

The curtain falls on a wonderful Suburb institution

After 28 amazing years The Hampstead Garden Suburb Theatre Club has sadly had to call 'Finale' but can look back on having made possible regular theatre outings to the top West End theatres and elsewhere around London for countless retired Suburb members.

From 19 September 1989, when its first outing was to the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre to see 'Prin' with Sheila Hancock for the princely sum of £12, it has organised monthly visits and a coach from Central Square and Temple Fortune, to take and bring home its patrons. Its informal motto became 'The Club that collects and delivers'!

As a result, this proved to be a boon for many older, and sometimes frailer, Suburb members giving them the opportunity to go to the theatre, which they would rarely have been able to do, if at all. In fact many members have said the club was the highlight of their month, enabling them to get out and see first class theatrical productions and an almost door-to-door service.

The Club has about 150 members and with partners, over 200 and there was always a waiting list for membership. If members moved out of the Suburb, they still wanted to belong to the theatre club, so

tickets almost always were snapped up very fast. An eclectic mix of productions was offered over the year, dramas, comedies and musicals but in December there was always a popular Musical Show on offer.

Also, in the summer, the committee organised an extra treat... a full day outing into the countryside to a theatre outside London which would always include a luncheon, a wonderful matinee production and afternoon tea! This final year it was 'A Little Night Music' by Stephen Sondheim at the Watermill Theatre in Newbury, Berkshire. Quite outstanding and all for the price of £60!

Finally and most importantly, a huge 'Thank You' and great credit must go to the committee who have worked extremely hard over the years to make this all possible. One or two of them have been members almost from the first days. They are Sue Aldous, Barbara Bliss, Valerie Codron, Sue Cookson, Madeleine Melling, and Elaine Grays. They have brought untold pleasure, culture, stimulation and camaraderie to all the Theatre Club members and as the metaphorical curtain falls, we will share with them, many very happy memories.

By a very grateful patron!

HELEN NAFTALIN



Suburb playwright at the Park Theatre



(Left to right) Natasha Bain, Susannah Doyle, Gary Webster.

Celebrated Suburb resident, former psychotherapist and playwright Matthew Campling's 10th play, The Secondary Victim, runs at the Park Theatre in Finsbury Park from November 14 to December 9.

Ali, who is married, is a well respected therapist, until a former client, a troubled young man, makes allegations of sexual misconduct against her. The process of an ethical complaint is known to be so distressing to the therapist that they are termed 'the secondary victim'.

We see the progress of the complaint, which culminates in an on-stage professional conduct inquiry. Who is telling the truth? And is it the whole truth? And when Ali's whole life comes apart, can she escape becoming the secondary victim? She finds herself fighting for her reputation,

her marriage and eventually her life.

Susannah Doyle, well-known from TV and film (Drop the Dead Donkey, About a Boy) plays Ali. Her husband is TV 'hard man' Gary Webster (Minder, Family Affairs, EastEnders). Supported by a stunning cast of rising younger actors, The Secondary Victim is a highly original take on today's blame culture, where as Ali asks 'What's happened to forgiveness? Nowadays people seem to be always looking for someone to punish'. Book at The Park theatre, website: www.parktheatre.co.uk.

Some readers might remember Matthew's name as he featured, with a mention of one of his books, in the Spring 2015 issue of Suburb News.

TERRY BROOKS

Return of the Sunday Tea Dance

Fun afternoons of smooth, modern jiving dancing with a party theme and yummy cakes start locally in November, with men likely to be in strong demand.

The new monthly Sunday tea dances will follow previously successful events hosted by local teacher William Comet, and offer a fresh, fun, accessible and safe opportunity to keep fit, learn new skills, meet people and boost energy levels as the nights draw in.

However, while ladies are usually the first to register for these events, the gentlemen are often a little shy. "We know from research that men often find partnered dancing difficult and are easily embarrassed," says William, 51, "so we aim to make it as relaxing and accessible as possible. The most important thing is that dancing should bring a smile to your face and to your soul. We use a proven, safe, low-impact format that enables our guests to dance with a variety of people, if they want to, and to feel comfortable."

"Earlier this year, we ran our evening Jive Dance Party on New Year's Day, which was well received. We also ran some



private classes recently for local residents, and taught brides and grooms for their wedding dances and these were well received, too, so we hope that locals will enjoy these Sunday tea dances, too."

To help encourage that relaxed atmosphere, there will also be tasty cake, snacks and, for those watching their waistlines, fruit and tea on offer. The first of the Sunday tea dances will take place on Sunday 26 November at the Free Church

Hall in Northway NW11, for adults and supervised teenagers.

There will be a beginner's class from about 2.30pm for about half an hour, followed by freestyle partnered modern jive dancing until carriages arrive at around 5.45pm. William says his aim is to share his love of this kind of partnered dancing, which has helped him stay fit despite long term back and knee pain. He adds: "The dances are low-impact and low risk, so if you can walk reasonably briskly to your local post box then you can probably handle this dance quite easily and you can make it as hard or as easy as you want. And you can bring friends, partners or come alone. Even people with two left are welcome."

To register your interest, for other dates in December 2017, January and February 2018 and to avoid disappointment, please visit www.jivedanceparty.com for more information about the tea dances and for private classes.

What is HGS Art?

About 18 months ago Suburb artists, including photographers, sculptors, jewellery makers, glass and fabric designers, were invited to join a group. The idea was to exhibit their work and to offer members lectures and social events within the Suburb. It is also a forum to exchange ideas, meet other artists, encourage children's art and make new friends.

A steering committee was formed and over 50 artists, with an array of extraordinary talent, signed up.

A logo was designed and a website set up, along with other social media. Leaflets and a banner were produced and our first Art Fair took place in April

2017 at Fellowship House.

We were absolutely delighted by the response to the Art Fair at Fellowship House, which included a very successful Children's Workshop, sponsored by Cass Art. Several artists sold their work and Combat Stress provided tea, coffee and cakes. Over £800 was raised for this worthy charity. The sun shone on a truly inspirational community event. The next Art Fair will be 14/15 April 2018 at Fellowship House.

On Thursday 30 November at 7.30 pm HGS Art will hold its first AGM at Fellowship House. It will be followed by a wine tasting at 8pm, open to non-members for £3. Please apply to

Valerie Cowan, Social Secretary, for tickets v.cowan@hotmail.co.uk or telephone 020 8458 4508.

You can join HGS Art for just £25 annual membership. Visit www.hgsart.co.uk for details or contact Mary Davis, Membership Secretary, on maryd5@hotmail.com, 8458 6556. Also you can follow us on [facebook@hgsart](https://www.facebook.com/hgsart) and [twitter@hgsart1](https://twitter.com/hgsart1).

You don't have to be an artist. We are looking for members who can help organise events such as the Art Fair or help with publicity and PR. We look forward to having you in HGS Art.

DIANA BRAHAMS

Rain Drop
by Mary Davis



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