ON THE HILL

DECEMBER 2021

FREE



JASON ALLEN

In conversation with Andrew Marr about youthwork at Mary's

PLUS

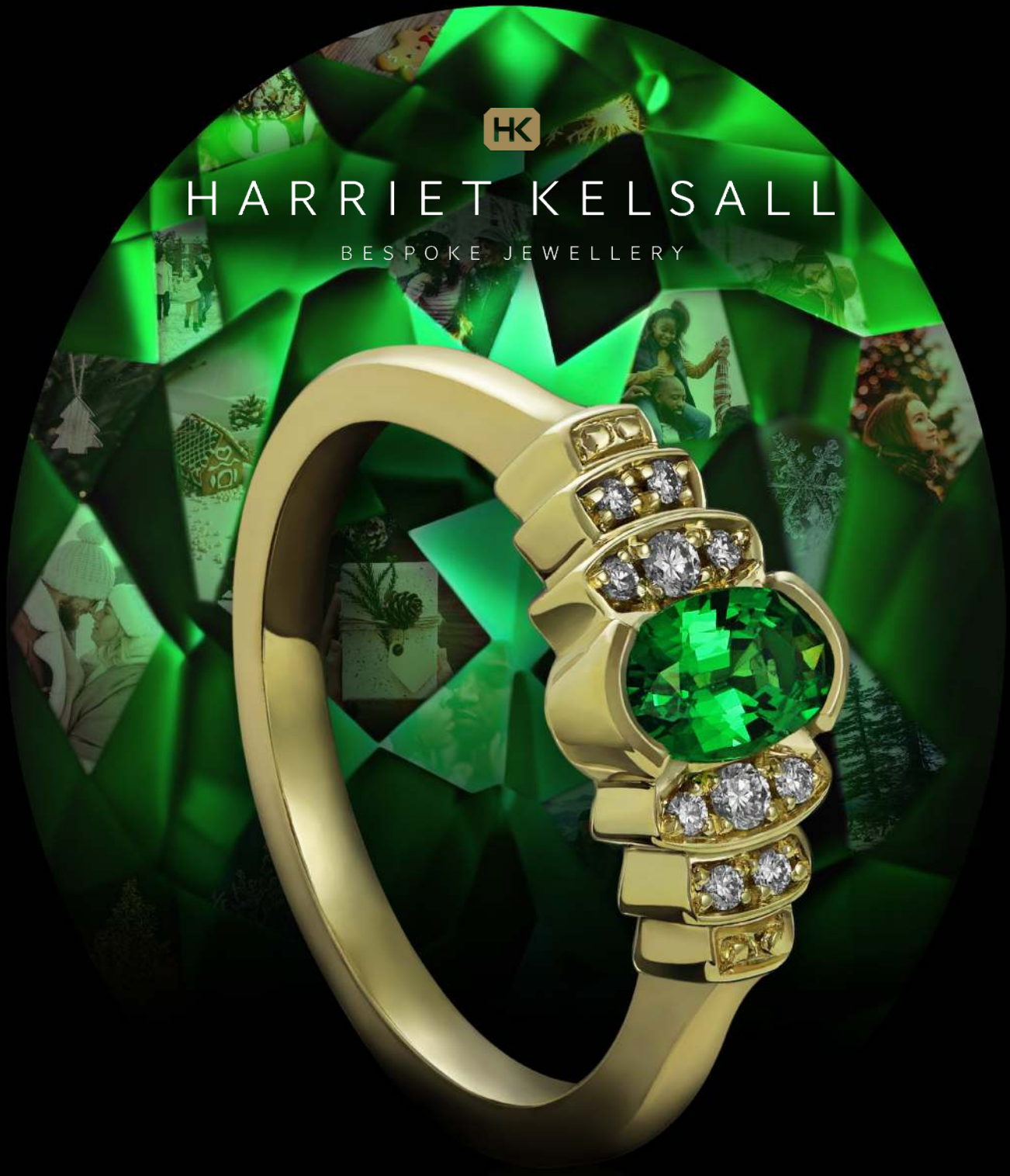
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Our Christmas gift guide for 2021

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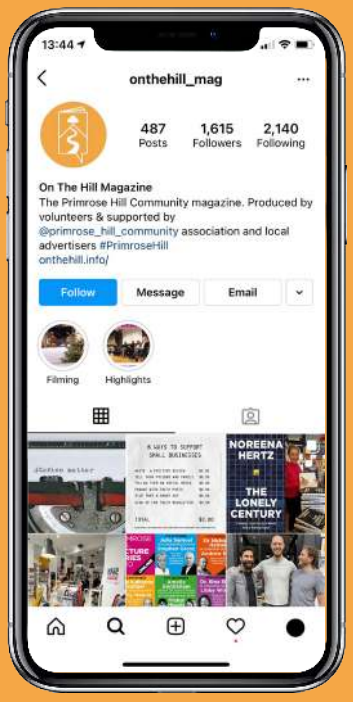
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DECEMBER 2021

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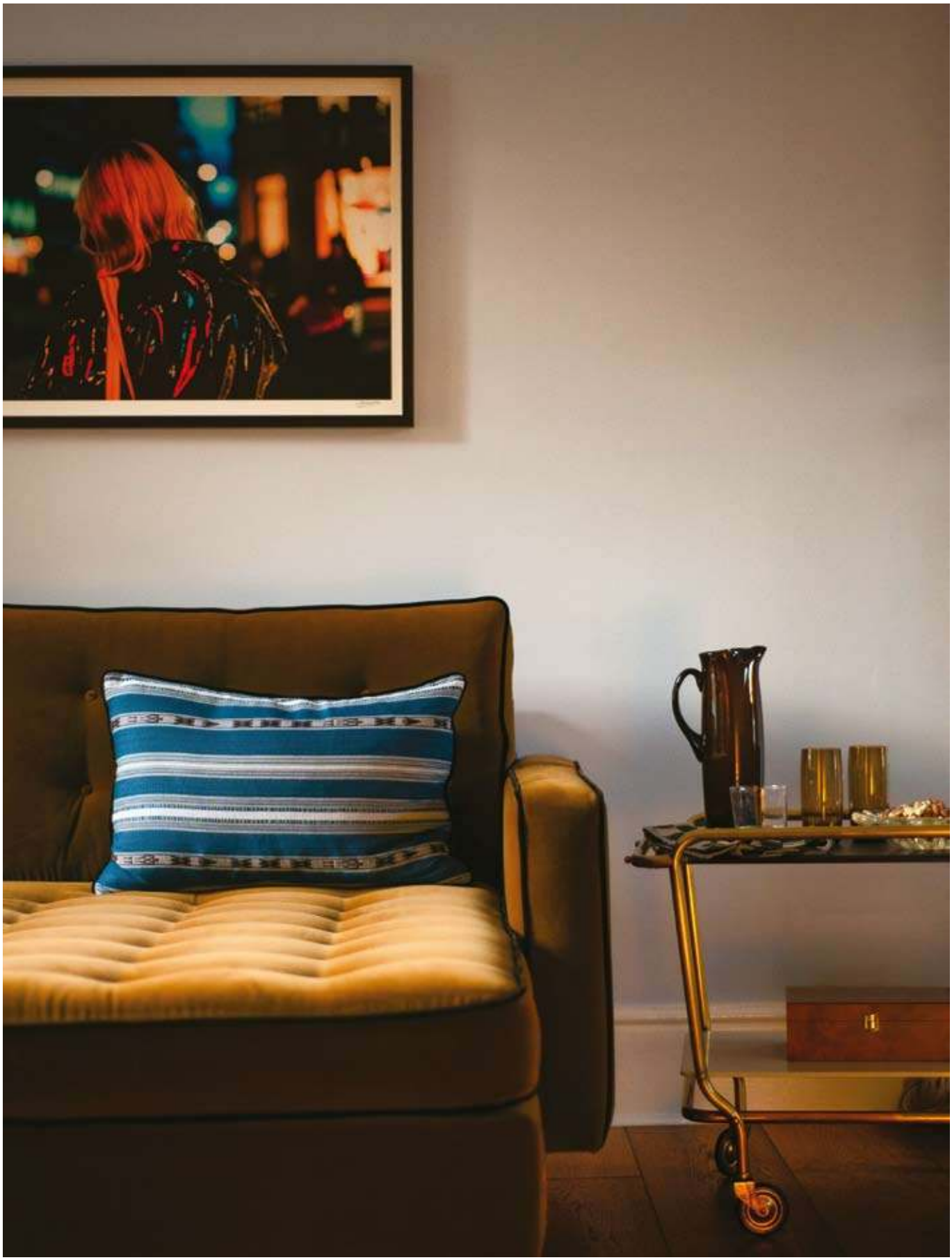
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PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

This publication is created by the community and for the benefit of Primrose Hill on behalf of your local charity, the Primrose Hill Community Association (PHCA). All proceeds from this publication go directly to fund the charity.
We hope you enjoy.

www.phca.cc

Disclaimer: the views in the magazine are not necessarily the views of the PHCA.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY
Nadav Kander

ISSN 20-6175



WELCOME TO DECEMBER

It's December already, and the countdown to Christmas has started. Although St Mary's Brewery has a beer advent calendar, and there are plenty of chocolate ones to be had, I still insist on an old fashioned one with pictures of mistletoe springs and sugar canes.

