ON THE HILL

PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



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PLUS

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOMELESSNESS

Help for those living on our streets

COMMON GROUND

Naomi Ishiguro discusses her new novel

JUNE 2021

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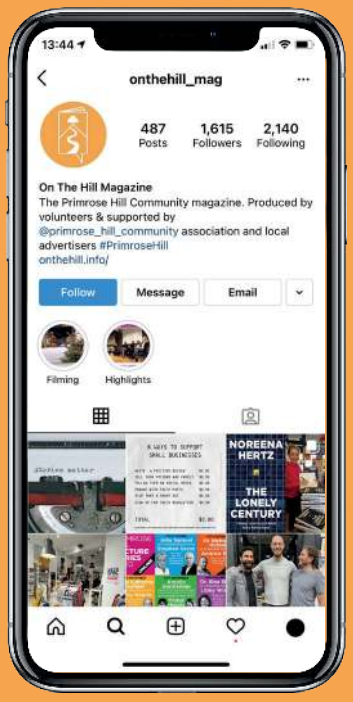
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On The Hill On The Go

Keep up with the latest news and happenings on our social media channels.



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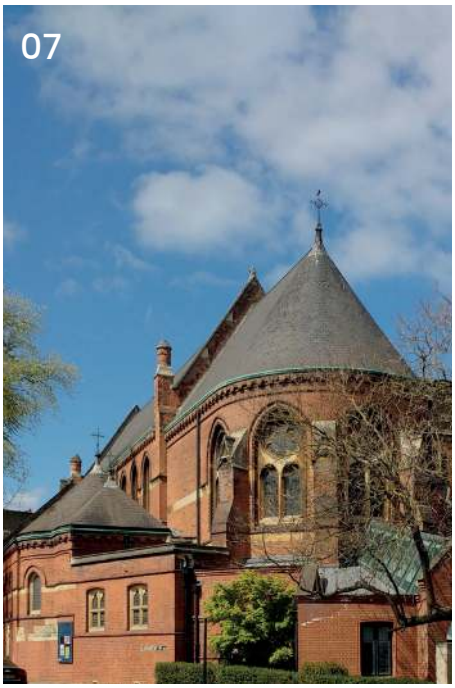
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ON THE HILL
PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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JUNE 2021

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performance running shoes and clothing

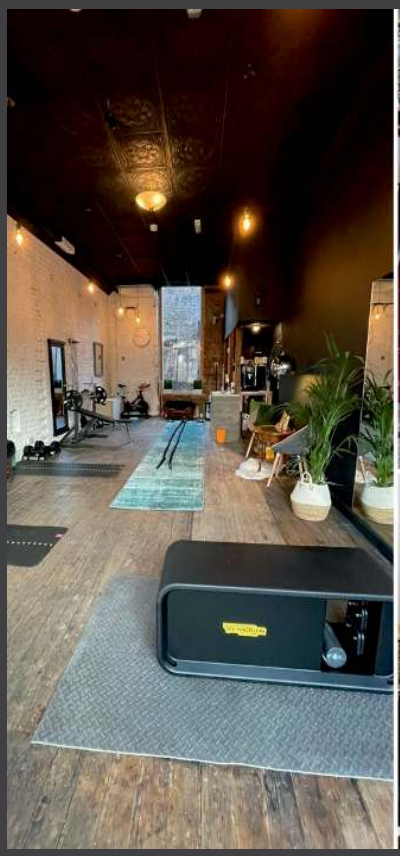
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PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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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Cover
PHOTOGRAPH BY
Sarah Louise Ramsay

ISSN 20-6175



WELCOME TO JUNE

You may wonder why JC, formerly of L'Absinthe, is waving his saucepans on our front cover. Neighbourhood Nosh is an initiative by the Primrose Hill Community Association to deliver nourishing meals to those in need, and JC is in charge of the cooking. He works alongside a fantastic team of volunteers who source, chop and distribute the food to where it's needed.

