

HGSHS 284th Flower Show



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The Suburb's new Virtual Museum

On October 29, shortly before Suburb News arrives on your doorstep, Patron Martin Bell will launch the HGS Heritage Virtual Museum on screen at Fellowship House and on the internet at www.hgsheritage.org.uk. The Mayor and Mayoress of Barnet, Councillor and Mrs Salinger, and other dignitaries will be present, together with representatives of key local organisations that have contributed from their records, led strongly by the HGS Trust and HGS Archives Trust.

Unlike Letchworth and some other Garden Cities, the Suburb does not have a museum of its own to preserve the many artefacts, photographs and other documents relevant to its foundation, and its history to the present day. Records are scattered across many different institutions and many are still privately owned by local Suburb organisations as well as by individual residents.

Additionally, there is no single location where students of architecture, the history of the built environment or the Garden City Movement, or researchers and visitors from home and abroad, can easily study the Suburb and its origins. Without a museum, important artefacts and papers, especially those still in private ownership, remain unknown or may be lost as

houses are sold and cleared out. In 2017 there have been two great finds – the photos show parts of the three-metre drawings made in the 1920s and found recently in the unused hut behind Fellowship House, and turn to page 5 for last month's finds in a 1913 bottle hidden in the spire of St Jude's – photos of both are in the Virtual Museum.

Hampstead Garden Suburb Heritage, the incorporated charity that has created the Virtual Museum, was established by resident Simon Abbott with some others in 2011. The charity is an umbrella organisation for many of the Suburb's organisations, societies and religious institutions.

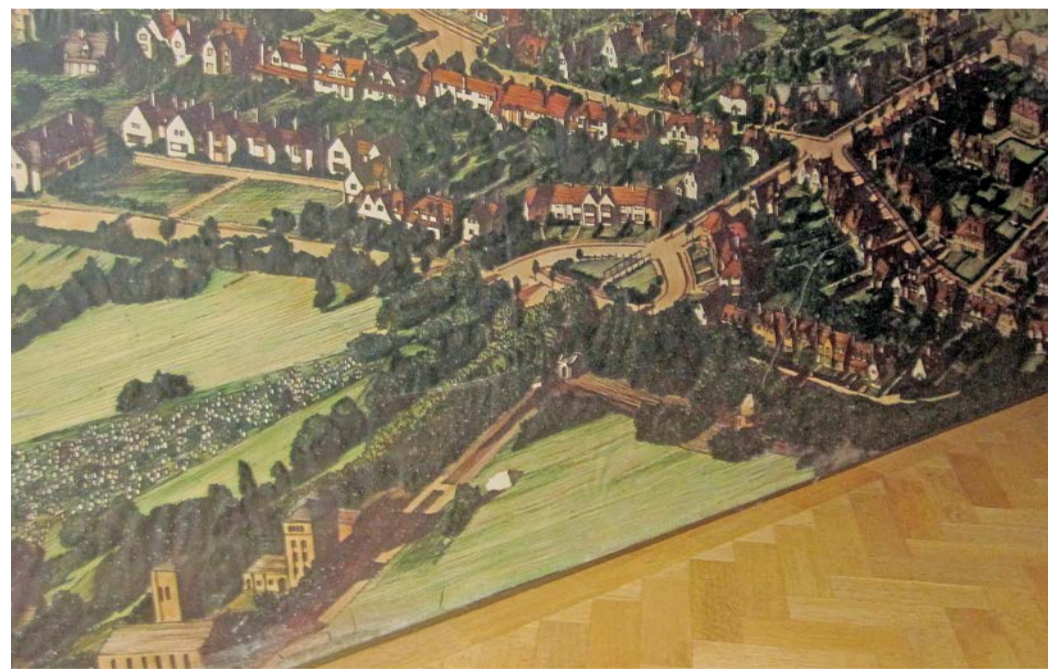
In 2013 it obtained a grant of £5,000 from the Residents Association's Centenary Fund with subsequent grants from a charitable trust, although the genesis of the project was some years earlier when a committee drawn from many of the Suburb's most important organisations and societies came together to search for a local site for a physical museum and visitor centre. This remains a long-term objective, but the need to record artefacts before they disappear, and to provide modern on-line access, has led to the Virtual Museum. It uses available software under the direction of resident

Steve Morris, who is well-known for establishing both hgs.org.uk and the much-used e-mail forum, the HGS List, some years ago.

The Virtual Museum is an ever-evolving project available to all worldwide. Importantly, it enables instant access, using the tools of modern technology, and lends itself to continual updating as memorabilia are brought to HGS Heritage's notice.

With the launch in place, HGS Heritage intends to encourage local people, and organisations that are not yet involved, to track down, register and even donate the Suburb's memorabilia, so that they are not lost for posterity. If you would like to be part of this project, to donate, curate, register your organisation, etc., please get in touch. E-mails can be sent to info@hgsheritage.org.uk.

Available resources, including volunteer students from Henrietta Barnett School who are scanning and indexing old issues of Suburb News in an on-going project, have been concentrated on a manageable number of organisations and 'objects' shown in the museum, but to facilitate an expansion of the display the recruitment of volunteer curators has begun, and more are encouraged to apply. Heritage therefore has a protocol in place to enable quick approval to new entries on its webpages.



Please help make *Suburb News* your newspaper. Articles, letters and news items welcome, send to the publisher with High Res pictures at rapublications@hgs.org.uk

EDITOR: Terry Brooks, rapublications@hgs.org.uk

WHAT'S ON EDITOR: David Littaur, raevents@hgs.org.uk.

Views expressed in Suburb News are not necessarily those of the publishers the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association.

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The RA website is www.hgs.org.uk