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# *The Heath & Hampstead Society* **NEWSLETTER**

*October 2022*

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*'Platinum Jubilee Beacon, in June 2022 at Golder's Hill Park'*

## Contents

	Page
Heath Report <i>by John Beyer</i>	5
Planning Report <i>by David Castle and Vicki Harding</i>	8
How Hampstead Heath Was Saved – A Story of People Power <i>by Helen Lawrence</i>	10
Autumn Musical Events	11
2023 Heath Calendar	11
Town Report <i>by Andrew Haslam-Jones</i>	12
Fading Memories of Hampstead's Past <i>by David Castle</i>	14
Hampstead & Highgate in 50 Buildings <i>by Martin Thompson</i>	17
Hampstead Summer Festival	18
Hampstead Memories: Before the Great War <i>by Enid Margaret (Powell) Norfolk</i>	21
Ellen Solomons Obituary	28
Hampstead Historical Ramblings: The fascinating story of Burgh House <i>by Martin Thompson</i>	30
Hampstead Plaques <i>by Juliette Sonabend</i>	32
Autumn Events in the Library	36
Burgh House & Hampstead Museum	37
Heath Walks: 2022–2023	38

**Front cover:** The photo depicts one of a series of beacons which were lit on 2 June 2022 throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and British Overseas Territories and each of the capital cities of Commonwealth countries, in celebration of the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Photographer: John Weston

## Chair's Notes

*by Marc Hutchinson*

### ***Annual general meeting 2022***

We had a successful AGM (chaired by me in the unavoidable absence of our President) at which Thomas Radice and John Weston were elected to serve on the General Committee for a first three-year elected term. Tony Ghilchik and Jessica Learmond-Criqui stepped down from the General Committee having served the second of their three-year elected terms. Jessica was re-appointed to a vacancy but, as mentioned in the May 2022 Newsletter, Tony decided not to seek re-election.

The draft minutes of the meeting are on the website.

After the meeting we welcomed Stefania Horne, the new Heath Superintendent, who gave a short, illustrated talk entitled “Where Eagles Dare”, about her time, as a student at the University of Rome, leading a successful project to stop the annual recreational slaughter of migrating birds of prey across the Straits of Messina. Her description of life and work on the tough frontline of wildlife protection was a real eye-opener to most of the audience and the Society is very grateful for her most memorable presentation.

### ***Annual members – renewal form***

Enclosed with this Newsletter, annual members will find a membership renewal form. If they pay by standing order, they should discard the form. The form is only for annual members who have not made a standing order.

### ***“How Hampstead Heath was saved: a story of people power” by Helen Lawrence***

The Society was delighted to learn, earlier this year, that the London and Middlesex Archaeological

## ***Chair's Notes (cont)***

Society (LAMAS) had awarded its 2020 Book Prize to Helen Lawrence for this great publication which was co-produced by Camden History Society and our Society. The citation included the following: "It is impossible for a relatively short review to do justice to the quality of this book which, in tracing the importance of individual intervention in the preservation of a unique environment – one of the great lungs of London – more than met all the criteria laid down by the Local History Committee."

The Society warmly congratulates Helen on this prestigious award and on page 10 of this Newsletter there is a reminder of the publication.

### ***Springett lecture 2022***

The annual lecture took place on 29 September at Rosslyn Hill Chapel. It was given by David Humphries and Alasdair Nicholl, and entitled "Protecting the Veteran Tree Ecology of Hampstead Heath". The lecture was very well attended and received. A report of it will appear in the January 2023 Newsletter but, in the meantime, a précis and slides will appear on our website. The lecture was broadcast on Zoom although viewers were unable to see the slides as well as the speaker. This broadcast was an experiment this year but, if we broadcast next year's lecture, the intention is to be able to show both slides and speaker(s) simultaneously.

### ***Talking "rubbish"***

At the behest of Camden Council, we are planning to host an evening Community Conversation in November, somewhat similar to the one we co-hosted with the Council in March (see the May 2022 Newsletter), where the chosen topic will be "rubbish", a problem which most Hampstead residents now regard with increasingly serious concern. Almost every aspect of the collection of domestic and commercial

rubbish requires reform and improvement. The Conversation will be chaired again by Maddy Raman, a Society trustee, and will be attended by councillors, responsible Council officers, and representatives of the rubbish collection firms. The date and venue for the new Conversation will be announced on our website when invitations are issued.

### ***Meeting with William Upton KC***

William has been elected to the position of Chairman of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee in succession to Anne Fairweather. John Beyer and I recently met William to introduce him, as it were, to the Society and to discuss a list of current problems affecting the Heath and its surrounds. The meeting was most helpful and we look forward to further occasional face-to-face meetings where matters can be discussed in a way which is not always possible in a public committee setting.

### ***Martin Humphery***

We were able properly to mark Martin's retirement as our long-serving Vice-President at a party at my house on 16 August, unexpectedly rain-free and attended by many present and former Society trustees and Society patron Melvyn Bragg. Martin refused to accept a



*Martin and Angela. Photo courtesy: Ron Vester*



*Celebration cake. Photo courtesy: Ron Vester*

present (he and Angela are running an extended “decluttering” programme) but asked that well-wishers donate to the People’s Dispensary for Sick Animals (the PDSA) using this reference number: 179740.

### ***Sub-Committees***

All of our sub-committees have seen recent changes in membership.

#### *Town Sub-Committee*

We say goodbye to Avril Kleeman who for many years ran the Hampstead Card scheme, and to Richard Price who covered transport and traffic. I wish to thank both of them for their years of service to the Society. In their place we welcome well-known Hampstead residents Alexandra and Andrew Lavery (Andrew is a former Chair of the Hampstead Business Improvement District) and Isabel Dedring, a former London Deputy Mayor for Transport.

We are also pleased to welcome as an adviser to that Sub-Committee Sophia Smith, who has had a distinguished international career in marketing and strategic consulting. She is initially helping with the reform and reinvigoration of the Hampstead Card scheme in the post-COVID retail world.

As we go to press, we have just learnt of the death of Martin Thompson, a member of the Town Sub-Committee (see below).

#### *Planning Sub-Committee*

Owing to pressure of work or relocation away from Hampstead, the following have retired from the Sub-Committee: Jenny Alderman, Claire Gasson and Liz Wright.

The Society is very grateful for their work over many years, with a special thanks to Liz Wright for her urban tree preservation work assisting Vicki Harding, our Tree Preservation Officer, and for her intention to continue that role outside the Sub-Committee.

The Chair of the Sub-Committee is contacting new members of the Society who have expressed an interest in planning and conservation to see which of them may wish to offer their time and skills to his Sub-Committee.

#### *Heath Sub-Committee*

Mahima Luna, formerly the Society’s Press Officer, is retiring from this Sub-Committee and we thank her for her work in that role and also in recruitment of new Society members. Her place is taken by Jeska Harrington-Gould who will be assisting with events organised by that Sub-Committee.

### ***Martin Thompson***

We were very sorry to learn of the death earlier this month of Martin Thompson, a member of our Town Sub-Committee. Martin joined the Sub-Committee in 2016 and in 2017 became its Chair, taking over from Frank Harding. Martin stepped down as Chair in 2018 owing to overseas commitments but remained an active member of the Sub-Committee, writing about historical matters for the Newsletter and in response to enquiries received by the Society. He



## ***Chair's Notes (cont)***



*Martin Thompson on the Society's stall at the 2021 Natural Aspect concert*

served on the Plaque Selection Panel and was also a regular presence on our recruitment stalls. He was a delightful and amusing man, devoted to Hampstead and the Society, and he will be much missed. We send our sympathy to his family and remember with gratitude the long service he gave to the Society.

### ***Jenifer Ford***

Jenifer Ford, who died in June this year, was a long-time Hampstead resident, lifetime Society member and well-known painter, her many subjects including

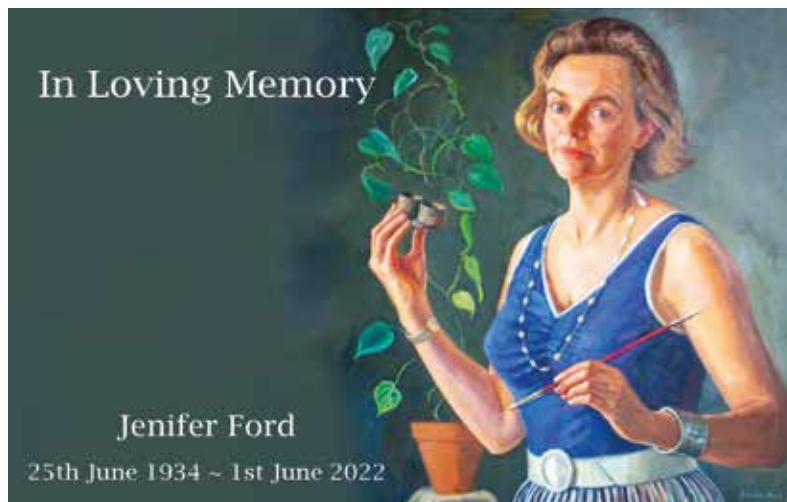
Hampstead and the Heath. Until her last years, Jenifer was a regular Heath walker and year-round outdoor swimmer. She left instructions that mourners should donate to the Society, a gesture for which we are very grateful. She will be much missed by all her many friends, and we send our deepest sympathy to her family. I and John Hunt (formerly of the Heath Sub-Committee) represented the Society at her funeral, but we were also there as her friends.