Alongside worsening food poverty, there is homelessness. Phil Cowan navigated a route through the system for a homeless man he found huddled in a pile of blankets in Primrose Hill. He has helped him enormously and provided us with some useful resources; see p 21.

St Mary's church does so much for the community: most notably a cold weather shelter for the homeless, and its youthwork, which mentors at-risk young people in Primrose Hill and Camden. They have a craft brewery in the crypt and host the annual Primrose Hill Lecture Series. All these resources mean that the facilities in St Mary's are stretched, so they've begun a fundraising campaign, Grow the Wonder, to remodel the church and make it fit better with their current needs. Please see details inside and help where you can.

In spite of hardships, there has been some amazing resilience shown in Primrose Hill. Most other high streets look desolate, with closed shops and graffiti on rarely raised shutters. But here we've had six new shops open over the past year, which shows tremendous optimism and bravery. (Bonus points if you can name all six before reading the article.) A huge welcome to them all; please drop by and give your support.

It's wonderful to be able to visit our long-standing businesses, pubs and cafés once again and enjoy a busy, thriving community. Long may it last!

Maggie Chambers

PRIMROSE HILL LECTURE SERIES 2021

LIVE AND ONLINE

30TH JUNE

Hadley Freeman

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Anne Karpf



The Story and Secrets of a 20th Century Jewish Family



9TH JUNE

Lorraine Candy

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Trish Halpin



Navigating Family Life - A frank, funny and inspiring guide to life on the home front



7TH JULY

David Omand

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Jon Snow



Discover How Thinking Like a Spy Can Help You Make Better Decisions

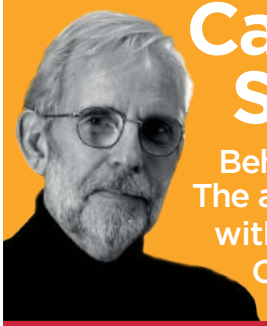


16TH JUNE

Walter Murch

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Catherine Shoard



Behind the Seen – The art of filmmaking with a three times Oscar winner

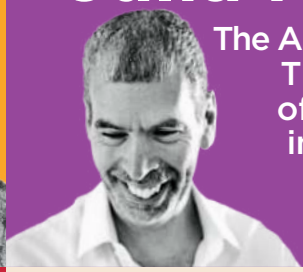


14TH JULY

David Bodanis

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Julia Neuberger



The Art of Fairness – The power of decency in a world turned mean



PHOTO: DEREK TAMSEA

23RD JUNE

Leroy Logan

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Natasha Beckles



Closing Ranks – Vital lessons in race relations from a former Met. Superintendent



7pm (Doors from 6.30pm)

St Mary's Church Elsworthy Road, London NW3 3DJ www.stmarysprimrosehill.com

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Funds go to aid St Mary's church – a vital base for local outreach services to vulnerable people

