

## Fellowship steams ahead

It's happening. At its last meeting Fellowship's Main Committee voted formally to proceed with the long planned refurbishment and extension project.

On August 4 work will start on bringing the building into the 21st century in terms of accessibility, circulation, services, equipment, convenience and safety. Fellowship House, situated on Willifield Green, is a totally unique amenity – the Suburb's only independent, secular community building.

After gaining planning permission from the Trust and Barnet and consulting with Suburb residents, an appeal was launched last winter to top up funding already in place from Fellowship's reserves and from the large Eileen Whelan bequest. The Suburb's generous response is clear recognition of the importance of this project. Our target has been exceeded. In total £79,000 has been raised. On behalf of present and future beneficiaries of this facility, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all who have given, whether those donations were in single digits or in the thousands. Each one was vital and the project would have remained a pipe dream without them.

Despite the above funding, the project is more costly than first thought due in part to urgent structural problems uncovered in the roof. There will thus be a final funding round to raise money for the only item at present not covered, namely £15,000 for much needed new seating. This is an important feature and will

complete the transformation. Chairs with comfort, stackability and style don't come cheap.

The appeal has clearly demonstrated this community's proactive attitude towards its amenities. It's not too late to be part of it – or to tip in a few more quid if you can. A small leaflet will be distributed in the autumn. In the meantime please send donations (cheques made out to Fellowship House) to our project co-ordinator, Andrew Botterill at 1 North Square, NW11 7AA, 8458 6352 or email [andrew@northsq.com](mailto:andrew@northsq.com), who will also be happy to field any questions or comments and can supply Gift Aid forms if required. As before, all donors, except those wishing to remain anonymous, will be permanently recorded on a list mounted in Fellowship House.

The building's main facilities will be a new kitchen and two spaces available for hire. The hall, seating approx 80-100, and a smaller room (formerly the Garden Suburb Gallery) seating 20-30. The committee voted to rename the latter with immediate effect 'The Eileen Whelan Room' in recognition of the generous bequest.

Reopening will be around the end of the year. Arrangements are in hand to move activities, after the normal summer shutdown period, temporarily to alternative venues.

The architect is Mark Beedle and the main building contractor is MA.27 LLP. The structural engineers are Jampel Davison & Bell.

JOHN HEWSON



Alan Dein, award-winning BBC Radio 4 presenter, joined the Rev Alan Walker and members of the HGS Archives Trust on 11 May to present the Residents Association's annual event in memory of the late Michael Rowley.

Micky Watkins, Chris Rafferty and Andrew Glendinning presented different aspects of the archives, with Micky explaining

the historical locations and the current split between Metropolitan Archives, where all building plans are available for public viewing, and the Archive at the new extension of the Trust's offices. Chris showed slides of artefacts (including the original foundation stone trowel) and photographs of the wartime use of Suburb buildings, including

the military hospital in the original Fellowship House during World War 1. Andrew gave the background to the Lottery grant that enabled the purchase of recording equipment and the digitisation of old recordings which will soon be accessible from the Archives Trust website, [www.suburbarchive.com](http://www.suburbarchive.com).

Suburb resident, Alan Dein, an oral historian and broadcaster, discussed the development of the new 'Suburb Voices' sound trail and reflected on previous audio recordings about the area. A recent discovery handed on to the Archives by Chris and Wendy Parry is a remarkable 10 inch 33 rpm vinyl record that was privately produced in 1957 to mark the 50th anniversary of the Suburb.

Alan played some highlights from the disc, which included speeches about the history of the Suburb by Princess Margaret and Sir Cullum Welch, Lord Mayor of London, and some wonderful recordings of the 50th anniversary festivities

including skiffle groups playing in Central Square.

Audio was also played from the Archives' collection held at the London Metropolitan Archives which has recently been digitised. This included a former resident, Dr Coffin, who spoke of the late Dr Henderson's home deliveries of Suburb babies and described the pre-war social activities at the Clubhouse when it was a centre of social activity for all ages.

Nearly 60 residents filled the Friends Meeting House and several contributed to the historical recollections, and no doubt will feature in future recordings, including Hilda Williams who came to the Suburb from St Helena via South Africa, Dorothee Rowley (Michael's widow) and son Jonathan, Richard Bradbury, former vice-principal of the Institute and Marilyn Greene who recalled the nit inspections at the Garden Suburb School.

The afternoon concluded with discussion over tea and cakes.

## Making poetry

Suburb resident and published poet, Peter Phillips, is inviting enquiries from those interested in learning the art of making poetry. Starters and the more experienced welcome. Each session will also introduce the work of an established contemporary poet. Classes are for about six students, and will be held locally. Fees £12, £11 concessions for a two hour workshop, plus a break.

Peter is an experienced poet who has had five collections published. His last two were released in 2011 and 2013 by



Ward Wood Publishing. Glyn Pursglove of Acumen wrote of *No School Tie*, "He is a poet whose humanity and good sense are consistently deployed without self-aggrandisement or undue flamboyance; a poet well worth reading."

When *Oscar and I: Confessions of a Minor Poet* was published, Peter Stewart, writing for The Frogmore Papers, said, "These are beautifully crafted poems, spare, precise and poignant. They are also hilariously funny."

For further information about Peter and his publications please visit [www.poetrypf.co.uk](http://www.poetrypf.co.uk) and [www.wardwoodpublishing.co.uk](http://www.wardwoodpublishing.co.uk). For more information about the workshops telephone Peter, 8455 6772.



## Memories in a quilt

Brian and Jenny Stonhold were presented with a wonderful quilt as they leave the Free Church and the Suburb to start their new life in South Wales. Each square had been imagined, stitched and sewn by members and friends of the Free Church and will be full of memories of their lives in the Church and the Suburb.

Brian was born on the Suburb and has attended the Free Church all his life. Jenny came here in 1961 when her

father was appointed to ministry in the Free Church. She has told the story of how, shortly after her arrival, she looked up to the choir stalls and saw the young angelic Brian singing there, and instantly fell in love.

Jenny has been a leading figure in Junior Church for many years and Brian has continued to sing in the choir, as well as giving pleasure to many with his mellifluous tenor voice. He also plays the organ and has

officiated as deputy organist for a good few years. As a couple Brian and Jenny have led Thursday Fellowship, providing a meeting place for elderly people, whether members of the Church or not. They have also been the prime movers in the twinning between the Church and the Montrouge Temple in Paris.

As a mark of respect for the work they have done in sustaining the Suburb during their lives here, they were made Honorary Life Members of the RA in April this year.

Brian and Jenny will be greatly missed. Their new home will be near enough to Cardiff to be able to take advantage of all the cultural and musical delights of that city. Their apartment is only a few feet away from the sea, which will fulfil their shared dream of living by the sea. Now they will have easy access to swimming round the clock and throughout the year! We wish them a happy life, and good swimming!

JOAN HOLTON

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