### ***Ellen Solomons***

Ellen Solomons, Chair of the Vale of Health Society and member of our Planning Sub-Committee, suffered a fatal accident whilst on holiday in Croatia. By kind permission of the Ham & High, we republish, on page 28 of this Newsletter, their obituary.

### ***Christmas party***

Our Christmas party will be held this year on Thursday 15 December at Burgh house at 7:00pm, and I look forward very much to welcoming you all to this event. A ticket application is enclosed with this Newsletter.



# *Heath Report*

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*by John Beyer*

## ***Constable's Pond***

While the ground was exceptionally dry in mid-August, Heath staff began work on the pond. The good news is the downpour later in August resulted in some water being retained, which likely means the soil must contain a fair amount of clay. Water retention will be even better once the pond is lined with puddling clay, a process which will be undertaken in the autumn when damper weather will make it easier to work the clay. The Heath team will be planting reeds and other edging plants to encourage pond wildlife. We will see the true form of the pond next year.

Michael Hammerson reports the excavation was disappointing in archaeological terms. Digging revealed only a strip of iron, an old milk bottle, a cut rib bone and a piece of clay gardening tile. Unfortunately, there were no musket balls – the area was where the Hampstead Volunteers did target practice during the Napoleonic Wars – and there was no sign of a paintbrush!

The Society fully supports this project which has been pioneered by the Redington Frogna! Association.



*Constable's Pond*

## ***Murphy's Yard***

The public outcry against the high towers and massive development proposed for Murphy's Yard resulted in the proposal being withdrawn. All the main parties standing in Camden during the campaign for local elections in May said they would not agree to high rise development on the site.

We are grateful to members for writing their objections. We believe your support had a considerable effect, alongside the Society's objections and those of the 30 or so other groups who criticized the proposals.

Camden subsequently sent a letter to the developers, Folgate Estates, inviting them to submit a new proposal and specified the new plan must "address local needs". The letter sent to Folgate Estates criticised the withdrawn proposal for, among various points, the "inadequate amount of open space, landscaping and greenery". The letter also stated the proposal had "an unacceptable impact on important views from Hampstead Heath".

Following an online meeting of local groups, Jeff Waage and Pete Mantle have been working with a landscape designer to build up an alternative green plan for the site which hopefully can be used to influence the next planning application.

## ***Kites on Kite Hill***

On Sunday 26 June, Melissa Fairbank and others worked with the City to host a second kite festival on Parliament Hill – aka Kite Hill – commemorating the 29 June passing of the original Hampstead Heath Act in 1871. The Kite Society of Great Britain presented a crowd-pleasing display, despite tricky wind conditions. The wind coming from the south up Parliament Hill

## ***Heath Report (cont)***



*SCUBA but in reverse. Photo courtesy: Ron Vester*

resulted in a vortex effect. At any one time there were 500 or more spectators, most with picnics and others lining up for ice creams. The display was first organized in 2021 to mark the 150th anniversary of the Act and, following that event, many people approached the Society stall to ask this to become a regular event. The Kite Society hope to return next year.



*A girl and her kite. Photo courtesy: Ron Vester*



*British skies. Photo courtesy: Ron Vester*

## ***Natural Aspect concert***

On Sunday 4 September, guitarist John Etheridge and singer Vimala Rowe opened the Natural Aspect concert at the Parliament Hill Bandstand. The duo treated the audience to songs in Sanskrit and Aramaic in a commendably varied set. Cuban band D'Cuba followed with Caribbean beats and some impromptu salsa dancing. Laura Matthews Band rounded off the afternoon. Organised by the City, this was the second concert to highlight a key phrase in the Hampstead Heath Act, which spoke of the need to preserve the natural aspect of the Heath.



*John Etheridge and Vimala Rowe at the Natural Aspect concert. Photo courtesy: Ron Vester*



We have Ron Vester, Heath Sub-Committee member, to thank for these photos of the swans on Hampstead No 1 Pond.



*George the heron has a job as crossing guard for swan family this season. Photo courtesy: Ron Vester*



*Seven of the eight cygnets born in early May 2022. Photo courtesy: Ron Vester*



# Planning Report

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*by David Castle and Vicki Harding*

Prompted by the record-breaking high temperatures, extensive fires in Europe and the USA, the Ukraine War, and the consequent reduction in food production in Europe this summer, I checked if and how the planning laws and regulations supported the government's aim to drastically reduce carbon production and energy use in the coming years.

I checked the primary planning guidance: the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Section 14 of the NPPF states, the Planning System should:

- support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate;
- contribute to a radical reduction in greenhouse gas emissions; and
- increase the re-use of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings

Section 15 follows and deals thoroughly with Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment. These NPPF directives are enhanced and detailed by The London Plan 2022 and Camden's Local Plan 2017.

These directives are excellent in principle, but most planning decisions at national and local level have to be made based on conflicting opinion and policies. For instance, should a building be saved and environmentally improved or would it be better to demolish it and build more dwellings on the site?

In addition, the changes to planning law being considered by Parliament in the *Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill* (LURB) will reduce the protection offered by the NPPF, the London Plan, Camden's Local Plan and also by Conservation Area policies and the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

The Society may not have the chance to influence the perhaps dramatic changes to come and help meet the challenges of climate change in a way which do not destroy or spoil the special qualities of Hampstead and the Heath.

## ***Comment on Camden's proposals to protect private trees***

Camden Council recently approached local groups to comment on its draft letter to the Secretary of State requesting more legislative powers to protect existing private trees. The Society really welcomes

this good and imaginative initiative which supports the Council's 2019 declaration of a climate and ecological emergency. The Society also appreciates the Council specifically approaching it and is very supportive of this essential step.

In addition, the Society supported most of Camden Council's points, made some suggestions and agreed with those submitted by the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum. Its suggestions included to consider further what could be the potential negative consequences of legislative changes. The Society also disagreed with the Council's proposal to charge fees for tree work applications because this would punish people who are already providing, paying for and acting to maintain the public benefit of trees. Instead, we proposed to increase fines, legislative support for enforcement and wider use of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

The Society agrees with the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum it may sometimes be inappropriate to apply Camden Council's proposed "trees must be replaced in all cases". Whether replacement is appropriate depends on the space available, existing canopy cover and species. Rather than numbers of trees, a more meaningful determination should be possible accounting for space, growth and locally important tree species. While the loss of large tree canopies has a major impact on local ecology, the Society also proposed to include shrubs and hedges in calculating garden canopy cover because these contribute considerably to pollution control and provide good habitat.

The Society also made the following proposals and suggestions:

- i) tree protection orders (TPO) or any new tree legislation should be at least as powerful as planning regulations;
- ii) surveys and submission of consent to work on veteran trees should be done by arboriculturalists with VetCert training to prevent inappropriate management for this special and separate group (there are upwards of 70 veteran trees in the wider Hampstead area);
- iii) emphasise the difficulty resisting tree loss under the current legislation due to weak enforcement and because it relies on a subjective evaluation of public amenity value of trees. Consequently, legal and finance departments and loss adjusters are loath to allow their tree officers to refuse felling applications or place TPOs on trees. This is particularly so in cases of

subsidence claims because this might put the public purse at risk if these are successfully appealed.

The Society particularly welcomed the following language:

- all trees of a certain size should have automatic protection; and
- unless there is robust justification to fell a tree, the presumption should be to retain.

The Society asked for this same consideration in relation to street trees too. In particular, it requested requiring robust justification which would be available for scrutiny, with structural causes of subsidence given more weight. This would replace the current insurance company-led automatic decision of “trees out”. Locals know local conditions and building history far better than loss adjusters.

### ***Heath House***

In August, the Society was informed a project manager would be appointed during September for the extension and improvement of Heath House. The Society understand the aim is to start building in early 2023.

## **SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL THEATRE**

### **Become a Friend of Hampstead Theatre**

Join as a Friend to make sure you never miss a show and support the future of Hampstead.

From £60 per year Friends receive exciting benefits such as:

- Priority Booking • regular e-newsletters
- Invitations to exclusive events at the Theatre
- 10% discount at Hampstead Theatre Café and more.

Join now on:

**[hampsteadtheatre.com/friends](http://hampsteadtheatre.com/friends)**

Call us on **020 7722 9301**

or visit us on Eton Avenue, NW3



**We look forward to seeing you soon!**

### ***Delivering the Newsletter by email***

Would you prefer to receive your Newsletter by email in the form of an Acrobat PDF file so that you can read it on screen?

It is environmentally more friendly, saving paper, unnecessary waste and cost.

With postage charges increasing, this is now a major consideration. The occasional extra flyers could also be sent via email, if wished.