ST MARY'S BREWERY

EARTH natural foods

LOME

St Mary's Primrose Hill

ON THE STREET

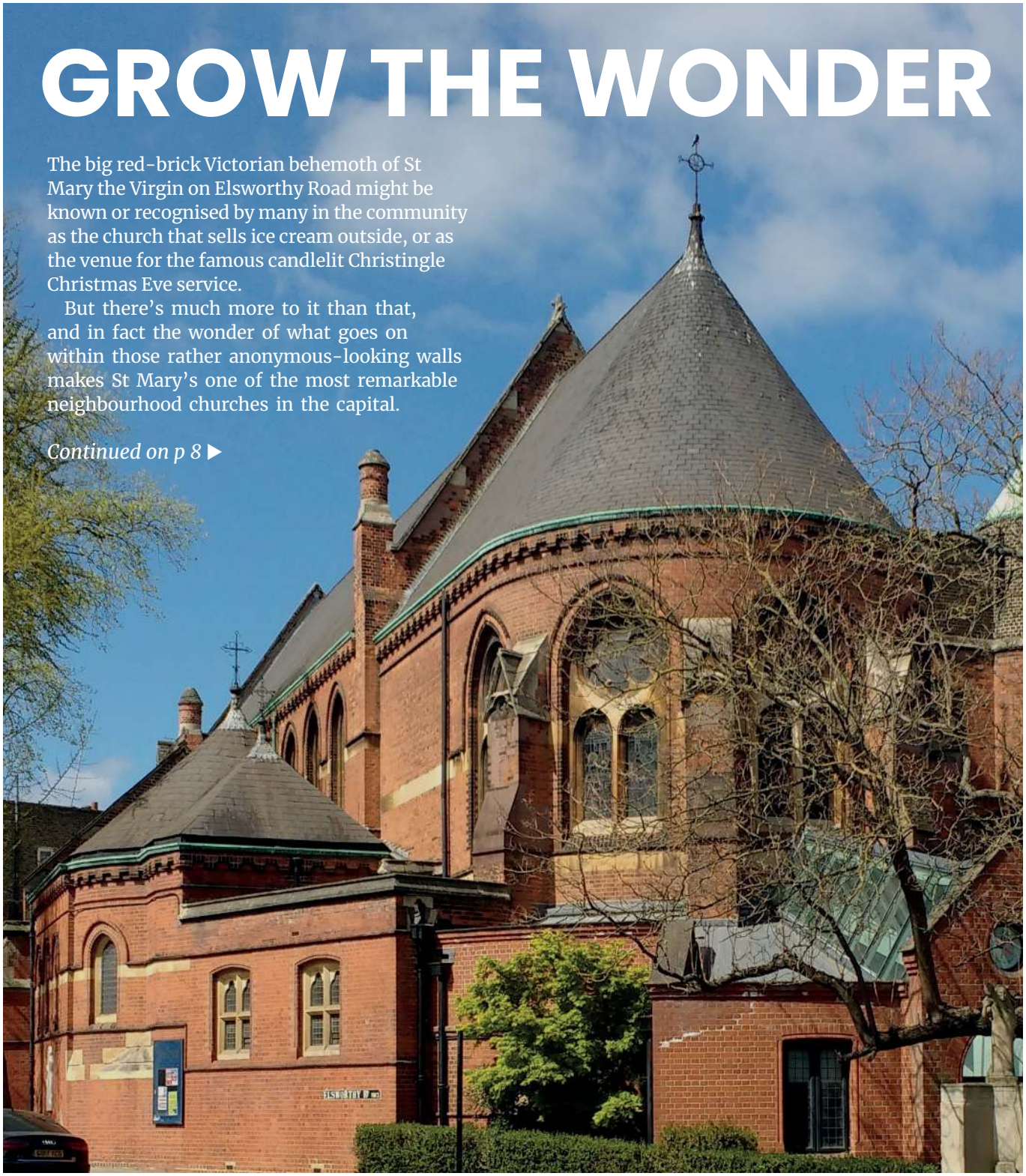
PHCA News *p 9*
Haverstock Journalists *p 11*
Opening in a Pandemic *p 12*
U3A *p 15*
AND MORE

GROW THE WONDER

The big red-brick Victorian behemoth of St Mary the Virgin on Elsworthy Road might be known or recognised by many in the community as the church that sells ice cream outside, or as the venue for the famous candlelit Christingle Christmas Eve service.

But there's much more to it than that, and in fact the wonder of what goes on within those rather anonymous-looking walls makes St Mary's one of the most remarkable neighbourhood churches in the capital.

Continued on p 8 ▶



Grow the Wonder

By Richard Benson



There are not many places of worship that use their crypt to house a craft brewery, profits from which are channelled back into the church (the equipment has been blessed by the Bishop of Edmonton, which sounds like A First). Then in the winter, the whole building is converted once a week into a cold weather shelter for the homeless. And in the summer, the interior is turned into a theatre for a well-known annual series of lectures that has included the likes of Alan Bennett, Mary Beard and Jonathan Miller.