I've just finished reading Bernadine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*, in which one of the characters refers to Christmas as 'Greedymas'. So this issue of *OTH* is a mixture of local gifts to buy for friends and family and an invitation to think of others less fortunate, through volunteering. Phil Cowan has done the legwork and researched the options in our area. Neighbourhood Nosh, for starters, are in need of volunteers – mainly cooks and bakers – if you can spare time to help. Their details can be found on p 21.

One of the people in Primrose Hill who does vital work is Jason Allen, who runs the local youthwork charity Mary's. This year he appeared in the New Year Honours list for his services to the community. Andrew Marr, patron of the organisation, interviewed him for *OTH*, and Nadav Kander provided the photographs.

Our other feature this month meets Willemijn Bol, the collector of the images we use for our popular 'Postcards from Primrose Hill' series. Over the years, Willemijn has built an extraordinary collection of postcards from our neighbourhood. Other than the horses and carriages in the streets, and the Victorian and Edwardian clothing, what struck me most is the amount of carcasses hanging from shop fronts! The old Fonthill Pottery building had them on the street corner, as did a butcher on Regent's Park Road. The grisly sight must have been commonplace a hundred years ago.

I wish you all a very happy Greedymas. Enjoy your Christmas dinner, and if meat is on the menu, be grateful it wasn't dangling outside a shop front for days.

Have a good one!

Maggie Chambers



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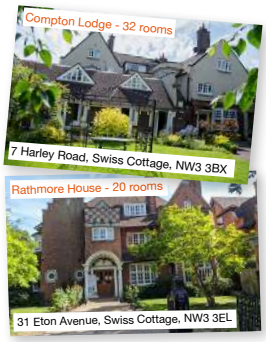
My passion is painting

"Art is something that I have always had a passion for and still love to do. I've made a new family here at Compton."

Celia Reynolds, Artist, 88

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Primrose Hill LAUGHS



We're doing our best to consume less, so I've asked my true love not to send me anything this year.

ON THE STREET

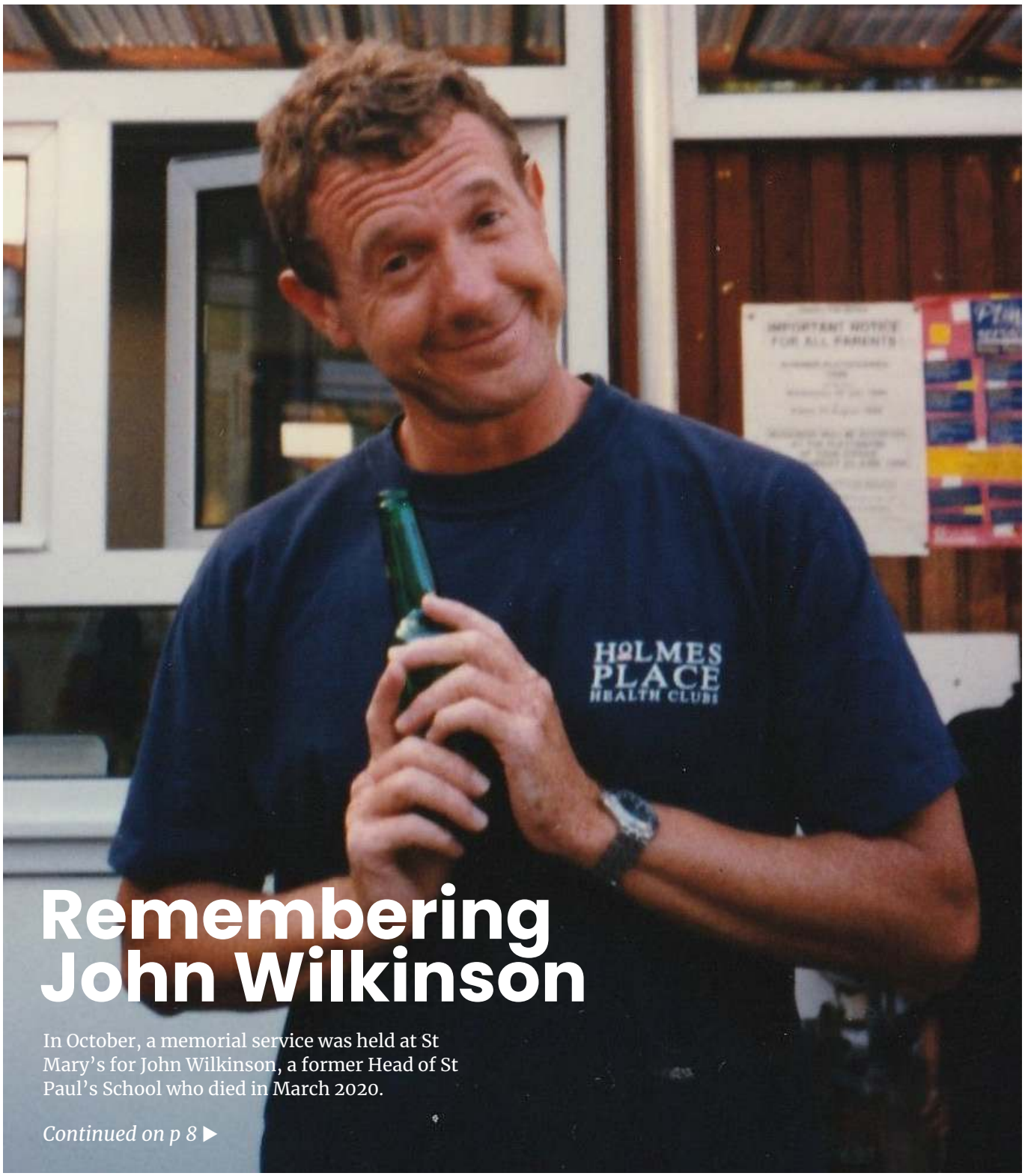
New at Primrose Hill Community Library *p 9*

The Camden Town Painter's Walk *p 11*

Gift Ideas for Local Bookworms *p 12*

PHCA News & Info *p 13*

AND MORE



Remembering John Wilkinson

In October, a memorial service was held at St Mary's for John Wilkinson, a former Head of St Paul's School who died in March 2020.

Continued on p 8 ▶

Remembering John Wilkinson

The first tribute was from his son, Josh Wilkinson. Josh was a pupil at St Paul's when his father was there, and keeping the boundaries between father and headmaster was sometimes difficult. One lunchtime, a young Josh knocked on the door of his father's office and asked "Mr Wilkinson, can you just open my packet of crisps?"

John's best friend from school, Graham Forbes, shared his memories, and then Chris Bernard recalled how John was good friends with Roald Dahl, and made sure that he frequently dropped that information into conversation, usually within the first ten minutes of meeting someone.

Debbie Finch, current Deputy Head of St Paul's, realised John was different from most Heads. He would stand in the middle of the staff room and tell jokes. One Christmas, a large box appeared in the hall where the children ate their lunch and they were told not to touch it. Shortly afterwards, John leapt out, dressed as Batman.

Mary Rock, who retired from the school in July, spoke about the time Ofsted came to visit. They wrote in their report, "There is something special about the atmosphere in this school, and I wish we could bottle it."

Ron Holding was the caretaker at St Paul's for 43 years and he had lots of memories of John. Here's an extract from Ron's memoirs:

"Oh boy, this was the start of something that I think changed St Paul's. He arrived on his motorbike, roaring into the car park. 'Wotcha,' he would say to me, and most people he would meet. He would take cricket and football, wearing the shortest pair of shorts imaginable. If anyone misbehaved, he would make them do 10 press-ups; no child questioned this, and they just did it. Roald Dahl came to our school one day and sat down waiting for the children to arrive. As he waited, he lit up a cigarette. I had to quickly find an ashtray to stub it out before anyone came in. At Christmas time, John and I would go up onto the roof where we would jump around and clipitty-clop, pretending to be Santa's reindeer. We would get some strange looks from people passing by on the hill. Sports day was the worst. He would always take part, and one year he tripped up a dad, who received cracked ribs. The one and only time I raced him, we got to the start line, started running, and the next thing I knew was a swift right arm from him which sent me flying over the grass. I remember a child picked me up, saying 'That Mr Wilkinson, he *must* win all the time' No comment."



Xandra Bingley, who was a parent at the school, told the congregation how John always called her Joanna (after Joanna Lumley). One day Xandra's mother overheard this and asked her daughter "Doesn't he even know your name?"

An ex-pupil of the school spoke of her fond memories of the advent calendar with John's favourite chocolate biscuits behind the windows.

Katina Patros, who also retired in July, read John's last school newsletter from when he retired in 2007. In it, he remembered hearing the bomb in Regent's Park in 1982, and how he locked the school gates after 7/7 to shut out the world.

His guiding philosophy was that every child had a spark in them.

Ron Holding remembered, "There was a something about his presence I could not figure out. He could walk into the hall, or a classroom, or the playground, and the children would all quieten down. It was a thing he had... I wish I had it."

The evening ended with celebratory drinks at The Washington.