PDFs of the Newsletter can be seen on the website. If you would like to try this, please let us know at:

**[info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk](mailto:info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk)**



Remember to use the

### ***Hampstead Card***

The current list of businesses taking part in the scheme can be found on the Society's website and can be downloaded from there:

[www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk](http://www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk)

*Benefits offered are granted at the traders' discretion. The Society is not responsible for changes in terms or availability of any discounts or offers.*

# *How Hampstead Heath Was Saved – A Story of People Power*

by Helen Lawrence

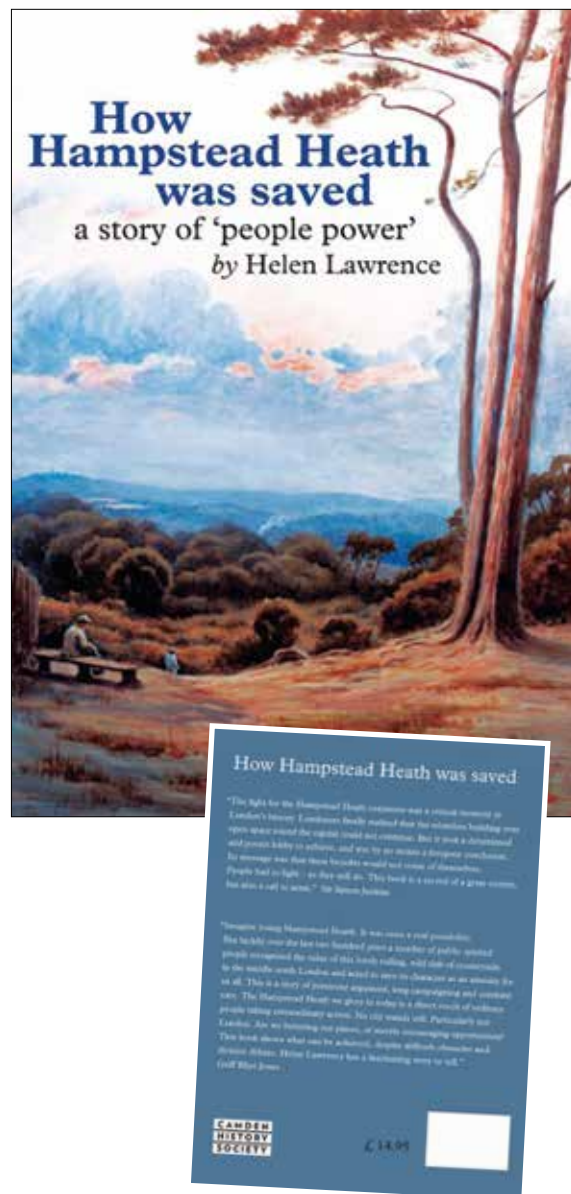
## Winner of the LAMAS Book Prize for 2020

*A new history of the Heath is the first to tell the fascinating story of the Society: how it not only fought to ensure that the Heath remained natural countryside – not a park – but, as one of the first civic societies in the country, pioneered the idea of democratic accountability. This quite remarkable story of “people-power” continues today and has never been told before. Helen Lawrence (Mrs Helen Marcus) served on the Society’s committee for 25 years, first as Chair and then as Vice-President.*

The campaign to save the Heath was one of national importance, helping to change opinion and encourage others to take action. Of all the open spaces saved for the public in the 19th century, its story is the most extraordinary, involving legal stratagems of every kind, in and out of parliament, vitriolic character assassination, national press campaigns, perjury, wholesale misinformation and even accusations of bribery and blackmail.

A group of formidable people who had campaigned for the Heath went on to be at the heart of what became the new conservation movement, setting up the Commons Preservation Society in 1865 and the National Trust in 1895. They were all involved in the founding of the Hampstead Heath Protection Society in 1897 – today’s Society. This newly researched account places events in the larger historical context of social and political developments and focuses on the role of the individual people involved, many of them eminent public figures.

*How Hampstead Heath Was Saved – A Story of People Power* is published by the Camden History Society and is available from them and most local bookshops.





## ***Autumn Musical Events***

*St John-at-Hampstead Parish Church, Church Row NW3*

***Saturday 12 November***

***Come and Sing***

Mozart Requiem Scratch performance

Arrival 1.30 pm. Rehearsal 2.00 pm

Informal performance 6.00 pm

***Sunday 18 December***

***5.00 pm***

***Christmas Carol Service***

***Concert by***

***The Hampstead Collective***

***Monday 4 December***

***Emotionally Volatile***

a recital of songs by women

Catherine Backhouse (mezzo soprano)

and Elspeth Wyllie (piano)

***The concert starts at 7.00 pm.***

***Doors open at 6.30 pm***

## ***Hampstead Community Choir***

The Hampstead Community Choir meets during term time at 7.30 pm for a 7.45 pm start on Thursday evenings in Hampstead Parish Church. We sing a wide variety of music, both secular and sacred, and we have two concerts a year, Christmas Lights (December) and Summer Nights (July) as well as performing at various fundraising and community events

No need to audition or be able to read music. Please contact [cc@hampsteadparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:cc@hampsteadparishchurch.org.uk) if you are interested in joining. All enquiries to Jenny Macdonald-Hay 0207 794 1193

## ***2023 Heath Calendar***

The 2023 calendar shows the very best of the Heath's diverse landscape and its wildlife throughout the seasons. The range of images reflects the work City staff and Heath Hands volunteers do to help protect the Heath for future generations. It is produced in partnership with the City, Heath Hands and Matthew Maran.

Available from [matthewmaran.com](http://matthewmaran.com), selected local shops and Amazon.



# Town Report

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by Andrew Haslam-Jones

## ***South End Green reconfiguration***

It is wonderful to see the work of the Town Sub-Committee bearing fruit.

By the time this Newsletter is printed and distributed, Camden Council's consultation on the changes to road layout in South End Green will have come to an end (<https://consultations.wearecamden.org/supporting-communities/southendgreen/>).

You may recall during the pandemic, the slip road between the shops and the triangular garden in the middle of South End Green, where the number 168 bus has had a stand for many years, was cordoned off and became an eatery. There appeared to be a desire



*The electric charging points installed by Camden Council on Willoughby Road in good use*

among residents for the pedestrianisation of the slip road to continue. However, the relocation of the number 168 bus stand to Fleet Road was causing traffic congestion because the bus was unable to turn into the bus depot on the other side of South End Road.

Regular readers will recall Robert Linger, a member of the Town Sub-Committee, came up with an ingenious plan to reconfigure the bus depot and change the direction in which buses enter it to allow the number 168 bus to use the depot. We are also grateful to one of our local councillors, Stephen Stark, for pursuing this plan with the Council and Transport for London. Hopefully, the outcome of the consultation will be positive and the reconfiguration of South End Green can take place.

As an aside, it is always worth checking Camden Council's consultation page to see if there are any relevant consultations under way (<https://consultations.wearecamden.org/>).

## ***Pollution***

Another consultation that will have come to end, but is worth checking, is the one on Camden Council's future clean air policy (<https://consultations.wearecamden.org/supporting-communities/camden-clean-air-action-plan-2022-2026/>).

It is pleasing to see some of the measures already introduced by Camden contributing to a reduction in the use of petrol vehicles, or at least the option for residents to own electrically charged vehicles.

Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum has completed phase one of the pollution survey it has been carrying out, with some financial support from the Society, and we expect to be able to report on the analysis of the results in due course.

At the same time, a private company called AirLabs, has agreed to provide Camden with 250 pollution sensors throughout the borough. You can track the extrapolated results of these sensors in real time at <https://airscape.ai/>. The Forum is hoping to coordinate phase two of its pollution survey with the Council.

### ***New members***

We are pleased to announce we have new members joining the Sub-Committee:

Alexandra Lavery has volunteered in Hampstead in a variety of roles, most recently helping to organise the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations for the Pilgrims to Willoughby Residents' Association.

Andrew Lavery was for a time the chair of the Hampstead Business Improvement District and before that chair of the NW3 business association.

Isabel Dedring joined the Society earlier this year and was the Deputy Major for Transport under a previous London mayor.

We know each of them will contribute to the work of the Sub-Committee using their unique experience and expertise.

The Sub-Committee was also joined by Linda Chung, the newly elected councillor for Hampstead Town. She is no stranger to Hampstead, having volunteered in many guises. This is Linda's second stint as a councillor and we look forward to her helping the committee in its dealings with the Council.

### ***Thank you***

Finally, the Town Sub-Committee would like to extend a warm and heartfelt thank you to Avril Kleeman and Richard Price who have stepped

down from the Sub-Committee. Avril worked for many years ensuring the Hampstead Card was well maintained, undertaking the time-consuming work of visiting each of the shops in Hampstead to encourage their signing up to the card. Richard kept a watchful eye on the increased traffic and congestion arising from the work on the High Speed 2 rail development. We are very grateful to both of them for their contributions.

### ***Martin Thompson***

As you will have read in the Chair's Notes, we mourn the passing earlier this month of Martin Thompson after several struggles with illness. I bumped into Martin only a few weeks ago on Hampstead High Street. He was his usual cheerful, positive self, qualities that he brought in spades to the committee. A friend of his, Tracy Lindner, said of Martin, "He loved, LOVED, living in Hampstead and the Heath has a very special place in his heart. He loved nothing more than to visit around his historic neighbourhood and go for walks in the Heath."

Some of you may be aware that during lockdown Martin started a page on Facebook entitled "London Historical Ramblings." In it, he distilled his vast knowledge of titbits of London's history into bite-sized fascinating pieces (as a result of which I had occasion to visit places and notice things that I would not otherwise have done). He was always bright and thoughtful and entirely unassuming, though he was rightly quietly proud of the long days he spent volunteering at investitures at both Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle. He will be very much missed.



# *Fading Memories of Hampstead's Past*

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*by David Castle*

*Another instalment of this time warp series allowing us a look into the past fancies and shopping habits of Hampstead's residents through the 20th century. Should you spot any more ghost signs, please get in touch with David Castle or the Newsletter.*

Up to the 1930s, the blank walls of shopping streets or commercial buildings were often covered in advertisements, names or entreaties to buy, drink or eat. The painted boards and the enamelled signs have all disappeared or have occasionally been transferred to museums. Sometimes, however, the wording painted directly onto brick walls remains.

There are two highly visible painted advertisements in Hampstead and I have found four others, all shown below, and all hinting at a past very different from the present.



28 Church Row – Chas B. King – Established 1746

This is the most noticeable sign in Hampstead. It is possible it was painted in the 1890s. It is located on the Heath Street façade of 28 Church Row, advertising Chas. B. King – obviously a man of many parts – Estate Agent, Decorator, Gas, Hot Water and Sanitary Engineer – not activities associated today. So much building took place in Hampstead between 1875 and 1914 and with much of it of a very high quality. Presumably, the local building industry was thriving and profitable during this time.