Perhaps most strikingly, the edifice also serves as the base for St Mary's Centre Youthwork, a nationally acclaimed programme of outreach and inclusion for disadvantaged and at-risk youth in the area. In recent times, after violence flared, St Mary's Centre youth workers were out on the streets, providing support and dissuading young people from reprisals. The journalist and TV presenter Andrew Marr is its patron; Jason Allen, St Mary's Youth Team Manager, received a BEM medal in recognition of his work in the last New Year's honours list.

Throw in dozens of other inclusive initiatives, and the way St Mary's makes its copious space available to the community at affordable rates, and you can see why the church, and its well-known vicar Marjorie Brown, are so well respected.

"Ever since the church was founded nearly 150 years ago, the governing principle has been to serve the whole community," says Marjorie. "We do that with the building. But for us, it isn't just a matter of being a big space for hire, as it were. We encourage a certain set of values. We want to be known as a beacon of openness, tolerance and love. And we want to expand what we already do."

That ambition raises a problem for the vicar and her team. The reality is, she says, that the facilities are stretched and the whole building really needs to be remodelled. The office, run by parish administrator Celyn Cooke, is small and cramped. The kitchen, which produces tons of food each year, needs updating for the 21st century. The interior needs a refresh; and the outside, as people in the church know, could really do more to communicate the good things that happen within.

To achieve all this, St Mary's is launching Grow the Wonder, a fundraising campaign aimed at attracting donations from the community, funding bodies and businesses large and small. It is spearheaded by patron Mary Portas, who sees in St Mary's a shining example of her new Kindness Economy concept.

"The Kindness Economy is about making business better, and making people and planet as important as profit," she said. "St Mary's has been doing really innovative things to make the world a kinder place since its inception, and it's about time people knew more about it. The Grow the Wonder campaign is the point where we're going to really tell the world what we're doing, so we can become a beacon of kindness, and really grow that wonder for the next 150 years!"

"We had something of a wake-up call," says Roddy Monroe, who surveyed the local community to discover what they wanted from St Mary's, "when we realised that the outside is so sober and unprepossessing that some people were unsure it's actually open."

Further ideas include repainting, adding new furniture, building new meeting rooms and adding solar panels. To do it all will cost £1.5m, but St Mary's is nothing if not ambitious. Events already scheduled include a fashion show, an auction and an extra set of lectures this year.

"I think people will want to support us because we're not just another facility or another church," says Marjorie. "We are making this about taking a stand in favour of the open, liberal values we have always espoused. Those values are under attack at the moment, and publicly available space is increasingly at a premium because of the cost of property in London. If you care about those things, we're offering you the chance to do something about it."

If you think you can help by donating, or helping with St Mary's fundraising efforts, please contact the parish office at office@smvph.org.uk

Find out more at: **www.stmarysprimrosehill.com/grow-the-wonder**

Donate at: **www.justgiving.com/campaign/grow-the-wonder**

News & Information

from Primrose Hill Community Association

PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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













Hello from your local community association!

The Primrose Hill Community Association is the charity that runs your local community centre (on Hopkinson's Place, just off Fitzroy Road) and supports the work of local volunteer groups, including Neighbourhood Nosh, the Library and *On The Hill.*

What's On

The Association has a volunteer events team, who've been very busy running online events over the past year – and looking forward to welcoming you in person as things open up. Summer events include the Art Trail on 13 June and Wednesday walks.

Other regular activities include Open House (free films, talks and workshops, sponsored by U3A), boules and mah-jong. We're also hoping to run a jumble sale on 31 July.

The best way to find out what's happening is our weekly email, where you'll find events, news and online content from *On The Hill.* You can sign up at **www.phca.cc/subscribe**

Membership

As a community association, we belong to our members. Our membership scheme has been in suspended animation, but it's time for a relaunch. The fee is just £1 per year – we hope no one will feel excluded by the cost. We are using an online platform to manage membership, so you can find out more and join at **www.phca.cc/join**

Anyone unable to use the online platform can join in person by calling in at the Community Centre. But please do join online if you can – this reduces the admin and means our team can spend their time doing stuff that makes a difference for you.