Can success in athletics lead to success in exams? Julia Hagedorn explains how sporting competition won a second innings in school. Below, a look at some of the problems with non-academic activities

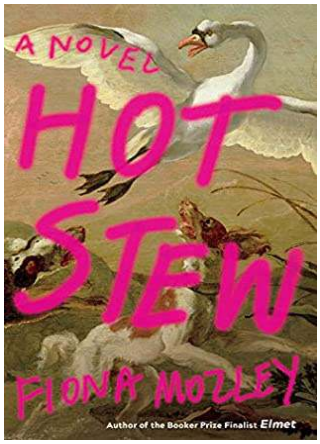
Morning training at St Paul's primary school, north London: pupils play games against other schools, and staff have their membership paid for at a local fitness centre Photograph: Edward Webb



LATEST FROM
Primrose Hill Community Library

Here are the latest acquisitions at the library to see you through the winter evenings.

FEATURED



Fiona Mozley
Hot Stew

One of the most anticipated books of 2021, from the author of the Booker Prize finalist, *Elmet.*

PLUS

PAPERBACK

Linwood Barclay
Find You First

Jo Bloom
Ridley Road

Susanna Clarke
Piranesi

Harlan Coben
Win

Elodie Harper
The Wolf Den

Jane Harper
The Survivors

Joanna Kavenna
Zed

Dinah Jefferies
Daughters of War

John Lewis-Stempel
Meadowland

Catriona Ward
The Last House on Needless Street

HARDBACK

Joan Bakewell
The Tick of Two Clocks: A Tale of Moving On

Sally Rooney
Beautiful World, Where Are You

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Pete Johnson
How to Train Your Parents (series)

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POSTCARDS FROM PRIMROSE HILL



A little boy looks straight into the camera. He is standing on the pavement in front of what looks like a road full of shops. Sadly King's College Road only partially exists today; much of it was demolished in the late 1960s to make way for the Chalcots Estate. The road ran between Eton Avenue in the north and King Henry's Road in the south. In this image we're looking towards Adelaide Road.

The only pub was located at number 9, seen here on the right-hand side, near the lamp-post. In 1911 the Prince Consort was run by Percy Keeble and his wife, Grace. They lived on the premises with their three young children: daughters Doris and Greta, and son Claude. Also noted on the census for that address that year were Ada and Esther, the barmaids who served the customers. Henry was the 'pot man'; he collected and cleaned the empty pots and glasses.

On the right-hand edge of the image one can just make out a sign saying 'Gilby's wine & spirits'. The business, created by brothers Walter and Alfred, imported wine and distilled spirits. It was located in Camden, where by 1914 it covered 20 acres near the railways. At this time, the Roundhouse was used by the Gilbys for storage.

@old_primrosehill_postcards

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The Camden Town Painters Walk

By Brenda Stones

I first led this walk round the settings of the Camden Town painters about five years ago, so I thought I'd retread the route to see if it was all as before. Horrors galore! HS2 had cut right across the itinerary, making Granby Terrace a no-go; Spencer Gore's house was up for sale; and William Ratcliffe's tree in Clarence Gardens had finally perished. So much for retracing our steps around the surviving sites of a hundred years ago!

But in a way, this is the lesson of the walk: in 1911, when the Camden Town Group was formed, the artists sought studios in the seedy side streets of Haughton Place, Augustus Street, Harrington Street; those buildings have largely gone, and even the street patterns have been 'rationalised' over the last century, let alone what HS2 is doing to carve up our familiar environment. Which makes it so much more important that we know and feel what was there before: that Sickert held drawing classes on the corner of Granby Terrace, the site now occupied by stacks of HS2 portakabins; that Spencer Gore looked out on girls playing tennis in Mornington Crescent Gardens, now obliterated by the Carreras cigarette factory (as was);



that Robert Bevan sketched the hay horses in Cumberland Market, now a basketball court. We need to preserve our understanding of the history beneath our feet before it disappears for good.

So what is there still to see and appreciate from those romantically bohemian days? One of the best surviving views is Spencer Gore's painting of 1911 from 31 Mornington Crescent (pictured), of the 'liver-coloured tiles' of the tube station, as Sickert described it, newly opened in 1907, and the old Camden Hippodrome, opened by Ellen Terry in 1900; although the church behind in Oakley Square was demolished in 1977. And if you try to identify the old Bedford Theatre beloved of Sickert and the rest of the group, there's nothing left in Mary Terrace, where it used to draw the crowds.

But we are privileged to live around those streets memorialised by the Camden Town Group; there's still enough to see to make it worth comparing the views from those evocative paintings with what is there now; and knowing what was there before enlivens our strolls around the area.

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Gifts Ideas for Local Bookworms

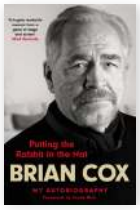
You can't beat a carefully selected book as a gift. In the spirit of supporting local endeavours, Jessica Graham from Primrose Hill Books has chosen an assortment of new releases which are in some way connected to the area. Signed copies of most titles are available in-store.



Joan Bakewell's memoir, *The Tick of Two Clocks: A Tale of Moving On*, sees the journalist, broadcaster and Labour peer – now in her late 80s – writing engagingly about downsizing from her former family home in Chalcot Square and embracing the challenges and changes of 'the next segment' of life.



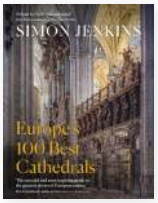
Graeme Macrae Burnet's *Case Study* is a riveting novel, set partly in 1960s Primrose Hill, and presented as a series of notebooks by a young woman who is convinced that a charismatic psychologist drove her sister to suicide. An intriguing investigation into the nature of sanity, identity and love.



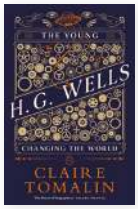
Putting the Rabbit in the Hat by Brian Cox is the long-awaited, witty and insightful autobiography of the acclaimed stage and screen actor, who is a part-time resident of Primrose Hill and currently starring in the HBO series, *Succession*.



The Heath: My Year on Hampstead Heath by Hunter Davies. Writer, columnist and husband of the esteemed novelist, the late Margaret Forster, tells of his daily walks, the people he encounters and the joy and solace of living near such a beautiful open space during the difficult days of lockdown.



Simon Jenkins, who lived for decades in Regents Park Road and still holds the area close to his heart, has written a fascinating new book, *Europe's 100 Best Cathedrals*, in which he takes us on a sumptuous illustrated tour of some of the continent's most spectacular buildings, and explores the rich cultural significance the cathedral holds in the European imagination.



The Young HG Wells: Changing the World by Claire Tomalin (former resident of Gloucester Avenue) tells the fascinating story of the visionary writer whose seminal novels were bestsellers when he was still in his 20s and 30s, and had a lasting influence on both writers (George Orwell in particular) and readers. Primrose Hill, of course, features dramatically in *The War of the Worlds.*



Last but not least, a special treat for children aged 6–10 years from local author and illustrator, Lauren Child. Her latest book, *Clarice Bean: Think Like an Elf*, is a delightful story in which the irrepressible Clarice galvanises her friends and family to fully embrace the spirit of Christmas and celebrate with the whole neighbourhood. Great fun, and full of spectacular, colourful pictures in Lauren's distinctive and highly original style.



NEWS & INFORMATION

from Primrose Hill Community Association

PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Your regular update from PHCA, publisher of *On The Hill*



It's been uplifting to see the Community Centre and Library coming back to life this autumn. We've got a lot going on and the best way to find out what's happening is our weekly email newsletter – sign up at **www.phca.cc/subscribe.**

The PHCA events team is busy planning a Christmas event, following a packed autumn that saw the return of our much-loved Village Disco plus COP26-themed talks, and weekly walks exploring hidden pockets of Primrose Hill, blue plaques, tree identification and more. See **www.phca.cc** for details of all our events.

The Library is hosting a jazz evening on 30 November with a trio fronted by our very own Terry McGowan (7pm, free/donations welcome), and 7 December sees the return of Film Night with a screening of *The Lavender Hill Mob*.

As we write, the Community Centre is alive with the sound of music: the Royal Albert Hall band is playing songs by Ella Fitzgerald, the Beatles, Tom Jones and Frank Sinatra, and the audience is singing and dancing along. This is just one of our regular (free) Open House events sponsored by U3A (Wednesdays, 2pm, always with tea and cake afterwards!). We also have a new (free) Zumba Gold session for seniors at 2.30pm on Tuesdays. It's a lively class, but those less steady on their feet can join in using a chair.

We – and the Neighbourhood Nosh team – would like to say a huge thank you to JC Slowik, our inspirational chef. After more than a year of cooking 120 meals every week for us, JC is standing down due to the success of his new Crouch End restaurant, Les 2 Garçons.

Warmest holiday wishes to all our members and supporters.

Amanda Dickins (Chair)
Mick Hudspeth (CEO)

JOIN US!

The Primrose Hill Community Association is a registered charity set up in 1988 to provide services and events to our local community. We run the Primrose Hill Community Centre and Neighbourhood Nosh, publish *On The Hill* and support the Primrose Hill Community Library.

Membership is just £8 a year (concessions £1).This money goes towards running these services, events and facilities. As well as supporting your community, membership gives you access to Hopkinson's (our members bar), early notice of events and discounted tickets. To sign up, visit **www.phca.cc/join** or pop into the Community Centre office.

NEWS & VIEWS



Primrose Hill Designer Sale

Primrose Hill Designer Sale is returning to St Mary's for a Christmas extravaganza. With 60 uniquely talented designers and makers, this promises to be bigger and better than ever. Come along and treat yourself to a very special day of inspiration, indulgence and fun!