The lettering, painted directly onto the brickwork, is strangely arranged. King is smaller than Chas B and Hot Water, whilst Engineer is squashed into the space available between windows.

The building upon which it is painted is Grade II\* Listed and has an interesting history, including as Charles B. King's offices during the 1890s. The Historic England description of 28 Church Row does not mention this painted advertisement.

## ***LNER for Scotland***

### **Shortest & Quickest**

The London and North Eastern Railway was formed in 1923 and nationalised in 1948. The serif logo LNER



35 South End Road

## *Fading Memories of Hampstead's Past (cont)*

was adopted in the mid-1920s. This well-painted and designed advertisement must date from between 1925 and 1935. It consists of a large black painted panel with yellow lettering.

### **????? Bank**

Though fading, BANK is fairly clear. To its left, where the bank's name presumably would have been, we can no longer see anything. Barclays Bank had a branch here up to about 1995, but could it originally have been a Midland Bank branch?



*43 South End Road*

### ***Libraries--?***

This sign, hidden for years behind the now removed fascia panelling, reveals this corner shop once sold books and possibly bought libraries. Part of the sign has faded away. Do you think it says bought and sold? The 1912 Post Office Directory shows an antiques dealer, S.R.H. Shakespeare, once occupied the shop at the beginning of the century. By 1935, the Kelly's PO Directory names Philip Thomas, Bookseller, as occupying 89 Heath Street.

This upper part of Heath Street was once full of local shops with two public houses. Of course, such shops have disappeared everywhere. It could



*89 Heath Street*

also be the constant road traffic in Heath Street and the consequent pollution have played a part in disappearing the original paint worked sign.

### ***Unwins Wines Spirits Beer***

It is possible to pass this sign a hundred times and not see it. Up to the 1950s, an arcade of seven small shops existed next to The Magdala. The last two original local shops, a newsagent and a greengrocer, disappeared in 1985. All are now offices and residences, except for two recently-opened specialist shops.



*South Hill Park*

## ***Fading Memories of Hampstead's Past (cont)***

And last, but by no means least –

### ***First Class Tea Rooms & Bean Feasts***

These well-painted signs which festoon the west and south facing walls of this building on the eastern edge of the Heath are so evocative of jolly parties on the Heath in the 1920s and 1930s or even perhaps much earlier. They are not easy to see now because of mature trees. Originally, the west façade would have been seen from the Heath by those leaving it. The south façade would have been seen by people approaching from Highgate Road and the bus stands of routes delivering people to and from the Heath for longer than the last 120 years.

Old photographs of high streets elsewhere show painted advertisements on all the visible walls. There is no doubt Hampstead was not an exception.

If you spot any more, please contact me.



*1 Highgate West Hill*

### ***Members' email addresses – are you missing out?***

#### **Keeping you informed of the latest news and events.**

The Society is increasingly using email, to let members know of vital issues that crop up between Newsletters. It is also an invaluable way to bring you other useful information, such as walks, talks and events that do not fit in with the Newsletter timetable.

#### ***If we do not have your email address you may be missing out on important local and Society news and initiatives.***

So, if you have not already done so, please do send your email address to the Society at:

**[info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk](mailto:info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk)**

Make sure that you include your name and street address so that we can identify you.

This will also enable us to update our membership records and simplify our communications with you.



# *Hampstead & Highgate in 50 Buildings*

by Martin Thompson

*This book review first appeared in London Historians ([www.londonhistorians.org](http://www.londonhistorians.org)), a club for Londoners who would like to learn more about their city's history. London Historians organises visits, talks, walks, social events and discounts to selected historical attractions and exhibitions. They also meet at a pub in London on the first Wednesday every month.*

Hampstead & Highgate in 50 Buildings is the latest of six books by Lucy McMurdo which have included *Islington & Clerkenwell in 50 Buildings*, *Chiswick in 50 Buildings* and *Bloomsbury in 50 Buildings*. The author is a blue badge guide who has combined two of her major loves when writing these books: London and history.

Lucy's descriptions of the chosen buildings Hampstead and Highgate, a mixture of Georgian, Victorian and modern, show she has an in-depth knowledge of the area and of the buildings in particular. A well-written introduction sets the tone, summarising the story of these two ancient villages and how they evolved. The 50 buildings chosen for inclusion are, I believe, a true reflection of these two areas. Her descriptions are really interesting as she shares the back history and vignettes, where appropriate, of some of the people who have lived within them.

The author begins the narrative with The Spaniard's Inn, Spaniard's Road, Hampstead, which was constructed by a Toll Road adjacent to the Bishop of London's estate around 1585 and ends with the Arundel Centre in Highgate, part of Channing School's new performing Arts Centre which opened in 2018. In between, she covers both secular and non-secular buildings, recording studios, museums, cemeteries, schools, hospitals both present and past, the houses of famous writers, poets, artists and architects, well-known public houses of historic

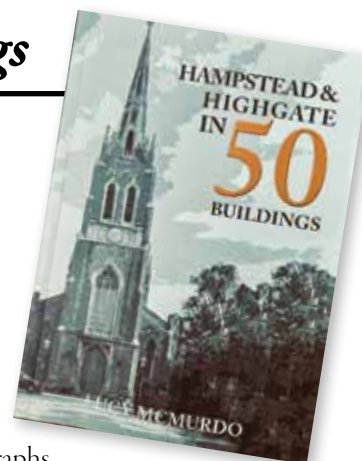
interest and various lanes and alleyways. She also narrates both factual and, possibly, the fictional stories of how they came to be.

The book is amply illustrated with beautiful colour photographs taken by Lucy's husband Alex McMurdo, which bring her descriptions and history of the buildings to life.

There appears to be a slight emphasis on Hampstead rather than Highgate, but this didn't bother me, as I believe there are more historical buildings of interest in Hampstead. If one were to use the book as a guide to the areas, it could be a little distracting because the author has chosen to list the buildings in chronological order according to the time of their original construction. As a result, the book tends to wander from Hampstead to Highgate and back again. However, there is a map and a key to the whole area included towards the front of the book. Since each chapter corresponds to a number in the key and on the map, it is easy to find the building being discussed if one does get a little lost.

This book covers both the architecture and social history of Hampstead and Highgate as well as many other aspects of life in these districts over the past 400 years or so. As the author herself says, "the reader will undoubtedly appreciate what a difficult task it has been to select only fifty buildings for the book. There is such a wealth of interesting buildings, so many stories to tell and truly stunning architecture."

I am sure anyone, whether a resident of Hampstead or Highgate, or a visitor, will find this book of as much interest as I did.





**HAMPSTEAD  
SUMMER  
FESTIVAL**



**Hampstead  
School of Art**



## ***HAMPSTEAD SUMMER FESTIVAL WAS EVEN MORE CREATIVE THIS YEAR***



*Canvas murals on the theme of Keats' poetry adorned the fence of Keats House*



*Adding to the Community Canvas*

Keats Grove is home to the wonderful Keats House Museum, where Keats lived from 1818 until his declining health forced him to move to Italy where he died. Keats House's lovely garden was also the home of Hampstead's Summer Festival this year. Happily, we were free of COVID distancing restrictions and we attracted a large happy crowd of local families and some passing visitors to the Heath.

Hampstead has long been a village of writers, artists and musicians. Now in its 12th year, Hampstead Summer Festival has evolved to showcase Hampstead's budding creative talent.

For the first time, the HSF mounted a new community art project: a Canvas Mural Festival, a gallery without walls. Artists from Hampstead School of Art, individual local artists and primary schools in Hampstead submitted large scale canvas murals inspired by Keats' poetry. Keats Grove's living squirrels, woodpeckers, robins and parakeets were joined by (painted) nightingales, kingfishers, butterflies and bees. On the opening day of the Festival everyone was invited to participate in a community canvas, bringing creativity to the heart of Hampstead, and throughout the Festival people came to take photos of these inspiring creations.

## *Hampstead Summer Festival (cont)*

On Saturday 25th June, Opening Day, visitors to the Garden saw artistic endeavours in four different genres. First, we welcomed the Rock Choir to get us in the mood for a lovely afternoon in the garden. After, Jonathan Nakouzi made his debut as a storyteller. Another first for the Festival was a performance by pupils of the Rona Hart School of Dance with an exquisite corps of young ballerinas performing as the swans of Swan Lake. The audience was entranced. Finally, the audience went out into the street to add to the community canvas.



*Pupils from the Rona Hart School of Dance performed an excerpt from Swan Lake in front of Keats House*

We were so lucky with the weather, lovely sunshine and not too hot, so the Family Garden Party was the place to be on Sunday with Mystical Fairy Elizabeth and her pirate companion entertaining the little ones with bubbles, and balloons. Everyone who wanted to had their face painted, and there was rhyme-time, amazing birds of prey. There was also another new addition to the Festival, a film school for kids run by Sparks Media. Gails provided some absolutely delicious cake so adults could picnic on the lawn with tea or a glass of wine, while excited children ran from one entertainment to the next.



*The gardens of Keats House looked lovely as a performance from the Rock Choir kicked off the Festival*



*A Mystical Fairy entertained the children with bubbles whilst a pirate blew up balloons*



## *Hampstead Summer Festival (cont)*



*Petruchio and Bianca delighted the audience who picnicked on the lawn of Keats House*

For the second weekend, Keats House's Garden was the scene for Drama Impact's open-air family-friendly performances of the *Taming of the Shrew*. This is their third visit and as word has spread the audience has grown. Fully costumed, they brought this challenging play up to date with delightful verve. We hope to welcome them again next year.