Find out more by visiting our website (**phca.cc**) or getting in touch via **www.phca.cc/contact-us**

POSTCARDS FROM PRIMROSE HILL



Here is a view of Regent's Park Road looking towards Primrose Hill park. In the far distance you can just make out the silhouette of The Queen's pub. The postcard is dominated by the butcher on the left, his wares clearly on display outside the shop. The staff pose for the photographer, wearing their aprons and holding on to their horses. The name of the butcher, Joseph Jupp, is proudly displayed on the carts. The 1901 census tells us that Joseph was 32 years old, and he lived here at number 158, with his wife Charlotte (30) and 2-year-old daughter Edna. He must be the chap standing directly in front of the shop. You can spot his wife holding their child, upstairs behind the window on the first floor.

@old_primrosehill_postcards

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You made us melt!
xxx

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NW3 3AJ

INTERVIEW

Major Tim Peake: Astronaut

Antonio from Haverstock School's journalists interviews Major Tim Peake

Belfast, Bosnia, blasts of gun fire and snap of shells: Major Tim Peake was used to danger, but when the Soyuz spacecraft he travelled in initially refused to connect to the International Space Station, he experienced a threat of a different kind. Failure to attach would have meant the spacecraft spinning around in space until the fuel ran out or it hit something.

My metaphor for peril in space is symbolised by the astronauts' space suits. They look robust but in the middle is flimsy string holding everything together; breakage means the space suit floats off and the astronaut's ability to survive ceases.

Things are often not how they seem in space.

One evening, Major Tim looked out from the observation deck and spotted silver discs floating towards the spacecraft. He thought they were UFOs, but later found out that the discs were from the neighbouring Russian Space Station and were the astronauts' frozen urine!

Major Tim:

There is a world of silence within the infinity of space. Everyday sounds like the birds in the trees, or sensations like feeling the rain on your face or the wind in the air, don't exist. Yet when looking down to the cradle of life that is our Earth, I felt serenity.

For six months the Major spent almost every moment in the European Space Station. He described the experience as being similar to lockdown – except in lockdown you can order takeaways and go for walks. In his free time he did simple activities like reading books. This activity had a Harry Potter feel to it: looking up from reading, he saw his other books floating around him.



"When looking down to the cradle of life that is our Earth, I felt serenity."

Major Tim sacrificed precious time with his two small children and wife because he feels strongly about the positive effects of space expeditions, including medical research and expanding frontiers. Over 8,000 hopefuls applied to be one of the six astronauts working in the European Space Station. Although he felt his chances were small, he researched the role, and space, and worked extremely hard on his application form. Major Tim is an excellent example of what dedication, determination and discipline can achieve, and he is an inspiration to me

Thank you, Major Tim, and the Future Talent organisation for organising the Q&A. I will be following you in 2024 when you return to space.

Antonio (Year 9)

Opening in a PANDEMIC

BY ANDREW BLACK

A year in lockdown has meant a year of walks. It's a time I look forward to: to get fresh air, clear my head, burn some calories. I have repeatedly explored every inch of Regent's Park and many local areas I had not visited before. Shops were closed, and some closures became permanent. Many 'To Let' signs hung in darkened windows.

So it's been with joy that I've watched our village fight the tide and add a few great new shops. Imagine the courage to take on rent, fit out a shop and start trading in the midst of a global pandemic. Our locals truly embody the entrepreneurial spirit.

