

The other Mary – doyenne of baking

We all love the Great British Bake Off, right? But how many GBBO fans living in North London know that there is another blonde, beautifully spoken doyenne of baking right here in our midst? At The Institute in East Finchley, Mary Davis is queen of the kitchen. For the past 15 years, Mary has been running hugely popular cookery courses at The Institute. Recently, the demand for baking courses has outstripped almost all other cookery classes and today students are falling over themselves to enrol on Mary's marvellous baking courses – where there is never a 'soggy bottom' in sight!



Her credentials are impeccable: she trained at Cordon Bleu and, after a variety of cooking jobs, went on to teach for 12 years at Leith's cookery school in Notting Hill Gate. Along the way, she had three lovely daughters – triplets – and, as she laughingly explains, "I used to have to bake three different cakes for every birthday so that was certainly good training."

Today Mary specialises in baking. "It's incredibly creative," she enthuses. "I really enjoy the

challenge of producing something beautiful and very professional." There is another aspect to baking too which Mary believes explains the current nationwide craze. "During a recession, baking is definitely a comfort thing. There is a feelgood factor about it. And it is something which everybody can do cheaply at home." Mary's family still demand certain favourites for special occasions. Her rose-scented and pistachio cupcakes are regularly in demand.

eagerly. "I think Mary Berry is wonderful, her ultimate cake book is brilliant for the home baker and the GBBO is the only cookery programme on TV where everyone is so pleasant – with no rudeness or shouting." You could never imagine Mary Davis raising her voice in the kitchen and she seems as if she would stay perfectly cool in any cake-related crisis.

She talks enthusiastically about her new spring courses at The Institute: "I am particularly looking forward to my one day workshops, 'Marvellous Macarons' and 'Time for Tea'. Teatime is definitely my favourite time of day and French 'macarons' are absolutely the flavour of the moment." Mary is also running a four week breadmaking course and, for anyone with some baking experience already, her 11 week 'Art of Baking' advanced course (starting 29 April) offers an irresistible challenge: instead of sitting in front of the telly, why not step into the 'other' Mary's kitchen and be the star of your very own baking show?

HELEN HARRIS

HGS Heritage virtual museum



A few years ago our Suburb celebrated its centenary having been noted as an important worldwide leader of 'Garden Suburbs', with its great housing, gardens, open spaces and amenities – but what of the future? To what extent is our history relevant to our way forward? How can we safeguard our Heritage for citizens in the years to come?

To respond to this question the leading organisations on the Suburb, including the Archives Trust, got together to answer this by setting up a welcome and information centre for enquirers, including students, residents and outside visitors. Also a museum for the display of artefacts and memorabilia – paintings and

posters, photographs and letters. Having surveyed all possible sites that we could find on and near the Suburb with scant reward, it has been decided as the first step to set up a 'virtual museum' on the web. This will display items and can be used extensively by those with access to the internet. In some cases, this is an advantage as some items such as some water colours, because of their fragility, cannot otherwise be shown.

A pilot is already nearly complete and we hope by the end of the year that the Virtual Museum will go live. We intend also to work jointly with the Archives Trust, to set up an ongoing campaign to collect Suburb artifacts and memorabilia from private sources. All this will become a permanent and growing repository of the Suburb's Heritage. We hope in due course to find the space for a real museum and not have to rely solely on what a virtual one can offer.

The work so far is funded through the generosity of the HGS Residents Association and

a charitable trust. But we need more person support to help us preserve the best of the past for the benefit of future generations. We lack an Hon. Secretary and we need additional committee members who can take on an overseeing role for some (not too onerous) areas of our activity. For example perhaps a specialist role such as publicity. Through an alliance with the Henrietta Barnett School we are gaining volunteers who can assess, describe and input item details for the virtual museum, and hopefully in the future for the collection of heritage items. Expenses are paid.

We have the benefit of our distinguished Patrons, Martin Bell, Sir Roderic Braithwaite, Jane Goodman and Lord Winston who all live on the Suburb. Our present HGS Heritage committee also comprises an impressive list of Suburb dignitaries.