The Primrose Tearooms will be there as always to help provide delicious sustenance to those in need of refreshments!

Saturday 27 November 10am–5pm

Suggested entrance donation: £2

Proceeds from admission go to support community outreach projects

St Mary's, Elsworthy Road, NW3 3DJ

@primrosehilldesignersale

Christmas Drinks with the Neighbours

Come along to the Primrose Hill Community Centre on Thursday 16 December for drinks, carols, readings and a raffle. Sadie Frost will be your host.

7.30–10.30pm

Tickets £10/£8



PHCA Walks

For a year now PHCA has been leading a walk on Wednesday mornings at 10.30 for about an hour and a half.

Sometimes we just have a social walk chatting through Regents Park, and a few times a month we have a theme; for example we have done all the blue plaques in our patch, two walks on trees in the area, one on lichens in Regents Park, one on the history of shops and a Camden Town Painters walk (see p 11).

On 8 December, local historian Martin Shepherd will lead a walk about street names in Primrose Hill, and on 15 December we shall do another 'Hidden Primrose Hill' walk, going through the back alleys and mews we don't normally visit.

Meet at 10.30 by the park entrance on the corner of Primrose Hill Road and Regents Park Road.

Arch Sinfonia

Founded in 2012 by international conductor Chloé van Soeterstède, Arch Sinfonia will perform at Cecil Sharp House on Thursday 3 February.

Drawing on her French roots, Van Soeterstède has programmed a whistlestop concert celebrating French music in all its glory, featuring Bizet, Chabrier, Saint-Saëns and Ravel.

Acclaimed cellist Nadège Rochat will take the stage to perform Saint-Saëns' virtuosic *Cello Concerto No 1*. This will be complemented by the spirited *Jeux d'enfants* by Bizet and Chabrier's *Suite Pastorale*

Celebrating Arch Sinfonia's tenth anniversary in 2022, and marking a step change in the performance and audience experience of classical music, listeners will help to shape the programme of the Orchestra's next concert through a vote. The concert will also provide lucky audience members with the rare opportunity to sit amongst the orchestra, immersing themselves in the *joie de vivre* that Arch Sinfonia embodies.

www.ArchSinfonia.co.uk

Tickets available via **www.efdss.org/whats-on**





What's On December

NEW THIS DECEMBER

TUESDAY 7 DECEMBER

Film Show at the Library
One of the great Ealing comedies, *The Lavender Hill Mob* stars Alec Guiness as Henry, a shy bank clerk in charge of gold bullions who meets Alfred, a foundry owner. Together they plan to smuggle gold out of the bank. PHCL. 7pm. £8 in cash, in advance at PHCL or on the door (includes a glass of wine).

THURSDAY 9 DECEMBER

Belshazzar's Feast
A celebrated Christmas show that mixes traditional folk music, seasonal material, stirring in classical, pop and music hall, all topped off with audience participation and lashings of wry humour. CSH. 7.30pm.

SATURDAY 11 DECEMBER

Primrose Hill Choirs Christmas Concert
NB Covid regulations. St Mary's NW3 3DJ. £10 (cash only), under-13s free. 6pm. Contact primrosehillchoirs.com.

SUNDAY 12 DECEMBER

Festive Gathering
Cecil Sharp House's annual yuletide celebration crammed with song, dance, music and good cheer. CSH. 7pm.

WEDNESDAY 15 DECEMBER

A Celtic Christmas with Calan
Celebrate the yuletide season with bagpipes, fiddles, harp and step dancing! CSH. 7.30pm.

THURSDAY 16 DECEMBER

A Winter Union
A festive folk band like no other! CSH. 7.30pm.

SATURDAY 18 DECEMBER

Freedom to Roam
The Rhythms of Migration. Folk meets classical via Africa, Scotland and India: crossing borders, breaking boundaries. CSH. 7.30pm.

WEDNESDAY 22 DECEMBER

The Young'uns
Three-time winners of the prestigious BBC Folk Awards, The Young'uns are one of the hottest properties on the UK folk and acoustic scene. CSH. 7.30pm.

THURSDAY 23 DECEMBER

Primrose Hill Food Market
Last market of the year. St Paul's School playground, Elsworthy Road NW3 3DS. Contact www.primrosehillmarket.com. 9.30am–2.30pm.

FRIDAY 31 DECEMBER

New Year's Eve Ceilidh
Dance away the old year and welcome in 2022 to the irresistible sounds and lively dances of an English ceilidh! CSH. 7.30pm.

FOR KIDS

MONDAY

Ready Steady Go
Pre-school education and activities for children aged 2–3 years. PHCC. 9.30am–1.30pm. Contact 020 7586 5862.

Ready Steady Go ABC
Exploratory play, singing, dance and stories for babies and toddlers 6–18 months. PHCC. 9.30am–12.30pm. Contact 020 7586 5862.

Rhyme Time
Library Rhyme Time for under-5s. PHCL. Suggested £2 donation. 11.00–11.45am. Contact 020 7419 6599.

Circus Glory
Trapeze for ages 2½–16. All levels welcome. PHCC. 2–7.15pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603.

TUESDAY

Ready Steady Go Beginners.
A gentle introduction to pre-school activities for 1–3 years. PHCC. 9.15am–1.30pm. Contact Jamie 020 7586 5862.

Monkey Music
Music and play for children under 5. PHCC. 9.30am–12.15pm. Contact 020 8451 7626.

Play Happening
Play sessions for babies and toddlers. PHCL. £15 per session. 9.30–11.30am. Book at www.playhappening.co.uk.

RSG ABC & Dance
Dance, music, movement and play for toddlers & babies. PHCC. 1–2pm. Contact Jamie 020 7586 5862.

Hartbeeps
Multi-sensory music movement and drama classes for infants and toddlers. 2–5pm. Term bookings £11 per class. Contact clarelouise@hartbeeps.com.

Messy Monkeys
Messy play sessions for babies and toddlers. PHCL. 2–4.15pm. Book at www.messy-monkeys.com.

Bilingual Beats
'Spanish through music' classes for children. PHCL. 4–5pm. Book at www.bilingualbeatsonline.com.

Karate
Authentic Shotokan karate classes for children aged 5+. PHCC. 4–5pm. Register at www.shiranamikai.co.uk.

WEDNESDAY

Les Petits Bellots
A bilingual mini-crèche for children aged 6 months–4 years. PHCL. 9.15–11.15am. Contact www.lespetitsbellots.com.

RSG ABC & Dance
Dance, music, movement and play for toddlers and babies. PHCC. 9.30am–12.30pm. Contact Jamie 020 7586 5862.

Ready Steady Go
Pre-school education and activities for children aged 2–3 years. PHCC. 9.30am–1.30pm. Contact Jamie 020 7586 5862.

Circus Glory
Trapeze for ages 2½–16. All levels welcome. PHCC. 2–6.45pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603.

Primrose Hill Children's Choir
Fun songs and games for ages 4–11. St Mary's NW3 3DJ. 4.10–5.10pm. 1st time free, then £8. Contact maestromattheww@yahoo.co.uk.

THURSDAY

Ready Steady Go Beginners.
A gentle introduction to pre-school activities for 1–3 years. PHCC. 9.15am–1.30pm. Contact Jamie 020 7586 5862.

Mini Mozart
Musical story time. PHCL. 9.30am–12.30pm. Book at www.minimozart.com.

La Petite Pierrot
Fun French Lessons for babies and children. Suitable for all levels. PHCC. 9–10.30am. Contact 020 3969 2642.

First Class Learning
English and Maths tuition. PHCL. 3.30–6pm. Contact 020 7966 484 568.

Catherine's Ballet
Ballet lessons for children under 5. PHCC. 4–5pm. Contact Catherine 020 8348 0262.

FRIDAY

Ready Steady Go
Pre-school education and activities for children aged 2–3 years. PHCC. 9.30am–2.30pm. Contact Jamie 020 7586 5862.

RSG ABC & Dance
Dance, music, movement and play for toddlers and babies. PHCC. 11.30am–12.30pm. Contact Jamie 020 7586 5862.

Circus Glory
Trapeze for ages 2½–16. All levels welcome. PHCC. 2–7.15pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603.

SATURDAY

La Petite Pierrot
Fun French lessons for babies and children. PHCC. 9am–12.15, 1–3 years old; 11–11.45am, 2–4 years old. Contact 020 3969 2642.

Caterpillar Music
Multi-sensory music and movement sessions for babies and toddlers. PHCL. 3.15–4.15pm. Contact Anita 07968486471.

SUNDAY

Perform
Drama, dance and singing for children 4–7. PHCC. 9.30am–1pm. Contact Lucy 020 7209 3805.

What's On December

FOR ADULTS

MONDAY

Chilled Strings
Beginners' orchestra rehearsals. PHCC. 6.30–8.45pm. Contact sueandhercello@gmail.com.

Bridge
For beginners and intermediate players. PHCL. 6.30pm. Contact jojarrold@gmail.com or call 07887 568 822.

Primrose Hill Choir
Love to sing? All styles of music, all levels welcome. PHCC. 7.30–9.30pm. Contact maestromattheww@yahoo.co.uk.