Many of us have been cooking up a storm during lockdowns, so it's perfect these foodie shops have arrived:

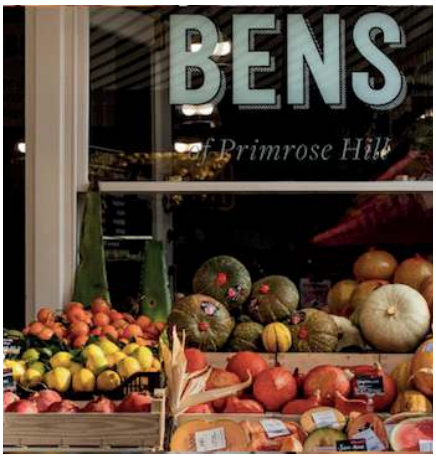
Primo Italian Provisions



Like many, the pandemic took away Natasha's job. Inspired by their new freedom, she and her Italian husband Natale bravely decided it was time to do something for themselves. They fell in love with Primrose Hill and planned a wonderful food shop with an incredible array of Italian products: from fresh meats, sausages and cheeses to sauces, condiments, olives, cooked foods and a wall full of pasta varieties. They work together every day and take great pride in their personal service, helping the locals who they confirm "have been warm and wonderful".

85 Regent's Park Road
020 7419 9678

Bens Greengrocers



At Bens Greengrocers, over 300 different kinds of fresh, organic produce and dry goods are available to us lucky locals. Ben and his team procure daily to supply an unrivalled variety of products. Ben had been looking to expand and was ready for it when the perfect location became available – even during a pandemic. Ben says, "Of course at the time we were concerned, as it has been so uncertain for everyone in business over the last year. Luckily for us, we actually saw an increase in custom as people who lived in the area started to discover their local stores." Bens supports our locals by offering same-day home delivery on electric scooters to all customers within a 2-mile radius of the shop.

140 Regent's Park Road
020 7722 2947

Reenie's Ice Cream Bar



Exquisite hot chocolates are a nice way to end my walks, undoing any calories burned. But who cares when you're in a pandemic and the drinks are this good!
The local couple behind Reenie's had double the trouble with Sirine being an actress and Matthew in the events business. Out of necessity and excess spare time, Reenie's was born. Sirine says they were keen to start a business that was unique to the area, and would somehow be uplifting and transformative, bringing a smile in tough times. The 1950s-style American ice cream bar arrived, built by her out-of-work theatre-set designer and builder friends. Serving amazing ice creams, sweets, hot chocolates and more, the place would inspire Willy Wonka.

3 Erskine Road
020 3876 7676

However, it's not just been about food; there are other new options to explore:

Studio M



It was the Art Trail in Primrose Hill last year which led Mimi Leslau to open Studio M. She loved the way it brought out the community and inspired people. That afternoon she sold some of her hand-made ceramics and sculptures, and decided to make a go of it with a shop. Interestingly, it was the pandemic which added to the impetus. The realisation of the precariousness of life spurred her to take on a new challenge.

Drop by to engage in the feelgood factor of Mimi's work, with the totems in the window and the ceramics inside. There's even a beautiful prayer wall where you can leave a message.

41 Chalcot Road
07956 553493

Shelter



Talk about perseverance: after delayed attempts Shelter finally opened its doors in September, only to be closed by two further lockdowns.

During their short tenure, they found locals truly embracing the shop, and saw Primrose Hill as a perfect fit. Here, they say, the locals are keen to explore sustainable shopping coupled with the notion that they can do good with every purchase and donation. Shelter helps millions of people seeking assistance with issues around shelter and homelessness.

Since reopening in April they have enjoyed record-breaking sales, proving that retail really can be therapy!

158 Regent's Park Road
020 7772 3053



Organic Pharmacy

As we start to be seen out in public again it may be a good time to visit the Organic Pharmacy, which sells skincare, supplements and treatments created in a fusion of science and natural ingredients that should help boost our immune systems and get us ready for life beyond lockdown.