And the finale was the Festival's traditional Art Fair, where local artists exhibited work alongside Hampstead School of Art's End of Year Show, Picture the Heath and The Young Person's Art Competition entries. Prizes were donated by Handelsbanken, Cass Art, Hampstead Providores and Mad Lilies. They were awarded to the delighted winners of the various categories. It was a joy to be present when the winners were announced and to see the pride and pleasure the recognition of their talent gave them. Visitors were able to buy pictures and craft items from the stalls and went away delighted with their purchases.



*Art enthusiasts enjoyed wine and delicious food at the Art Fair*

Over the centuries Hampstead has been home to Constable, Moore and Hepworth, Rego and Pavlova. The Hampstead Summer Festival aims to showcase our new generation of artists, but, more importantly, to get everyone to come and express themselves in paint or music or dance.



*The Heath & Hampstead Society enjoyed meeting local residents at the Art Fair*

*Hampstead Summer Festival raised £15,000 for our two popular local charities, Hampstead School of Art and Keats Community Library. Thank you to Keats House for the use of the Garden, Osbornes Law our main sponsor, and all the Hampstead businesses who supported the Festival, and thank you all for coming and making it a success.*

*If you would like to take a stall or volunteer to be involved with next year's Festival please contact  
[Keatscommunitylibrary@gmail.com](mailto:Keatscommunitylibrary@gmail.com)*

# *Hampstead Memories: Before the Great War*

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*by Enid Margaret (Powell) Norfolk*

*Peggy Norfolk was born in Theydon Bois, Essex, in 1903, the daughter of Alfred Septimus Powell and Blanche (Allen) Powell. She was brought up at 9 Rudall Crescent, Hampstead with her two sisters and two brothers. She left school at age 14 and became a typist at the Canadian Red Cross offices in London during the latter part of the Great War.*

*In 1924, Peggy married a Royal Navy Lieutenant, Stanley Edward Norfolk, at St. Mary's Holly Place, Hampstead. In 1935, they settled in Sevenoaks, Kent, with two sons and two daughters. Stanley Norfolk retired with the rank of Captain in 1948.*



*Peggy and Stanley's wedding in 1935*



*Peggy Norfolk*

*The Powell family, several doctors among them, had an extensive history as non-conformists in Kent and Sussex. In the early 1960s, Stanley acquired a portable typewriter. Peggy, not known to have typed anything since her war work, sat down in front of this new typewriter one afternoon and produced in a stream of consciousness a nine-page memoir about growing up in Hampstead before the Great War. Despite encouragement she is not known to have typed anything again.*

*Stanley died in 1980 aged 82. Peggy died in 1988 aged 85. They are buried in the Norfolk family plot in Greatness Cemetery, Sevenoaks.*

## ***Hampstead Memories: Before the Great War (cont)***

*This unfinished account was sent to the Newsletter by Anthony Norfolk, the author's great-grandson. It is reprinted here largely as the author wrote it in the early 1960s. These are Enid Margaret (Peggy) Norfolk's memories of Hampstead before the Great War. They are a remarkable record.*



*9 Rudall Crescent*

The house was one of a row, tall and the rooms, two by two, up to the attic by the steepest of steep stairs<sup>1</sup>. These stairs, straight and curving, had little unexpected landings where glimpses of flat roofs could be seen, with square tanks for the primitive water system which regularly froze in any cold winter.

The summers were often baking hot and sleep under the sloping roofs impossible.

A passion for reading could be indulged in with the help of a torch under the bedclothes in winter and in the summer, the tiny window caught the last flicker of daylight for the finishing of a chapter. A magnificent view of London stretched away into the distance, sometimes misty, sometimes clear and terrifyingly awe-inspiring when lit with flashes of lightning followed by loud crashes of thunder and the tumbling downstairs roll which filled the air with fear. One particular thunderstorm kept me petrified in bed for a whole night unable to go to my mother for comfort. This fear stayed with me 'til the day when, in turn, my children had to be comforted in a more understanding age. Children's needs seemed so unimportant then. To be seen and not heard was not so much said as taken for granted and the daily cry of elder sisters, "Must we take the kids?" was always answered by a firm, "yes!". Our faces roughly sponged or soaped according to the mood of the soaper whose mind was not on such

mundane things. Our endless layers of clothes both tied and buttoned were, at last, held together.

We started off up the High St. The grocer's van clip-clopped leisurely down the street with richer customers' goods. Our own groceries were carried and cash paid for every purchase. The price and value of the goods scrutinized carefully and even then indignantly returned if not considered good value for the money. In fact, a running battle went on between grocer and customer. Sometimes, it was won by the grocer, unmoved by my mother's plaint, "I always pay cash and should have good value." She was quite oblivious of the fact that, the money being in the till, complaints would leave him indifferent, short of custom being removed elsewhere, when a grudging concession would be made. A smile would be turned on and a biscuit or two put into our out-stretched hands, and all was well again.

There seemed to be so much shopping. Minding the pram with brother in it, a very boring occupation, when across the road was the fire station. The gleaming brass, glimpses of the horses, quiet now but ready to spring into action, sparking fire from the cobblestones, bell ringing, brass helmets shining and the bell loud for a spell-binding second, then fainter and fainter or stopping and filling one's imagination with flames and rescues.

All this abruptly shattered by an indignant voice, "They'll have to be paid for." One, two, three, eggs on the pavement, what a horrible mess and the shop-front just cleaned. "Where's that boy?" Caring for a younger brother was a full-time occupation and hypothetical fires and exciting rescues mere wishful thinking.

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<sup>1</sup> *The house at 9 Rudall Crescent*

## *Hampstead Memories: Before the Great War (cont)*

Up the High Street, we see a high gig with footman in characteristic pose, with arms folded, sitting at the back. He gets down and assists the two pretty girls to the pavement and holds the glistening pony's head. Everything shines, the black top hat, the black pony, bit and bridle. He waits. They try on their shoes. They are the Torby girls, daughters of the Grand Duke Michael, and have a slightly foreign air. They have come over the Spaniards from their home in Kenwood. What fun to drive across the Heath on a sunny day and buy a shiny pair of patent leather shoes.

We must walk up Heath Street before we get to the Whitestone Pond. Persuading "them" to wait while we get 4 oz. of sweets for a penny. The choice is soon made as there is only a small variety at that price. "Cheap sweets are full of glucose," was the cry. "So bad for you." Bad for teeth perhaps, but may have staved off many a bilious attack which, naturally, was followed by "a good dose" or a powder from the chemist. "Come on kids, we'll never get to the top."

At last we are there. "Will the boys be there?" What a question. We always run into the boys on the Heath. If they are not on the top, they are in "The Bower" or "The Maggot's Rest" or even "The Drawing Room". This last a collection or arrangement of trees and seats reminiscent of conversation pieces in an Edwardian drawing room. The boys would remain grouped on one seat and the girls on the other, but conversation flowed backwards and forwards. Frequent visits were made rather as in the Lancers because however long one was away from one's seat one always returned to it in the end. Our constant gaze became irksome and we were sent on various errands. "Why don't you run down the hill? There's some sand down there you can play with." This would do for a time but we would return, no doubt, just when not wanted and enjoy being part of the group and a necessary evil to be ignored as far as possible. Sometimes a kinder-hearted boy would do tricks for us with boxes of matches or a twirling stick, but watching was just as fascinating as playing and we did both.



*Whitestone Pond*



## *Hampstead Memories: Before the Great War (cont)*

Sundays were dreaded. Our all-wool combinations, clean and scratchy, were laid out and in the summer, a broderie-anglaise dress and starched hat to match, both of which scratched abominably, round the neck of the dress and the forehead of the hat. In hot weather, this was torture. My brother's Eton suit and knife-like edged collar must have been even more unendurable and to sit still during the sermon well-nigh impossible till one learnt to feel faint and be "taken out".



*Rosslyn Hill Chapel today – the Bride's Entrance*

The church was reached by a series of steps, which was a short-cut<sup>2</sup>. We were regularly dragged up these – to us – steep steps at break-neck speed all because my sister thought that Chumley, one of the boys,

might be there. He was, sometimes, but the fact that he could see her home must have governed his choice of churches for Sunday worship, as this one was miles away from his home. He used to look very dashing, but had as many spots on his face as he had on his bow tie. We had our revenge on a later Sunday by spending the afternoon pulling all the cherries off our sister's hat, leaving only the stalks.

If the day were wet, the boys used to congregate in the upstairs drawing room. Striped white wallpaper and cream paint could not stand up to constant coming and going and my mother was considered advanced in her views allowing such freedom. She believed her daughters would make a better choice in marriage if there were freedom for boys and girls to see a lot of each other, and, though chaperones were only just beginning to go out, they were not an anachronism until the First World War swept away these niceties. She had much to suffer from neighbours who said her daughters were meeting boys at the pillar-box at the end of the road. This was quite untrue as, owing to her advanced views, they had no need of such subterfuges and could bring their friends home at any time. Perhaps, the sing-songs round the piano with the music of *The Quaker Girl* and *The Arcadians* floating out of the open window was a disturbing element in our quiet crescent.

When there was not much room round the piano they would sit with their legs dangling out of the window yelling the choruses and, no doubt, as much of a nuisance as the rock'n' rollers of today. The neighbours were not all unsympathetic. The Spanish family next door sent the score of *The Arcadians* as a present, in the hope it would do as a substitute for *Handel's Largo* played at a spanking pace by my sister,

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<sup>2</sup> *Rosslyn Hill Chapel, coming in the back way up the steps*

and agony to a musical ear. Mr. Machado presented the score with a bow and said, "Here is Music you can play as fast as you like."