TUESDAY

Pilates
Dynamic sessions, 10.15–11am; gentle session 11.30am–12.15pm. PHCL. £12 per class, £100 for 10 classes. Contact Liza on 07525 461 361 or email lizacawthorn@gmail.com.

Zumba Gold
Zumba class for seniors looking for a fun, modified low-intensity workout, made easy with simple-to-follow steps. PHCC. Free. Check PHCA website for details.

General Yoga
Intermediate level yoga. PHCC. 6.30–7.45pm. Contact Catriona first 020 7267 5675.

Morris Dancing Class
Learn Morris Dancing. All welcome, no experience required. CSH. 6.30pm. Book online.

WEDNESDAY

Primrose Hill Walks
Weekly walk through Primrose Hill, Regent's Park and surrounding areas, sometimes with themes. 10.30am–12pm. Free. Check PHCA website for details.

Open House
A regular activity (film, talk, performance) followed by tea, cake and chat. PHCC. 2–4.30pm. Free.

Mah Jong
Mah Jong sessions for all levels. PHCC. 7–9pm every second and fourth week of the month. Contact jimbo.mulligan@outlook.com.

English Folk Dance Club
Fun for dancers of all abilities and none. No partner needed. PHCC. 7.15–10pm. Contact camdenfolkdance@yahoo.com.

THURSDAY

Silver Swans Ballet
Ballet classes for over 55s. PHCC. 11am–12pm. Contact katie@primrosehillballet.co.uk.

Gentle Pilates
Gentle but effective Pilates class. PHCL. 12:45am–1.45pm. £10 per session. Contact: annie@mactherapy.org

Narcotics Anonymous
Support for people with narcotics problems. PHCC. 1.30–3.45pm. Free. More information via NA Helpline 0300 999 1212.

Primrose Hill Community Orchestra
Community orchestra. PHCC. 2–4pm. Contact sueandhercello@gmail.com.

Life Drawing
Beginners to professionals, just drop in! PHCC. 6.30–8.30pm. £7.

Kriya Yoga
Yoga class. PHCL. 6.45–8.15pm. Contact info@kriyayogauk.com.

English Country Dancing Class
Learn English country, ceilidh, barn dancing, and related social folk dance styles from further afield. All welcome, no experience required. CSH. 7.30pm. Book online.

FRIDAY

Aerial Pilates
Improve strength and flexibility through movement with the support of an aerial sling. PHCC. 10–11am. Contact circusbodies@gmail.com.

Chair Yoga for All
Online Chair Yoga. 2.45–3.45pm. Free. Register at phca.cc.

SATURDAY

Primrose Hill Market
St Paul's School playground, Elsworthy Road, NW3 3DS. 10am–3pm. Contact www.primrosehillmarket.com.

Advertise your club, group or event with *On The Hill*



Submit your details to **onthehillwhatson@phca.cc** to be featured and reach 35,000 Primrose Hill residents and visitors each month

ON THE HILL
PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

onthehill.info

CONTACT DETAILS

PHCC
Primrose Hill Community Centre
29 Hopkinsons Place
(off Fitzroy Road)
NW1 8TN
Contact: info@phca.cc
www.phca.cc
020 7586 8327

PHCL
Primrose Hill Community Library
Sharpleshall Street
NW1 8YN
Contact: events@phcl.org
www.phcl.org
020 7419 6599

CSH
Cecil Sharp House
2 Regent's Park Road
NW1 7AY
Contact: info@efdss.org
www.cecilsharphouse.org
020 7485 2206

SHOP AROUND THE BLOCK

CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE 2021



SOULSTICE

Soulstice London brings you into a world of healing, wonder and sparkles with their crystals for every part of your life. Crystals and wellness intertwine beautifully, creating the perfect Christmas gifts. Crystal sets, candles and accessories are a wonderful way to benefit from their healing energies.

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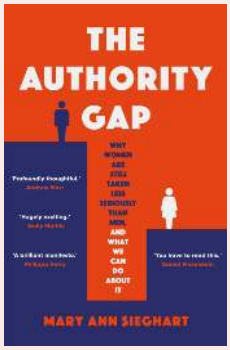


ST MARY'S BREWERY

Get your Christmas beer gifts here! From our Winter Warmers gift pack featuring delicious festive brews to our advent calendar, we've got the perfect seasonal gifts! Come and join us for tastings at Primrose Hill Food Market every Saturday and at the Designer Sale on Saturday 27 November. You can also buy online with free local delivery.

www.stmarysbrewery.co.uk

Primrose Hill has everything you need when you're planning for Christmas – a butcher, fruit and vegetable shops, Italian delis, cake shops, *and* you're spoilt for choice for gifts. Here are a few ideas to set the ball in motion. Remember: keep it local and support our neighbourhood businesses!



PRIMROSE HILL BOOKS

Nothing beats a good book at this time of year, and you'll be able to find something for everyone at Primrose Hill Books. They offer a local delivery service and can post books to UK addresses.

www.primrosehillbooks.com



PRIMROSE HILL COLLECTION

The Primrose Hill Collection creates bespoke sterling silver jewellery, handmade to order in the heart of Primrose Hill.

www.theprimrosehillcollection.co.uk



VITRUVIAN WELLNESS

Treat your loved ones and yourself this Christmas with Vitruvian Wellness unique gift packages and vouchers. We offer massages, acupuncture, sacred energy healing therapies and more to harmonise mind, body and soul.

www.vitruvianwellness.co.uk



PAMELA SHIFFER

These gloves by Rino & Pelle are sure to keep you warm this winter. With a cosy fleece lining, they will go perfectly with your favourite outerwear. £35

www.pamelashiffer.com
@pamelashifferprimrosehill



Streets Kitchen Camden

TWELVE CAUSES CALLING

Volunteering your time to a good cause is one of the best gifts you can give. Phil Cowan salutes some of the local initiatives that run on people power

The last couple of years have been challenging for us all, but if anything positive has emerged from the pandemic, it is the remarkable capacity people have shown to step up and help others.

From provision of basic food requirements to tackling loneliness and isolation, a vast army of volunteers have pooled their talents for the betterment of society. The one asset they all have in common is a desire to give that most valuable of commodities: time. It could be an hour a month or several a week, but cumulatively these acts of kindness represent a formidable force for good.

Here in Primrose Hill, we are so lucky to have charities, organisations and groups that have hugely benefitted the community both before and during the pandemic, and which will remain beacons of hope in the future. I've selected twelve that are either based in the area or have strong connections to it, and spoke with some of the great volunteers who are involved.

Primrose Hill Community Association (PHCA) has existed for over forty years serving the people of this neighbourhood in many ways including running clubs, film showings, talks, a monthly bar, village discos, Burns Night parties – and even a magazine! You name it, they've done it! The most recent project is Neighbourhood Nosh, which was set up during the pandemic specifically to help the isolated or vulnerable by delivering nutritious meals and snacks twice a week straight to people's doors. This and other PHCA initiatives will welcome new volunteers with open arms, so get signing up!

A VAST ARMY OF VOLUNTEERS HAVE POOLED THEIR TALENTS FOR THE BETTERMENT OF SOCIETY.

Primrose Hill Community Library (PHCL) shares close ties with the PHCA and remains open thank to a successful community campaign. It is now run by volunteers, and is a shining example of how to save an important community resource. On the reception desk the day of my visit was Ronwen Emerson, who set out her reasons for volunteering: "It's so important that people and especially children are given the opportunity to experience the joys of reading in a friendly and fun environment. I'm hopefully giving something back to the community when I do the shifts, but I do take away a lot of pleasure from being part of it. It is truly mutually beneficial!"

We have three outstanding charity shops on our high street which sell a great selection of clothing and accessories for adults and kids. **Fara, Shelter Boutique** and **Mary's Living & Giving** support international charities through their sales, but they are also community hubs and put on events which are almost exclusively reliant on volunteer enthusiasm. Tim Kirkpatrick at Mary's Living & Giving (founded by Mary Portas in 2013) told me: "It has been great to help out here. Apart from the obvious charitable benefits, the shop also provides a great interface for neighbours to mix together. Add to that the recycling nature of the project and in my book it's a win, win, win situation!"

Transition Primrose Hill was set up by Doro Marden and is run by a small but tightly knit group of volunteers that aim to promote awareness of sustainable living and building local ecological resilience. While the subject of our environment and climate is a serious one, Transition Primrose Hill always hopes to respond in an engaging way and have some fun with it. Recent local initiatives have included planting fruit trees on the high street, Easter egg hunts to promote local business, pub crawls, air quality talks and seminars.

Streets Kitchen homeless outreach is a grassroots organisation set up to benefit those who are experiencing homelessness or rough sleeping by providing great food, hot drinks and support in a non-judgemental space. Our nearest hub outside Camden Town tube station has very strong ties to Primrose Hill through its regular volunteers.

I spoke with Inga Rasmussen about her experiences volunteering at Streets Kitchen: "We are helping



Chalk Farm Food Bank



All Dogs Matter

CUMULATIVELY THESE ACTS OF KINDNESS REPRESENT A FORMIDABLE FORCE FOR GOOD.

our guests with one of the most basic needs in life: access to food and drinks. We always try to have a chat, which I believe is so important. Who doesn't love to have someone who takes the time to listen to what you have to say? It fills me with pride to be surrounded by fellow volunteers, who also care about people. We would love for more volunteers to join us, so please come along, and give it a go." Well, that is rather a glowing review for Streets Kitchen. Get involved!

