

Jean Barraclough, 1925-2013



With the sad death of Jean Barraclough the Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church, and the Suburb as a whole, has lost one of its most prominent and influential members. Jean was the wife of Peter Barraclough, the well-respected Minister of the Free Church for 31 years until his untimely death in 1992.

In her role as his wife Jean undertook many obligations and

tasks in the Church as well as being a stalwart and loving helpmeet to Peter throughout his ministry here and elsewhere. They came from Ipswich in 1961 and soon established themselves in the Suburb, making their influence felt in many aspects of Suburb life.

Jean led a full life as teacher and administrator as well as contributing to the work of the Free Church and bringing up her large family. There were four children (and latterly two grandchildren, the children of Kathy, who live nearby, plus a small tribe of grandchildren in Australia whose father is Paul).

In the Church Jean fulfilled several roles over the years, as well as supporting Peter's work throughout. Her deep faith was clear to all who knew her and enabled her to help a wide variety of people in many different ways. She was a helper in the Youth Club and in the toddler play group. In the 70s and 80s she led the 'women's working party' making things for sale at the annual Church bazaar and she also chaired the catering committee, providing

lunches and refreshments on important dates in the church calendar. Even when she was housebound with the beginnings of the illness which finally ended her life, she continued her work as a Deacon in the Church. Meetings were held in her house so that her wisdom and knowledge were not lost to the Deacons' Court.

There was no end to Jean's responsibilities in the Church: she was for many years one of the editors of 'News and Views', the popular church magazine, and her gifts were also used in writing and producing Christmas plays over several years.

Last, but not least, Jean was an excellent public speaker and took pride in her elocution. She conducted joint services with Peter, and occasionally took sole responsibility for them. Jean was thus a woman of many parts and many talents – and to these she added her own outstanding charm, her utter reliability in all things, her generosity, her calmness in the face of crises, and, above all, her loving nature.

JOAN HOLTON

the most enjoyable and fulfilling work I have ever done, and I found Jean to be a most excellent boss. The atmosphere was inclusive, warm and caring – a reflection on Jean herself. There was always time to give advice when my students had problems, or to answer obscure questions on English grammar or usage.

Although she retired as head of department at sixty-seven, she continued to work at the Institute until the age of eighty managing quality control and supporting and training teachers. For many years she organised the wonderful International Students Services in the Free Church at the beginning of December, which I am sure many readers will remember with fondness.

We were both on the RA publications committee together where her English skills were much appreciated.

I remember The Manse being an open house with a welcoming kitchen in which all were made to feel at home. Home and family were important in her life and she leaves four children and seven grandchildren in this country and Australia; she took on her role as grandmother with much love, and it gave her great pleasure. Jean celebrated her eighty-eighth birthday a few weeks ago with family and friends around her bed and she enjoyed blowing out the candles

Northway Gardens playground revamp

Plans are well advanced for a full scale update of the young children's playground in Northway Gardens (west end) which is tired and worn. A local parents' group has provisional funding (including a contribution from the Residents Association) for phase one and has conducted a survey of views regarding outline plans. As Suburb News goes to press, more detailed plans are being drawn for submission to Barnet Council to be signed off by the year end. The results of the survey are being analysed

but it seems that the proposed tall children's playhouse may now be lower like the existing playhouse. The aim is to begin work after the February half term with a view to opening phase one at the start of the Easter holidays. Subject to funding, phase two may be carried out during the summer term. At a meeting with Barnet on 24 October the small boundary extension was reined back to the minimum needed for safety requirements around the swings, and colours were toned down suitably.

New police line up

DeeDee Ciftci the Suburb's popular police community support officer dropped in on Suburb News to update us on the new local police line up. The Garden Suburb Safer Neighbourhood Team is headed up by Sergeant Aidan Russell. Our dedicated ward officer is PC Paul Brown and DeeDee Ciftci is our PCSO. They are now based at 61 Golders Green Road, NW11 8EL.

and reading the many cards she received. Jean will be remembered for her many qualities, which included her generosity, kindness, understanding, wisdom and humour, as well as for her elephant collection which is probably my, now grown-up, children's foremost memory of Christmas drinks at The Manse.

TERRY BROOKS

...and the RA

Jean was Vice-Chairman of the RA when I was Chairman from 2002 to 2005. She had no interest in being Chairman herself, but was always ready to offer advice when I needed it and she always backed me up in committee meetings. I'm sure equally good advice was handed out to anyone else who asked for it.

The RA was, at the time, very much concerned with traffic calming and parking issues. We seemed to spend forever pouring over drawings of parking spaces in Temple Fortune, reports on how many pedestrian refuges were to be removed or the difference between speed humps and speed cushions. These were subjects neither of us knew anything about, but that didn't stop Jean having well-considered opinions and helping to make sure the RA did its very best for residents. She was an Honorary Life Member of the RA.

GEORGINA MALCOLM

Take minutes in London

Rett UK is a small national charity which supports people with Rett syndrome. This is a neurological condition which affects (almost exclusively) girls and women. The girl appears to be normal for the first year and when the cognitive development kicks in, she loses skills that she previously had and ends up being profoundly and multiply disabled and unable to do anything for herself.

The trustee board needs someone to take minutes at their meetings which take place in central London on four Saturdays during the year. The meetings last from 10am until about 2pm with a break for lunch. We would be happy to pay for this service.

Is there someone out there who knows of someone who could help? We are also looking for a volunteer treasurer.

Please contact Lorna Jaffa at lorna@jaffa.org.uk if you think you can help.



Library needs volunteers

The much-loved community library in the Market Place needs more volunteers for its 3½ hour shifts, done in pairs. Responses to Mail@gardensuburblibrary.org.uk.

Remembering Jean at The Institute...

Jean Barraclough touched the lives of many who live on the Suburb in many ways. She was born in Swansea in 1925 and moved around with her family until they settled in Cardiff where she met her future husband, Peter, while they were both still at school. She went on to Cardiff University where she studied for an English degree and teaching certificate while Peter gained a masters degree in Physiology at Cambridge before being called to the church. As Jean commented, "I got engaged to a scientist, but married a minister."

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