Music would drift upstairs during the many musical evenings. The deep bass of Mr. Schmidt's rendering of *The Erl-King*, with its wonderful accompaniment, would send shivers down my spine. He was very erect and *korrekt* and became a naturalized Brit so that his only son would not have to serve in the German army. His father had been a German general who had married a French woman during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. This feeling about past wars was brought home to me by a school friend, Renée Fairfax, whose mother was French. She astonished me by refusing to buy a paint box in the local toy shop because it was marked *Made in Germany*. "Why?" I asked. "It is cheaper and better than the other." "I will take the English one," she replied coldly. What a sacrifice! The reason for her choice was beyond me, but I recognised her decision was irrevocable, and no amount of persuasion would get her to alter her mind.

Occasional visits to Flask Walk, where the vegetables were bought, were looked forward to with pleasure. The costermonger family, whose numerous offspring, old and young, were scattered around the shop, mixed up with the vegetables and fruit. The older boys helped to serve. "Naughty boys," their fat, smiling mother used to say. "Fred's in, but'll be coming out soon," referring to his temporary sojourn in gaol. "He likes the excitement." The youngest was either in a dilapidated pram or pushed round on one of the barrows, where he or she was fortunate enough to have no teeth to chatter when rushed down the old rough stones on Rosslyn Hill. The pusher's feet barely touched the ground and a swaying movement, according to the load, set up which only settled down to normality when it got to the smooth bit past the new police

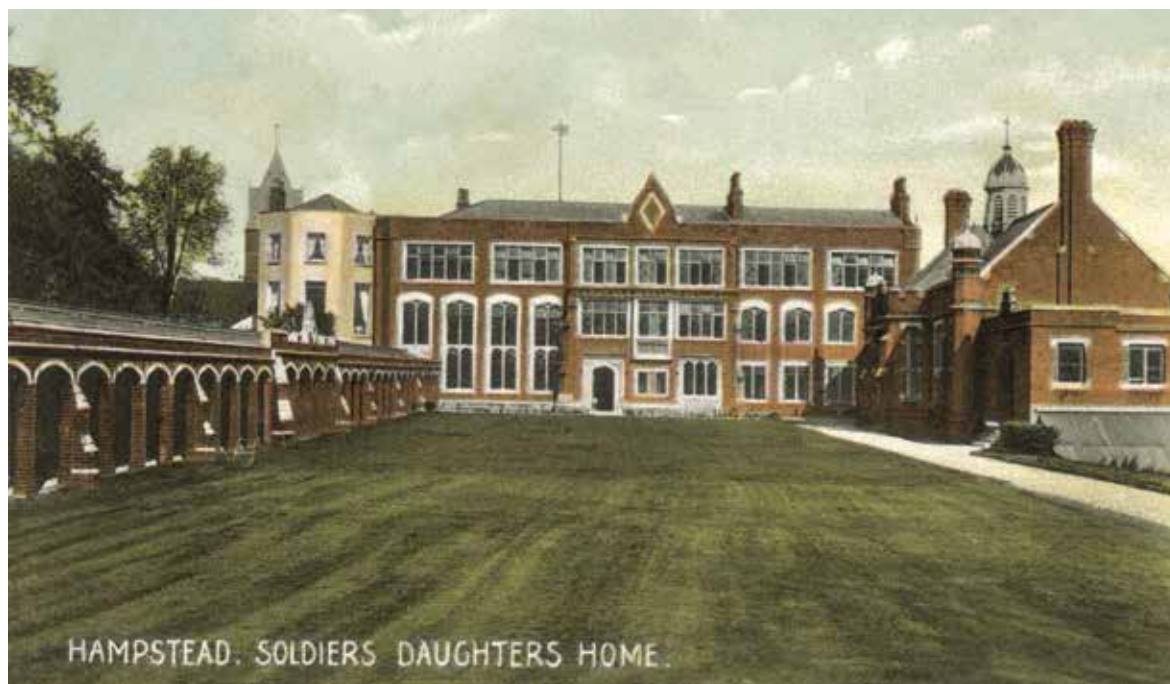
station. The old police station was turned into the new laundry for the Royal Soldiers' Daughters' Home.

These girls wore bright red dresses, starched white collars and cuffs, stiff straw boaters, and heavy dark blue cloaks in winter. The Sailors' Orphan Girls Home was not far away and the girls there wore the same kind of outfits, only the dresses were blue. This gave them a kind of pinched look in winter, which used to make me feel very sorry for them. A friend of mine lived next door to the Royal Soldiers' Daughters' Home. The house was old and had a lozenge on it indicating, "Sir Harry Vane lived here before he was beheaded," or words to that effect. It gave me a thrill every time I read it, and when we ate the delicious, ripe, mulberries from the tree in the garden I used to try to visualise him in that same garden. Sometimes, we would talk to the Soldiers' Daughters over the fence. This was strictly forbidden and they would have been punished if they were caught. I hope they never were.

The new police station was an awe-inspiring place compared with the homely looking old one. The brick work remained new for years, which had an off-putting effect compared with the grey, ornate dinginess of the old one. Its portals were only entered once when my brother and I were led reluctantly in by my sister, who was making an inquiry of some kind. We fully expected to be locked up at any moment, and heaved a sigh of relief on reaching the street without having been arrested for some forgotten misdemeanor. Sending for a policeman was a familiar threat to be ignored at home, but treated with respect within range of the lock-up.

My other sister caused much amusement to a detective who was making inquiries about a lost purse. Our daily help was not above suspicion. Although nothing could be proved, my mother was convinced that she had taken it. She responded by putting the

## *Hampstead Memories: Before the Great War (cont)*



*Hampstead Soldiers' Daughters Home © Peter Higginbotham - [childrenshomes.org.uk](http://childrenshomes.org.uk)*

blame on Sylvia who was about fourteen at the time. "You shouldn't ought've taken it," she kept reiterating and all Sylvia could say was that she hadn't.

Sylvia was questioned by the detective and asked if she had ever been to the police station. "Yes," she said, "with another school girl. You have all the photos of the criminals round the walls. Horrible looking men". This last statement caused him to laugh long and loud. "I must tell them that when I get back. Those photos are of the detectives who have distinguished themselves and merited notice so their photos are put up in a prominent position."

Visiting the dentist was looked forward to, at first, but later dreaded as being a painful episode to be avoided by the onset of illness on the day of the appointment. It was no good, a shake and a loud,

"nonsense!" and you were off, around the corner and quaking on the doorstep in no time. A starched maid, with cap perched high on her head, would brightly show us straight in. There seemed to be no waiting, and one was in the chair far too quickly for one's liking. If well behaved, one would be allowed to work the chair mechanism or be pumped up high and have a quick ride down to the ground. Afterwards, we had a sweet each.

Going to the seaside was a major undertaking. A horse bus, with two horses, if the family was large, would draw up in front of the house. All the luggage would be piled on top and we were bundled inside to wait, impatiently, to be off. The excitement was intense and we were ticked off every few minutes and told to sit still. Once in the train, we would gaze anxiously out of the window if anyone left the party to get so much

as a newspaper, quite certain the train would leave without them. We would vie with each other to catch a first glimpse of the sea, which was not always seen from the train. On arrival, we settled down in our new surroundings, pretty quickly, anxious to be down to the beach as soon as possible, only to find it was high tide, which was very disappointing. There was always the concert party to watch and listen to over the railings. This went on every day and by the end of the fortnight every song and gesture of each performer would be mimicked to the life. Sometimes, we had a seat to watch the performance and felt very affluent to be seated instead of standing at the back, where we were frequently turned away when our numbers got too thick. On one occasion, I strayed onto a patch of grass inside the enclosure and was horrified to find the leading tenor of the concert party had fastened the gates on me for a joke. This caused me to burst into floods of tears and, when he opened them again, run to bury my face in my Norwegian nanny's lap. This was just what he wanted, as he was anxious to strike up an acquaintance with her as she was tall, fair, and very good-looking.

Coming back, we took a horse bus from the station and soon after starting we would pick up one or two runners. These men seemed always to be of very poor physique and, when we got to the hill at Chalk Farm, only the more persistent hung on. The driver was unsympathetic as he hoped to cope with the luggage himself, thereby securing a large tip. My mother was always sorry for these poor men and would tip them to go away, except for one man who she would insist on being taken on the box with the driver. His protesting back was turned on us, but my mother would have it, as to see them running, getting more and more exhausted, was more than flesh and blood would stand. It was impossible to get home without a hill and Rosslyn Hill was one of the steep ones. A

trace horse was kept on duty at the bottom of the hill and used to assist any vehicle with a heavy load. The coal carts, which had two horses for a big load, used to be glad of the assistance. Often, horses fell down on the hill, which caused a lot of commotion but no real hold-ups in that part of the world. It is only recently the notices of *please slacken bearing rein when going uphill*, have disappeared, and one is glad of it, as there is not so much suffering of animals these days. When we stayed in the country, we always had to get out and walk up the hills to save the horses. The drivers were not always so sympathetic and thought us horribly fussy. Sometimes, I wondered why we had taken a cab at all, as we seemed to do so much walking.

The pace of life was so much slower. A picnic with a donkey and trap for us children was a leisurely affair, especially when the donkey would refuse to go forwards or backwards and much time was spent in coaxing and encouraging. The holdups were many, but there seemed to be no hurry and the days long and blissful.