For those who like their volunteering with an aquatic flavour, there is the **Pirate Castle** down on the Regents Canal. Founded in the 1970s, this project introduces children to the fun of kayaking and other water activities as well as teaching safety in that environment. You won't be able to miss HQ on Oval Road as it certainly lives up to its name!

Crisis at Christmas has been serving homeless communities across the UK for decades and provides a year-round resource, running out of daycare centres and other locations. They hope to extend the branch of friendship and practical support for those in need over the festive season and beyond. Although operations have been scaled back and adapted over the last two years, there are still plenty of opportunities to help out locally this yuletide. Just contact them through their website to find out what you can do!

St Mary's Youth Outreach project, **Mary's**, is a hugely successful community initiative that helps the younger members of our community who need support find purpose and hope in their lives. The activities are aimed at widening participation in our society through an imaginative range of programmes. (See p 26 for Andrew Marr's interview with Jason Allen of Mary's.)

The Chalk Farm Food Bank operates out of the Baptist Church on Berkley Road every Thursday. This sadly necessary service providing food and other essentials to those in need is on offer through referral. The number of food banks across the UK has burgeoned over recent years, and until we can create a fairer, more just society, volunteers will be needed. If you're interested in joining them, contact them via their website.

Finally, we come to **All Dogs Matter**. Although not based in Primrose Hill. a walk around the park will guarantee plenty of poochie meetings with beneficiaries of the charity. I asked Simon Happily, a local volunteer, for his thoughts. "I first met the All Dogs Matter team when I was compering the big Pup Aid dog shows in Primrose Hill park. Pup Aid drew attention to puppy farming and produced Lucy's Law, which has made the cruel trade illegal, although sadly not eradicated it. I've volunteered at many of ADM's events since. I have met so many lovely people through it, and it's always great to bump into some of them walking in Primrose Hill and Regents Park."

Well, that's it, folks. A final thought for this festive season: the best gift you can possibly give is the one you will receive back through your volunteering. I can assure you that there is absolutely nothing better underneath that Christmas tree than the reward of supporting your community.

Merry Christmas, everybody!

@Primrose_Phil



Mary's

CONTACT DETAILS

PHCA
www.phca.cc

PHCL
www.phcl.org

Neighbourhood Nosh
nosh@phca.cc

FARA
www.faracharity.org

Shelter
england.shelter.org.uk

Mary's Living & Giving
www.savethechildren.org.uk/shop/marys-living-and-giving-shops

Transition Primrose Hill
www.transitionprimrosehill.org

Streets Kitchen
www.streetskitchen.org

Pirate Castle
www.thepiratecastle.org

Crisis
www.crisis.org.uk

Mary's
www.smcyouthwork.org

Chalk Farm Food Bank
www.chalkfarm.foodbank.org

All Dogs Matter
alldogsmatter.co.uk



Love Where You Live

By Maggie Chambers

Joan Bakewell was in conversation with Andrew O'Hagan at the Primrose Hill Lecture Series in September.

Joan Bakewell lived in Chalcot Square for 53 years, during which time she inevitably saw the area change. After graduating from Cambridge, she found a job at the BBC, got married, and rented a flat in South End Green for £5 a week. When she was ready to buy a house, she decided Primrose Hill was suitably green and bought one in Chalcot Square. "In those days," Joan said, "and this will break your heart – houses were going extremely cheaply in Chalcot Square. They were going for a snip because they were very run-down."

They had been built by speculative builders "in the heyday of Lord Palmerston" for comfortable middle-class families, who took great pride in them. However, by the time Joan moved in, they were rooming houses, with a family – mainly Irish – living on each floor. A lot of the land in the area hadn't been built on at all: Lemonia was still the Chalk Farm Tavern and had no immediate neighbours.

Primrose Hill was distinguished as a manufacturing area and was full of piano factories. When Joan moved here, the area was smoky and dirty, incredibly run-down and unattractive, but she and her husband decided they could make something of the house, with its large windows and tall ceilings. Joan subsequently became a well-known figure in the 1960s, and there's a famous photograph of her stepping out into Chalcot Square wearing a floppy hat.

The demand for houses and gentrification brought about huge price rises in Chalcot Square. Joan believes the housing market is an outrage. She felt she was the beneficiary of a property boom for which she takes no credit and for which she made no effort. She even spoke to Ed Miliband about her concerns as she felt such steep profits should be taxed properly as windfall tax, and the money put towards social care instead of people having to sell their homes as they get older. She believes everyone should have the right to a decent life, a decent house, a good education for their children and security in their old age.

Joan described the sense of loss which encroaches when we age. "As well as losing health, jobs and friends, we lose the sense that we're in the middle of things, rather than moving towards the edge." As the result of making the Radio 4 programme, *We Need to Talk About Death*, and realising that she should take heed herself, coupled with the effect of flights of stairs on her creaking joints, Joan decided to downsize. Her most recent book, *The Ticking of Two Clocks*, describes the process of her move.

First and foremost, there was a lot of 'stuff' to clear out. Her motto had always been 'You never know when there might be a use for it', which was the result of a wartime childhood. However, she freely admits there is too much stuff on the planet, mostly floating around in the Pacific Ocean.

It turned out she had accumulated 40 vases over the years, tucked away at the back of shelves. Paintings were difficult to let go of as each one had its own story: "When you lose stuff, you also lose the memories." Books were also difficult, although one personally signed by Nelson Mandela was top

of the 'to keep' list. Joan was asked to interview him within a week of his being released from prison in 1990.

Work was carried out on the new house and garden to get it as she wanted it, including having her entire kitchen from Chalcot Square trundled through Primrose Hill. The kitchen now stands exactly as it did in Chalcot Square.

Once established in her new home, Joan got to meet the neighbours and immerse herself in her new life. "Neighbourliness is the most important quality of where we live. It's a discreet accessibility, availability for crises, discretion when not wanted, but also handy when there's a crisis. It makes your home and your life have a reality you wouldn't find anywhere else." In fact, that morning Joan had sent Andrew O'Hagan – in his capacity as neighbour, rather than interviewer – an email in block capitals asking him to help her in a crisis!

As Baroness Bakewell, Joan is a Labour Party peer. She is outraged by the growing divide between rich and poor, and the fact that poorer people are dying at a younger age. "The poor shouldn't be poor at all and living at that level, and the rich have far too much than is good for them." She's on the House of Lords Built Environment Committee, and she had been in Southwark that morning to help on a scheme to build homes for social housing tenants, 10% of which are reserved for the old. Joan hopes that if a project such as this can happen in Southwark, it can extend to other cities.

She feels that Primrose Hill has grown in its identity, its civic awareness and its fondness for its institutions. She remembers residents coming together to raise money for the library, and how it is now run by a team of volunteers who are incredibly generous with their time. Andrew O'Hagan added that businesses in Primrose Hill provide not only a service, but also colour and neighbourliness, so it's important that we support them.

A newcomer to the area asked how one could become part of the community. Joan replied that there is a "whole network in any area, particularly here, of volunteers wanting to do things. What does the neighbourhood need that you can contribute? If you just look around, you notice things that are happening that don't have a very high profile, but can make an enormous difference to people's lives."

The Tick of Two Clocks can be bought from Primrose Hill Books, as can Andrew O'Hagan's latest novel, *Mayflies.*



"Neighbourliness is the most important quality of where we live."

The Face Behind the Postcards



The Mole on the Hill meets Willemijn Bol, creator of our popular 'Postcards from Primrose Hill' series

Grandad, what's that red tube thing on the corner down there?
That's a letter box, lass. People used to post letters there, but not so much now. They used to send postcards too, but that's all gone. Now they just take a picture with their mobile phone and post it online.

Readers of *On The Hill* will be familiar with our regular feature, 'Postcards from Primrose Hill', in which an old postcard from the area is presented alongside a fascinating commentary. Willemijn Bol started the project in 2016 as an Instagram account which continues to this day, and has shared almost 100 images with her followers. She kindly agreed to contribute to our magazine several years ago.

So why does this Dutch woman collect postcards of Primrose Hill? Willemijn, forty-six, was born with her twin sister Charlotte in 's-Hertogenbosch, a provincial city near Eindhoven. She grew up in the fortified town of Heusden, built in the seventeenth century. "It's a very pretty town. My parents' house was built in 1604. My grandparents live round the corner in a house dating from 1605. I was brought up with an understanding and knowledge of history. It made me feel connected to my environment. It gave me an extra dimension."

It was almost inevitable that Willemijn would make a career out of something creative. Her mother, Gerrie Klinkenberg, runs an art gallery and her late father, Henri Bol, was a painter in the tradition of the Dutch masters. He painted still lifes in oil, but he considered himself a twentieth-century artist. His work is realistic with the added interest of an element of *trompe l'oeil*. Willemijn did a BA and MA in Art History at Utrecht University and then came to London to study Theatre Design at Central St Martins. After that she secured an internship at the Royal Opera House, where she has worked ever since.

"I alter the costumes for the operas and ballets and maintain them. I do revivals mostly but also do the actual shows. When I do a performance I can be responsible for a team of five or ten. We see that the artists have the correct costume, at the correct time. We maintain those costumes. A revival can take eight or nine weeks.