Maybe you, or someone you know, could add some further skill or expertise to this working committee. Contact abbott.s@virgin.net.

SIMON ABBOTT

From the Other Side

Henrietta and Samuel, founders of our Suburb – 'Hettie' and 'Sam' – are somewhere else but still like to keep an eye on the Suburb and, in particular, the HGS Chatline

(Samuel is looking at the Chatline on his laptop and Henrietta is reading a book. She puts down her book)

Hettie: Is there anything on the Chatline Samuel?

Sam: (Peers at screen) Not a lot Het. Usual stuff. Servant problems – 'au pairs' they call them now – things for sale, places to eat, where to go on holiday, theatre recommendations – the usual middle class problems.

Hettie: No sarcasm if you please Samuel – it's a sign of weakness and unbecoming in a man of the cloth.

Sam: Sorry Het! Oh this will interest you – there's been a bit of fuss about hedges.

Hettie: (Suddenly interested and standing up) Hedges? Quite right! There should be a fuss. I was always having to knock on doors and tell people to keep their hedges in order. They simply wouldn't keep them under control. All over the place, blocking the paths, cluttering the

gardens, creating problems everywhere. I could understand the artisans not knowing about hedges but even the Central Square lot seemed clueless.

Sam: I can't follow all of it but there seems to be a lot of criticism about the height hedges are supposed to be.

Hettie: (Indignantly, pacing up and down) Goodness me! What on earth is the problem? They've got rulers haven't they? If I could go round with a tape measure and tell people off, what's to stop them? Or do I have to show them how to use those as well! (Pause) Oh, of course I can't anymore. I'm up here now.

Sam: It's not so much the measuring but the rules that seem to annoy them – the regulations. In fact, having regulations at all. (Looks at laptop) According to this chap it's something do with a 'nanny state'.

Hettie: (Even more indignantly) Nanny state! What on earth is he talking about!! They were my regulations – nothing to do with the state at all. Does he think I don't know how high a hedge should be? That I can't frame a few regulations myself. And please stop calling me Het Samuel. My name is Henrietta if you

hadn't noticed. Hettie if you have to shorten it.

Sam: Sorry Het, I mean Hettie.

Hettie: Besides Mr Asquith never mentioned hedges to me once – nor Mr Balfour come to that. And I'm sure that Nanny never mentioned hedges.

Sam: I think it's a metaphor Hettie – 'nanny' I mean. Something about being treated like a child?

Hettie: But Nanny never mentioned metaphors either. Sam: (Trying to change the subject) Anyway, it makes a change from all that stuff about dustbins and coloured cycles they were going on about a little while ago.

Hettie: Yes, that was awful. I thought it would never stop. How can people go on about dustbins for so long?

Sam: There's still quite a bit about them I'm afraid – green bins this time. Emptying them.

Hettie: (Angrily) Green bins! What's the problem now? Don't they like green bins either? What colour would they like them to be? Pink, red, multi-coloured!? Or do they want me to come and empty them for them

Sam: (Being placatory) Steady on Het – Henrietta – you're not really supposed to lose your temper up

here. At least they agreed that it was bringing the community together again.

Hettie: (Calms down, sighs and in a resigned voice) You're right Samuel – but isn't it strange. You give them an Institute, a tea house, churches, allotments - meeting places galore in order to create community spirit – and all they want are dustbins! Why did I bother?

Sam: It does seem a pity. But we have to change with the times Het. 'O tempora, O mores', that sort of thing.

Hettie: Or 'castigat ridendo mores' – I can do the Latin as well Samuel! Well at least it might provide material for one of your sermons. God knows they need livening up a bit.

Sam: Rather like the Chatline – eh Hettie?

Hettie: I'll do the jokes Samuel

Sam: Sorry Het.