Donkey rides were a mixed blessing, but we clamoured for the biggest donkey and to be first in the race back a triumph, though it was a job to stick on when one's donkey stumbled on the rough ground.

We were taken to College Crescent on the old horse bus just before it was withdrawn. The driver had a rubicund face, black moustache and wore a three-quarter length covert coat, breeches and highly polished leather gaiters. He was retired when the buses were withdrawn and stood outside the tobacconist near the bus terminus. He looked lost without his whip. With his bow legs and horsy get up, he seemed to be perpetually waiting for the day when his bus would return. The tobacconist had long clay pipes in the window, which was beautifully arranged with different varieties of tins of tobacco.



## *Ellen Solomons (1942–2022)*

*Reprinted by kind permission of the Ham & High*

*Ellen Solomons, long-term resident and community leader of Hampstead, died suddenly in June while travelling abroad.*

Born in July 1942 in New End, Ellen was the first child of Nita and Willi Schreier, recent refugees to London from Nazi persecution in Austria. While pregnant with Ellen and fearing further bombing in London, Nita learned that her own parents had perished in Europe's concentration camps. This trauma and ongoing financial hardship provided a backdrop that shaped who Ellen would become.

She attended Paddington and Maida Vale High School, but her education was hampered by serious illness – the inherited Gaucher's Disease that would affect Ellen and her younger sister



*Ellen c1958*

Susan throughout their lives. In line with parental expectations, she married just after her 18th birthday. But it soon became evident that Ellen was not ready for a life of domesticity.

Encouraged by her husband David, Ellen re-entered education and qualified as a barrister at a time when there were fewer than 100 women at the English bar. She forged a successful career in family law, specialising in children and families in distress. She later combined this – again defying the conventions of the day – with motherhood. She had seemingly endless energy and determination, curiosity and intelligence, and a strong sense of the need to fight injustice.

She was tested by the illness and deaths, within a few years of each other, of her mother, husband and sister, and her own illness. But she rarely complained: she treated life as a gift, forming many friendships locally and travelling widely. And then, some years later came unforeseen joy as an old friendship blossomed, leading in time to a happy marriage to Reg Glick. Beyond retirement, Ellen shared her skills, wisdom and kindness with national and local groups and charities, and with many friends, family and others in need.

Reg's death eight years later was all the harder to bear when, soon after, the Covid lockdown and instruction to shield left Ellen isolated in her flat. It was a mark of her strength and vitality that, already in her late 70s, she found ways to keep active: walking daily on the Heath, learning how to use Zoom, and taking online classes in literature and philosophy – still keen to hear

from new people, broaden her horizons, and learn more about the world.

Perhaps it is fitting then that her sudden death came when she was once again out exploring the world. The night before she died, she had been in touch to say that she was having a wonderful time in one of the most beautiful places she had ever seen. She attached the photograph of herself shown here, smiling broadly in the sun by a beautiful waterfront.

Ellen will be missed dearly by her children, grandchildren, and many friends and colleagues. But this image – of a woman born into sadness but who found so many ways to live life to the full – may bring consolation and inspiration to those left behind.

Marc Hutchinson, Chair of the Heath & Hampstead Society, writes:

I had the privilege and pleasure of getting to know Ellen when we spent many months working closely together successfully to prevent attempts in the Vale of Health to build a house on the South Fairground Site and to turn the North Fairground Site into a commercial caravan ground. It was an immense help having Ellen co-instruct our barrister; she knew the litigation game inside out. She later actively served on the Planning Sub-Committee of my Society. She was an inspiring altruist and delightful colleague, and will be terribly missed.

The Vale of Health Society Committee adds:

When news of Ellen's death came from Croatia, the Vale of Health's residents gathered spontaneously on a street corner to grieve and

remember. There were so many memories of her decade as Chair of the Society that we were still talking hours later. The memories were not only of committee meetings in her flat where she guided us through the latest complex planning issues but of Ellen's role in every element of Vale life. Many recalled her role in the parties that brought us together in winter, summer and special occasions, most recently the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Ellen was so full of energy and ideas she made the Vale fun, joining in the singing in the street during Covid, offering her suggestions at Book Club. She never asked to be the unofficial leader of our community, that was not her way, but is what she was, and we miss her so much.



*Ellen Croatia June 2022*

# *Hampstead Historical Ramblings: The fascinating story of Burgh House*

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*by Martin Thompson*

*All photos courtesy April Blaszak*

*This is our second and final instalment of Martin Thompson's feature for the Newsletter. Martin will be missed. Martin's final piece features the story of one building we all know, at least by sight. What is its history? Who lived there? And how did it evolve into our local museum?*

We have a tendency to take for granted the places we see and pass by on a daily basis and even to ignore them, not thinking about the people who may have lived there or the events that may have occurred within. Many of the buildings in Hampstead still in existence have an interesting story to tell.

Take Burgh House for instance. I'm sure most, if not all of us, have been there at one time or another and yet have you thought about when it was built or who had lived within those walls at one time? I decided to do a little research and found some surprising connections.

Burgh House was constructed in 1704 and is therefore over three hundred years old. At that time, the Hampstead Wells Spa was a flourishing business. In 1720, the spa's physician, Dr William Gibbon, was living there. He added the present wrought iron gate, which still bears his initials.

Although the spa in Well Walk was initially successful, a combination of factors, including its distance from London, other London spas, together with problems of rowdy behaviour, caused its popularity to decline and it was demolished. Hampstead's days as a spa were over, but the Wells period had encouraged substantial development and established the village's reputation as a healthy and attractive area in which to live.

Between 1822 and 1856, the house became the home of Reverend Allatson Burgh, after whom it is named. By all accounts, he was generally disliked; although locals respected him for campaigning against the lord of the manor's plans to build on Hampstead Heath. Burgh House was then taken over by the Royal East Middlesex Militia in 1858 and served as the headquarters and officers' mess until 1881. It returned to domestic use in 1884.

In 1863, the Pre-Raphaelite artist Ford Madox Brown painted his seminal



*Gertrude Jekyll's terrace*

## *Hampstead Historical Ramblings: The fascinating story of Burgh House (cont)*



piece *Work*, in Heath Street while living in Hampstead. Today, it can be seen in the Manchester Art Gallery and a tile replica can be found in an alcove to the left of the garden entrance to Burgh House.

From 1906 to 1924, the house was occupied by Dr George Williamson. Dr Williamson was an international art expert who commissioned Gertrude Jekyll, the talented garden designer, craftswoman, photographer, writer and artist, to design the garden. Unfortunately, only the terrace now remains where a small plaque confirms the history of the garden. Incidentally, the surname may sound familiar because her brother was a friend of Robert Louis Stevenson, a frequent visitor to Hampstead. Stevenson borrowed her name for his 1886 novel *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

In 1925, a director of Lloyds Bank with the somewhat grand name of Captain Constantine Evelyn Benson CBE, DSO bought the house and built the present music room on the site of Dr Williamson's library.

Between 1933 and 1937, the author Rudyard Kipling's daughter, Elsie Bambridge, lived in the house with her husband, Captain George Bambridge. In fact,



Rudyard Kipling's last outing in 1936 was to Burgh House to visit his daughter

Between 1937 and 1946, Burgh House was unoccupied and then bought and restored by Hampstead Borough Council. The barrack blocks in front of the building were pulled down. In 1947, it reopened as a community centre with a citizens' advice centre in the basement.

The house was again closed in 1977 when Camden Council discovered dry rot in the building. The Council proposed selling the house. Fortunately, local residents formed a charitable trust, launching the *Keep Burgh House* appeal. As a result of the appeal and on 8 September 1979, the Council granted a lease to the trust. The house was restored by the Council and opened to the public as the local museum, art gallery and popular buttery you can see today.

I for one am a frequent visitor. I hope you are too. It is a lovely quiet place to soak up the sun amongst the flowers on a summer's day along Gertrude Jekyll's Terrace and have a bite to eat and perhaps a cup of coffee.



# ***Hampstead Plaques: Philosophy, art and letters marked with plaques to Sir Isaiah Berlin, Marie-Louise von Motesiczky and Elias Canetti***

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*by Juliette Sonabend*

*A triple unveiling of plaques this spring and summer for illustrious Hampstead residents of the 20th century. Up first was philosopher, political theorist and historian, Sir Isaiah Berlin. His plaque was followed by a double plaque to artist Marie-Louise von Motesiczky and Nobel Laureate Elias Canetti who shared a house for some years.*

## ***Sir Isaiah Berlin's Plaque***

It is almost impossible to overstate the level of joy and gratitude generated by the installation and unveiling of our plaque for the philosopher, political theorist and historian of ideas, Sir Isaiah Berlin, on his family home in 49 Hollycroft Avenue, in early May. This unique event was the result of many months of scrupulous planning and careful coordination.

Our journey began with an approach from Nancy Mayo, the Secretary of the Redington/Frognaal Residents Association. I was thrilled with the proposal and the plaque panel immediately approved it. Following our usual protocols, I approached English Heritage to ensure that they were not planning a plaque for him. To my astonishment, they were also planning



*Plaque unveiled, 49 Hollycroft Avenue*

a plaque for him, not in Hampstead, but at his parents' earlier home in Upper Addison Gardens, Kensington. So began a carefully coordinated unique double event.

Having swiftly secured consent from the homeowners who bought the house directly from the Berlin family, I engaged the help of Jeremy Wright of the Society's Planning Sub-Committee to execute the application for listed building consent.