We have to do fittings with the complete cast, principals, chorus, actors and dancers. That's easily forty or fifty people."

And here comes the bitter-sweet love story. Willemijn met Stephen at the Opera House. He lived in Chalcot Square and they were together for nearly seven years. They were happily in love, but he became ill and died in 2007. "It was very difficult to deal with his death. He absolutely loved it here and in a sense I am carrying on his memory."

According to Wikipedia, Willemijn's father, Henri, was an avid collector of antiques. He acquired furniture, tin, enamel, watches, musical instruments, glassware, china and books – historical objects which served only one purpose, namely to act as subjects in his still lifes.

"I take after my father. In an ideal world I would love to time-travel and I suppose by collecting Victorian postcards I am able to travel back to those times. I started by buying books about the history of Camden and Kentish Town and they were fine, but it always seemed that Primrose Hill was a small sub-section. I became fascinated by those images of Primrose Hill. I saw a few postcards and decided I would start to collect others. So, I used to go to postcard fairs, but the problem was Primrose Hill was always seen as part of Hampstead or Camden Town. If you look at the old postcards it never says Primrose Hill. It's always Regent's Park.

"It can be an expensive business because these things are sought-after now. I recently paid £90 for a card, but you can sometimes find things on eBay. A lot of sellers don't know what exactly I'm looking for and it can be confusing. Some streets have changed their names. For example, Chalcot Road used to be St George's Road. So I have bought cards for a fiver, but the minute they realise that St George's Square is Chalcot Square, you pay more. The cards are rare. If I find one every six months that's a lot."

Willemijn has about 200 cards and her ambition is one day to publish a book in which she will be able to pay as much attention to the image as to the people who wrote the cards and the friends and family they wrote them for. There are some fascinating stories to be told, but unearthing them takes a lot of time-consuming research. Take for example, this one reprinted from *On The Hill* in March 2018 to accompany a photo of St George's Square (now Chalcot Square): "The postcard was written and posted in September 1905 by Annie Jane Knowles, a 43-year-old butcher's wife who lived in 20 Princess Road with her husband Thomas and her children Florence, Alfred and Wilfred. According to the 1901 census it seems that they shared the house with four boarders and another family: Percy and Elizabeth Sprague and their four children. By the time of the 1911 census it seems that they could afford the whole house: the Spragues had disappeared by then and only two boarders remained. Their 23-year-old daughter Florence is listed as working as a schoolmistress so this extra income might have helped with covering the costs."

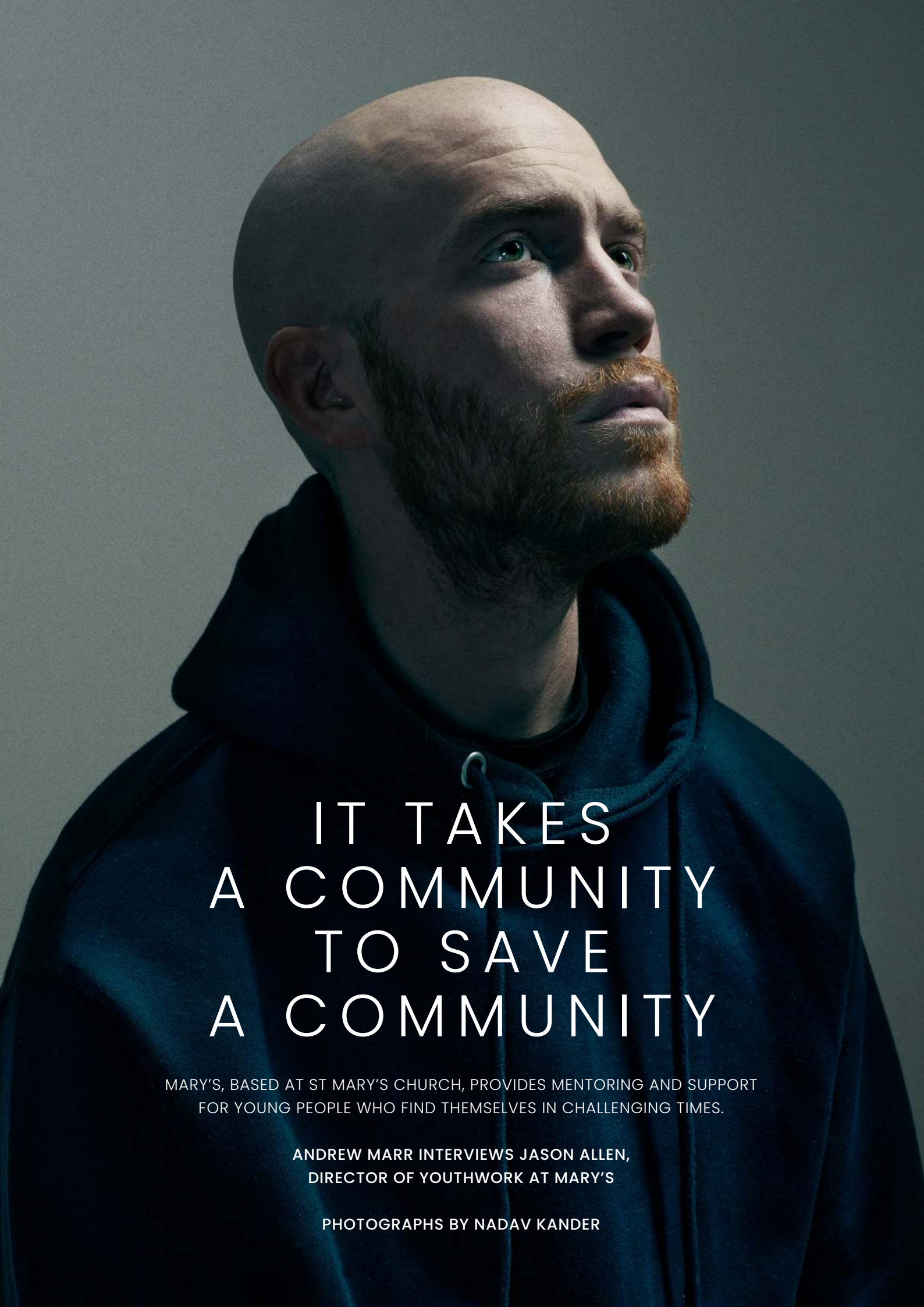


And we must not forget that these images were all posed. The butcher standing with his staff outside the shop; the horses and carts displaying the name of the proprietor; the nursemaids with their prams; the lady with the bicycle; the children paused in a game – they all had to be recruited and persuaded to stand stock-still for the twenty seconds or more it took to take the picture. Not so different from today when there's a film-shoot and we obediently avoid walking through the action.

There is, of course a finite supply of postcards of Primrose Hill, so it's worth having a look in the attic and going through that shoebox. I imagine Willemijn will give you a good price for any cards you find.

Grandad, what you just said is daft. People on Primrose Hill won't have any cards. They used to send the cards to their friends, so they could have ended up anywhere.

@old_primrosehill_postcards



IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO SAVE A COMMUNITY

MARY'S, BASED AT ST MARY'S CHURCH, PROVIDES MENTORING AND SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO FIND THEMSELVES IN CHALLENGING TIMES.

ANDREW MARR INTERVIEWS JASON ALLEN, DIRECTOR OF YOUTHWORK AT MARY'S

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NADAV KANDER

AM: Jason, can I ask you first of all to explain a little bit about yourself and how you got involved in this work?
JA: I've worked on the youth project now for sixteen years. I ran Mary's Youth Centre, and I saw a big gap in our society's provision for young people at risk to themselves and to our community.

AM: These were the kids who got involved in gangs and gang related violence?
JA. Yes, young people in their early teens. They were getting kicked out of secondary schools and having adverse childhood experiences. From there, they went into gangs, and then into criminal activities.

AM: So this is the critical moment? The teen years in school and on the edge of everything going wrong?
JA: Yes. Often they only engaged with the criminal justice system. Social services treated them as useless criminals. I was one of those people myself.

AM: Tell me a little bit about that.
JA: Growing up, my mum tried extremely hard, but I struggled in school.

AM: You're a Londoner?
JA. I am. My school struggled to support me. Their only answer was to kick me out of the classroom. I began making bad decisions because I couldn't see any other options. I've got mental health issues, and I got into trouble and involved in violence. I lived in an extremely low-income single-parent household – a typical story. I then lived in hostels at age sixteen, next door to drug abusers. I became involved in things I would never have pictured myself becoming involved in.

When we were both thirteen, my friend Diego died after being stabbed. By seventeen, I understood that the man who killed him was a psychotic homeless man who had sexually groomed him. And by eighteen I really wanted to start working with young people deemed like I was ... 'a waste of resources '.

AM: And you kind of felt you'd been there? You understood it from the inside?
JA: Yes – risks that no child or adolescent should get into or be around. Things detrimental to me even now twenty years on.

I'm finishing a Masters in Psychology and many of my assignments are around Attachment Theory. We know now that young people who've had violent childhood experiences without support networks need someone consistent in their life. Someone positive.

