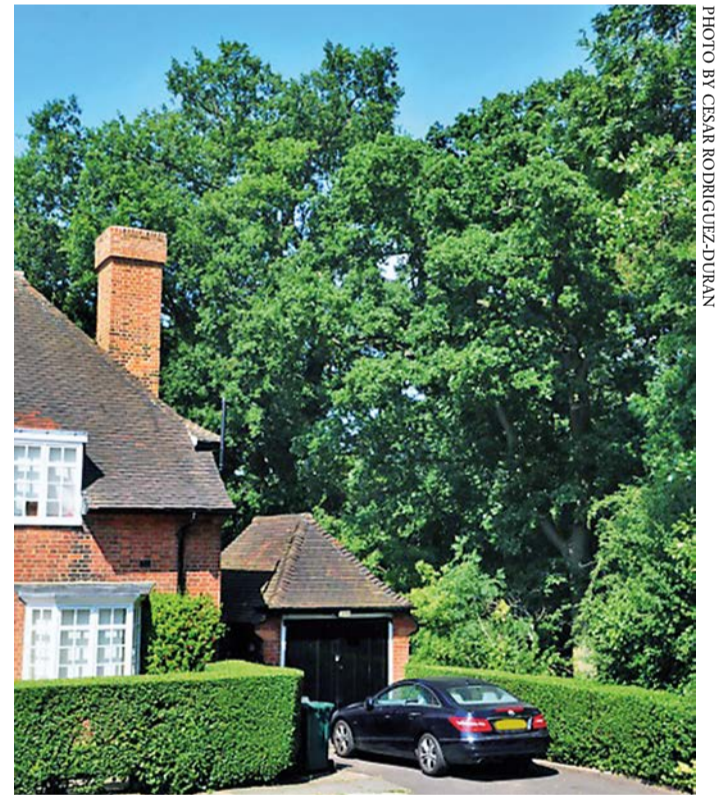


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