Meticulous planning with Cathy Power of English Heritage, as we were slowly edging out a Covid-ridden world, led to our chosen date of 3 May. I was now ready to approach my old boss, Michel Strauss, the former head of the department of Impressionist and Modern Art at Sotheby's to ask if he would unveil the plaque. Michel was one of Sir Isaiah's two stepsons. A few years earlier, I had spent a week chatting to him and reconnecting on a beach in Barbados. I was excited to have this connection and thrilled to be finally ready to make contact. Sadly, my excitement was short-lived. Within moments of searching for Michel on the web, I came across his obituary. Sadly, he had died a few weeks earlier from Covid-19 and his family was still in shock. I was devastated. I took a deep breath and approached the other stepson, Peter Halban.

Peter was delighted to learn we were planning a plaque. Because he was aware of the developing plans at English Heritage, he was particularly anxious not to disrupt anyone's plans or offend their sensibilities. Guest lists were coordinated and invitations finally despatched to family members from Belsize Park to Paris and beyond. Oxford academics and colleagues were delighted to learn one of the greatest thinkers of the twentieth

***Hampstead Plaques: Philosophy, art and letters marked with plaques to Sir Isaiah Berlin, Marie-Louise von Motesiczky and Elias Canetti (cont)***

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*Peter Halban, Sir Isaiah Berlin's stepson*



*Henry Hardy, Sir Isaiah Berlin's editor*

century was finally to be commemorated in not one, but two, key London locations – on the same day. The anticipation of great joy was spreading abundantly.

Being acutely aware many people were travelling from afar, I felt a proper tea was essential. Living two streets away from Hollycroft Avenue, I decided to make it myself. Also knowing a few weeks later I would be moving from my home of 27 years, I felt a plaque tea would be a perfect swansong!

I spent the week baking: brownies, malt loaf, florentines and scones. On the day, I arranged flowers, opened all the windows to make the house Covid-safe and finally brushed my hair!

Peter Halban and Henry Hardy, Sir Isaiah's literary editor, and others went to Upper Addison Gardens with Cathy Power of English Heritage for a photo-shoot at the newly installed plaque. They then continued to Hollycroft Avenue for our three o'clock unveiling.

Frank Harding beautifully opened the proceedings with

a few well-chosen words of welcome and John Weston took some fantastic photos. The plaque was unveiled by Peter Halban together with his little grandson Max and a perfect afternoon of sheer joy ensued!

After the unveiling, the party walked to my home, where they spent the rest of the afternoon eating and talking prodigiously in equal measure. Sir Isaiah would have been delighted. Finally, at six o'clock I felt enough was enough. I gathered the last florentines, popped them in a Zip-Lock bag and sent them back to Oxford with the remaining party. After all, I was busy; I had another unveiling to organise!

The thank you notes started pouring in the next day and continued until our next unveiling a month later. I shall leave the final words to Peter Halban:

It was perfect, informal, intimate and yet a public recognition of Isaiah. You and the Society went out of your way to ensure that we all could remember Isaiah in our own different ways.

## ***Hampstead Plaques: Philosophy, art and letters marked with plaques to Sir Isaiah Berlin, Marie-Louise von Motesiczky and Elias Canetti (cont)***

### ***Marie-Louise von Motesiczky and Elias Canetti***

Barely a month later, we unveiled plaques for Marie-Louise von Motesiczky and Elias Canetti.

Mark Francis, the Director of Burgh House, proposed the plaque for Marie-Louise von Motesiczky. An exhibition of this Viennese émigré expressionist artist's work is being planned for early 2024 in collaboration with the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust. Both organizations were keen for her to be commemorated at 6 Chesterford Gardens where she lived with her mother for 36 years.

As the project developed, we learned the writer and Nobel Laureate Elias Canetti had stayed in the house with Marie-Louise for 13 years. Both the current owners and the Trust were keen to commemorate Elias Canetti together with Marie-Louise. We designed the double plaque after our plaque panel approved the additional candidate.

A year and a considerable amount of stress later, His Excellency Michael Zimmerman, the Austrian



*Marie-Louise von Motesiczky commemorated at 6 Chesterford Gardens*

Ambassador to the United Kingdom, unveiled the plaque followed by a heartfelt talk from Edmund de Waal, a relative and family friend. Tea was served in the garden and once again a feeling of gratitude and contentment was palpable amongst the assembled guests!

As always, I am very grateful to Frank Harding for setting the scene with his warm words of welcome and John Weston for taking magnificent photographs.



*His Excellency Michael Zimmerman, the Austrian Ambassador to the United Kingdom*



*The Society's Frank Harding*

***Hampstead Plaques: Philosophy, art and letters marked with plaques to Sir Isaiah Berlin, Marie-Louise von Motesiczky and Elias Canetti (cont)***

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*Frances Carey, Chair of the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust*



*Jeremy Adler, one of Marie-Louise's executors and former Trustee of the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust*



*Edmund de Waal, relative and family friend*



*Pascal Heberling, owner of 6 Chesterford Gardens where the plaque was erected*





## Autumn Events in the Library

**Time to think about Christmas!**  
**Saturday 12 November 10-5pm:**  
**Giant Book Sale**



The perfect time to buy some stocking fillers for your friends and stock up with your holiday reading. Hundreds of high-quality bargains to choose from.... crime, literary fiction, history, biography, art, cookery, poetry, and a huge selection of children's books for all ages. Come and see for yourself. *Free entry*

*NB: Donations of clean books with bar codes very welcome please*

### Under Ken Wood by Neil Titley

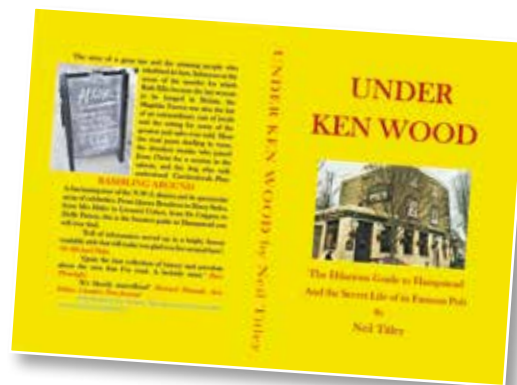
We also have a wonderful (new) book about Hampstead for you to give as a gift, including rambles around the area, pausing for anecdotes about the eccentrics and celebrities who lived here, and hilarious stories about the locals who frequented the legendary Magdala Pub.

We promise you this book is truly delightful.

£10 from the Library or Daunt Books, or we can send one by mail for a p&cp fee of £2.80 in UK (visit the website to order and pay by PayPal)

All proceeds go to support the Library.

*From Queen Boudicca to Harry Styles, from Mrs Hitler to Leonard Cohen, from Dr Crippen to Dolly Parton, this is the funniest guide to Hampstead you will ever find*



**Book tickets by calling the Library ☎ 020 7431 1266 or online at [www.wegotickets.com](http://www.wegotickets.com)**

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280a Hampstead High St NW3 1GA  
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# *Burgh House & Hampstead Museum*

***Those Remarkable Carlines*, featuring Sydney, Hilda and Richard Carline, Marie Louise von Motesiczky Art Gallery**

**19 October 2022 – 10 April 2023**

Mantelpiece by Josie and Madeleine Hunter, Drawing Room



Spanning over 100 years, four generations of the Carline family will exhibit together under one roof for the first time at Burgh House this autumn.

Work by siblings Sydney, Hilda and Richard Carline will be on show in *Those Remarkable Carlines*.

**Burgh House**  
New End Square, NW3 1LT  
☎ 020 7431 0144  
[info@burghhouse.org.uk](mailto:info@burghhouse.org.uk)  
[www.burghhouse.org.uk](http://www.burghhouse.org.uk)  
[@burghhouse1704](https://twitter.com/burghhouse1704)

**BURGH  
HOUSE**

**House & Museum:** Open 12–5pm Wed, Thu, Fri & Sun  
**Café:** Open 10am–5pm Wed, Thu & Fri, 9:30am–5:30pm weekends

# Heath Walks: 2022–2023

Walks are normally held on the first Sunday of every month except January. Most start from Burgh House, New End Square. London NW3 1LT – 10 minutes walk from Hampstead Tube Station (for map see [www.burghhouse.org.uk](http://www.burghhouse.org.uk)).

***NB:*** *Parking is extremely difficult locally, especially in spring and summer; the West Heath car park (behind Jack Straw's Castle) is more likely to have spaces than the East Heath car park.*

Starting times are either 2:30pm or 10:30am (9:30am for birds), depending on season and subject matter.

Walks last approximately two hours. They do not necessarily follow made-up paths; you are recommended to wear suitable footwear as conditions may be rough or muddy.

You will be invited to make a minimum donation of £5, to be collected at the beginning of each walk, to help support future walks programmes and to promote the Society's activities generally.

***Children are always welcome so long as they are suitably shod, can walk reasonable distances and are accompanied by an adult taking full responsibility for them.***

Further information from the walks organiser,  
Thomas Radice

mobile: 07941 528 034 or

email: [hhs.walks@gmail.com](mailto:hhs.walks@gmail.com)

## **Sunday 4 December 10.30am**

(meet at **Kenwood Walled Garden**, off Hampstead Lane)

*The Hidden Heath: signs of the Heath's past* led by Michael Hammerson, a Vice-President of the Highgate Society and member of the Heath Sub-Committee.

## **Sunday 5 February 2023 10.30am**

(meet at **Burgh House**)

*History of the Heath Ponds.* Marc Hutchinson, Chair of the Society and Secretary of the Hampstead Heath Winter Swimming Club.

Further walks will be announced in the January 2023 Newsletter. Details of walk programmes are available on the Society's website:

***[www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk](http://www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk)***

***🐦 @HandHSocHeath***