YOUNG PEOPLE WHO'VE HAD VIOLENT CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES WITHOUT SUPPORT NETWORKS NEED SOMEONE CONSISTENT IN THEIR LIFE

One boy who was being aggressive to teachers at a local school took our mentoring. We noticed his pattern was bad behaviour in the mornings. He eventually told us his dad woke him up by pouring beer on him. The boy was traumatised. It took two years at Mary's until he felt safe from neglect and abuse. He was never excluded from school. All because he was listened to by our trained mentors.When we're talking about teenage kids we can't just deem them a waste of resources. The social services work wonders with the majority of young people, but a small group fall through the net. A public light has only been shone on these young people in recent years because the media finally started reporting youth knife crime.

AM: Jason, this might be an impossible question, but do you know how many people have been through the Mary's scheme?
JA: I'm probably talking in the thousands. Mary's Youth Centre is hyper-local but we have to reach further. Dealing with violence and gang mediations requires knowing criminal networks in a wider area.

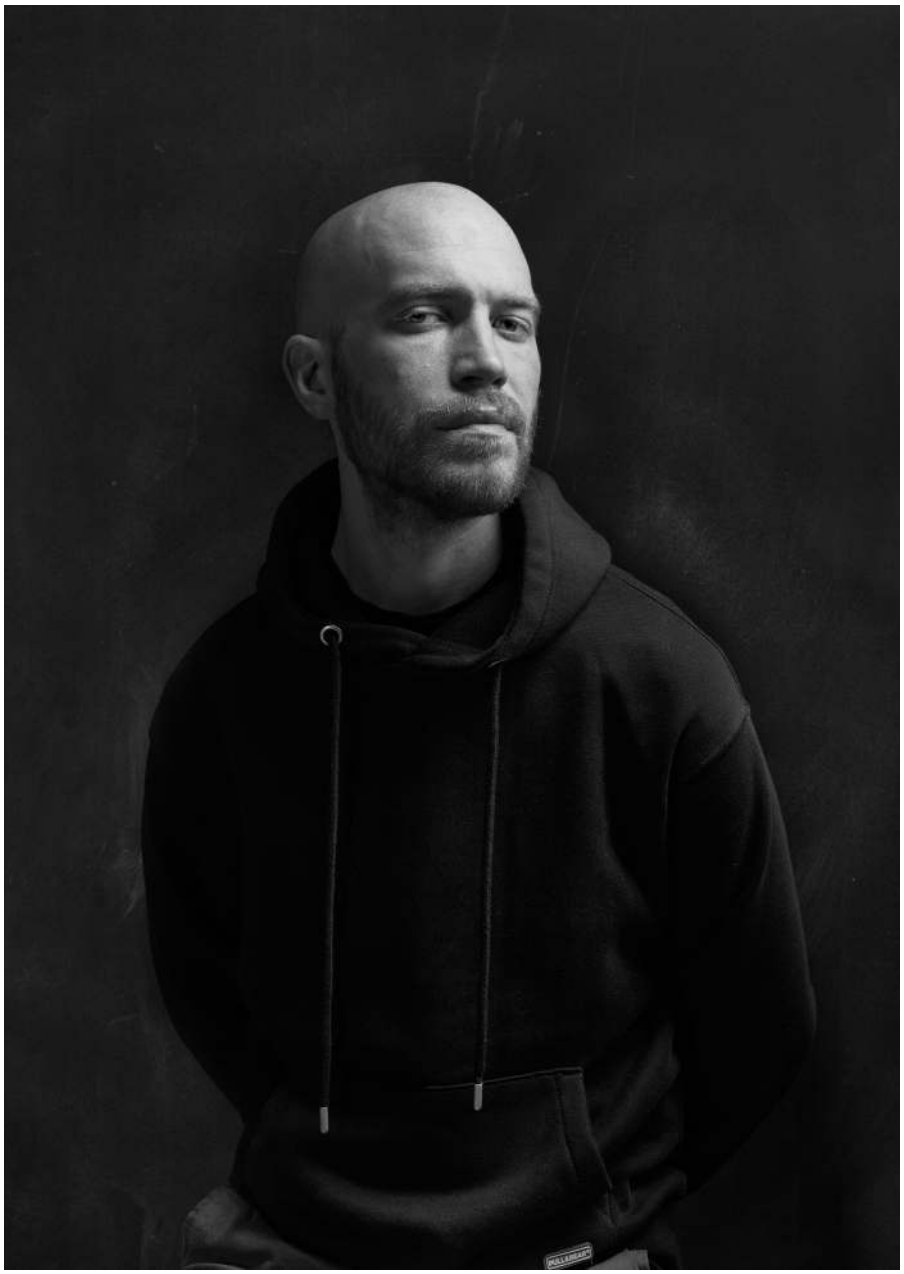
AM: What is the geographical spread of the work?
JA: Our home and our base is St Mary's Centre in Elsworthy Road. That's where we run everything from. We have amazing relationships with our local schools and with a majority of young people in gangs or with mental health issues. And we work right across the rest of Camden, and Islington and Brent.

AM: Okay. People pick up this magazine and it's Primrose Hill. A really wealthy, calm, privileged place. What are they missing?
JA: Primrose Hill is a lovely place to be. I love coming here to work. But as soon as you step away from certain roads you see poverty and social housing everywhere. Young people living in poverty make up approximately 34%. If you look at Camden as a borough it has one of the highest youth violence rates across London, and Primrose Hill is a big part of Camden.

AM: How many knives have Mary's taken out of circulation? How many interventions are you making?
JA: We have a knife bin and this year alone we've gone into the hundreds of collected knives and also firearms.

AM: Can you prevent potentially violent confrontations from escalating?
JA: Yes. When the covid lockdown happened many young people were getting out dressed up as essential workers to join in criminal activities – often against the young person's own free will.

During full lockdown we were deemed key workers, so we were able to travel county lines. One time we collected three young people from hundreds of miles away who were forcibly groomed to carry



drugs. They needed to come home, but they had no way of getting home.

Mary's team, working as key workers, mediated in some very violent home invasions between rival young people in Camden borough.

AM: What's happened since lockdown lifted?
JA: A very quick spike in youth violence. We work tirelessly to achieve impact at schools level and Mary's work goes on 24/7 and 365 days a year. But young people are carrying knives and not understanding the implications of their actions. We have implemented more trauma-informed workshops in schools, and more bespoke mentoring programmes for referrals to us from local schools and from social workers. Again – all work around prevention.

MARY'S WORK GOES ON 24/7 AND 365 DAYS A YEAR

AM: Going forward, where do you think we are with levels of violence in the areas, and what's the plan?
JA: Society may get the impression that knife violence has gone down a bit, but youth violence is still out there and continues to grow. More young people carry weapons.

We have twelve case workers trained at the Tavistock and Portland and the Freud Centre in trauma behaviour. We now know how to build strong attachments with adolescents drawn to violent behaviour and gangs, and how to mediate gang situations. Lately, an outreach team was able to talk to a gang outside a school and confiscate a machete and end the problem without violence occurring.

AM: Are people controlling the gangs still pushing as hard as ever to recruit kids?
JA: Yes and society will never eradicate crime or drugs – that will always be in our communities. A community is what is going to save the community. It takes a community to save a community.

Mary's is here to work with our young people and to create prevention. Also we support young people engaged with the criminal justice system. We say, "We will always continue to work with you. If you get sentenced to prison we will visit and support you. When you come out we'll help you adjust back into society so you can start to feel accepted and to know you can change your life around."

Mary's will continue growing our work to support more young people.

AM: Really great work and congratulations on that. Is there anything else you would like to add?
JA: Thank you to people of our community who are already helping. I definitely see the difference to what this area was seventeen years ago, and even five years ago. However, we would love to have more people supporting and being a part of what we are building here.

Donate at **www.maryscharity.org**

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OUTFOXED

There have been increasing reports of foxes making themselves at home in Primrose Hill. Here's Caroline Cooper's story of the fox who came to visit.



"Oh good, the French window is open."



"Not interesting over there."



"Gardening gloves in this basket – they smell human."



"Let me put one on the sofa."



"Nothing meaty in the kitchen. So what's upstairs?"



"Ah, now what are these? Slippers? At last something more tasty."



"I'll put one of them on the bed.
But what's that?
Is she coming home?
Time to run."

Hello, Primrose Hill!

Ghosts, witches and vampires were loose on the streets of Primrose Hill again this Halloween. It was subdued compared to previous years, but there was still an abundance of sweets for the ‘trick or treaters’.





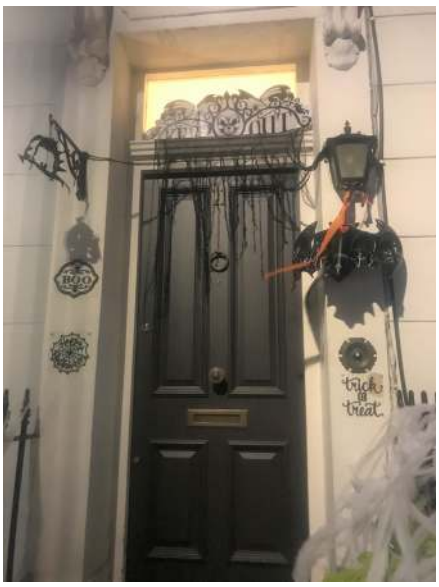
















The John D Wood & Co. team in Primrose Hill wish everyone happy holidays and wonderful New Year.



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