(Samuel closes his laptop, Henrietta sits down, sighs and picks up her book again)

ANON

Apologies to Peter Philips, Ian Davidson, June Armstrong Wright et al

Garden Suburb Design Guidance

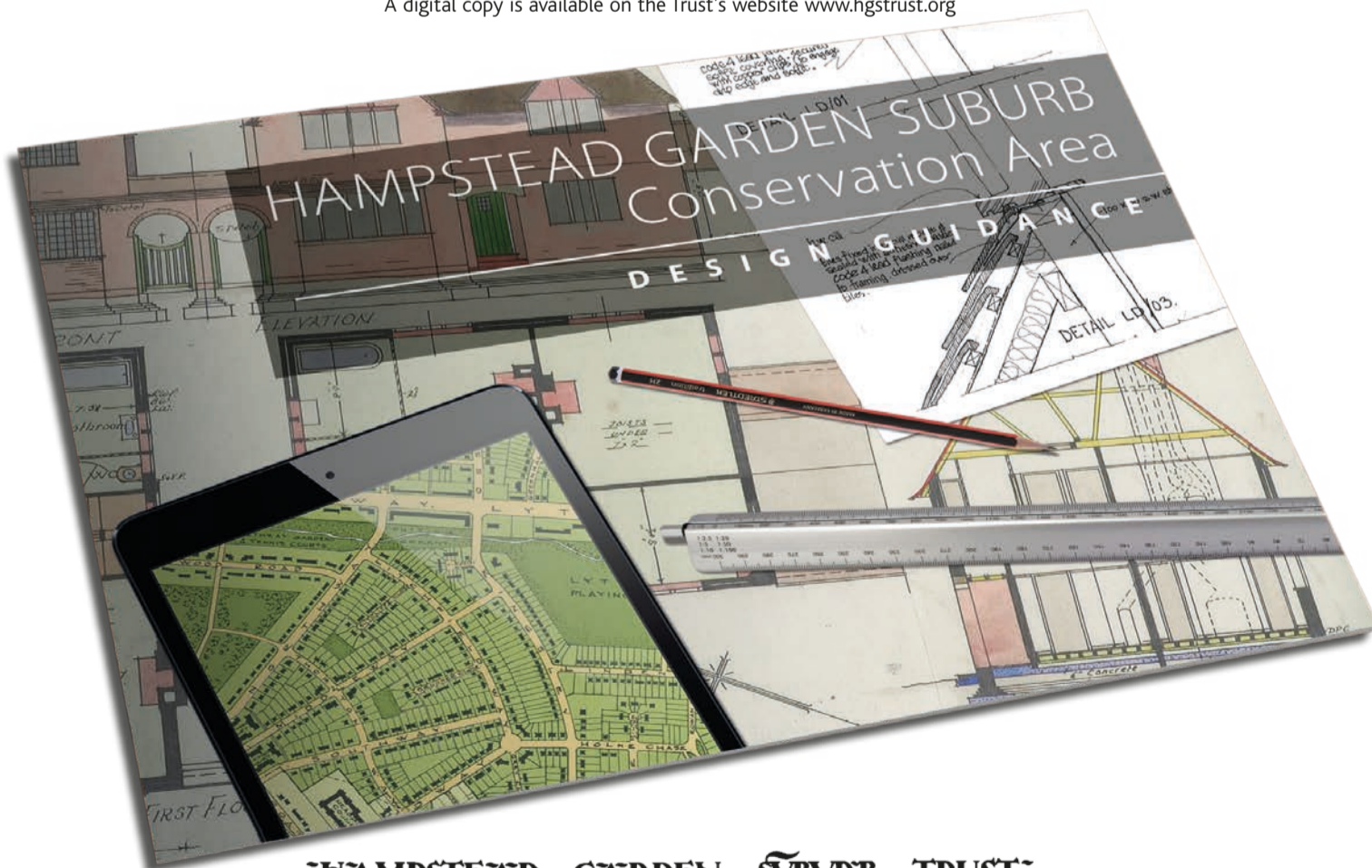
A fully illustrated Design Guidance for the Suburb has been produced by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust and Barnet Council.

This full-colour publication gives advice on repairs, alterations and extensions to properties and on works to trees and gardens.

Copies are available to collect from the Trust Office and Garden Suburb Library, or by sending a self-addressed A4 envelope stamped with £1.33 to:

Trust Education & Publications Assistant, 862 Finchley Road, London NW11 6AB

A digital copy is available on the Trust's website www.hgstrust.org



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