73 Regent's Park Road
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If you're in need of a good read, the Library buys new titles monthly; these are the recent acquisitions:

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The Vanishing Half

Craig Brown
One Two Three Four: The Beatles in Time

Clare Chambers
Small Pleasures

Tracy Chevalier
A Single Thread

Ann Cleeves
The Darkest Evening

Linda Grant
A Stranger City

Matt Haig
The Midnight Library

Lynda La Plante
Blunt Force

Erik Larson
The Splendour and the Vile

Emily Mandel
The Glass Hotel

Lionel Shriver
The Motion of the Body through Space

Hardback

Mark Carney
Value(s)

Kazuo Ishiguro
Klara and the Sun

Ferdinand Mount
Kiss Myself Goodbye: The Many Lives of Aunt Munca

Mark Stevens and Annalyn Swan
Francis Bacon: Revelations

Sasha Swire
Diary of an MP's Wife, Inside and Outside Power

Children's

Rowley Jefferson
Awesome Friendly Spooky Stories

Liz Pichon
Tm Gates: Ten Tremendous Tales

David Walliams
Fing



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Saturday: 10am–3pm

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Library members are required to use hand sanitiser on entry and wear a face covering. This is likely to remain the case until all restrictions have been removed.

Thank you for your continued support.

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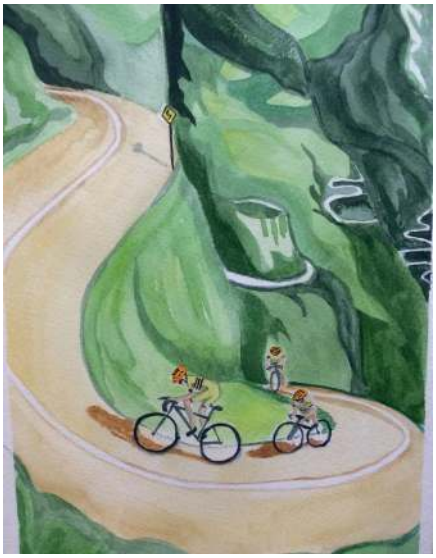
Big Surprise by June



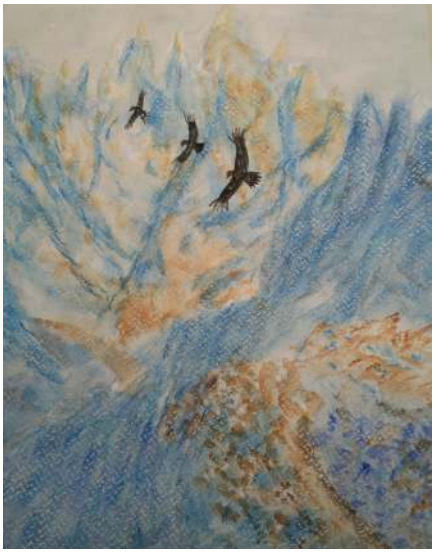
Pencil by Manny



Scary Rooster! by Sheila



Tour de France by Thea



Birds 2 by Rosa

U3A in London

By Maureen Betts

U3A in London is a membership organisation for people who have retired, offering a variety of classes from Monday to Friday. It is a registered charity, run by a dedicated team of highly talented volunteers. They use rooms in the Old Town Hall, 213 Haverstock Hill, NW3 4QP and attract members from Primrose Hill, Swiss Cottage, Kilburn, Hampstead, Finchley, etc. It costs £75 a year to join, which entitles you to join as many classes as you wish. These include talks, films, exercises, languages, various art mediums, walks, card and board games, lectures, drama group, art/history, photography etc.

Unfortunately, due to coronavirus, U3A have had to stop holding events at the premises, but they have succeeded in transferring over 90 classes a week to Zoom, email and other platforms. All members receive a friendly weekly email newsletter giving details of forthcoming classes/events and how to join them online.

I belong to the Thursday watercolour class, and since April 2020 we have chosen a different theme to paint each week then shared our work with each other (some of our achievements illustrate this article). During the summer, when restrictions were lifted for a short time, we met outside at Golders Hill Park for coffee and painted in the gardens, which was both sociable and therapeutic.

As well as painting, I am enjoying online chair pilates three times a week, an 'improve your bridge' course, and viewing various talks on screen.

Do join us to learn, make friends and have fun.

Contact details
www.U3aLondon.org.uk
tel: 020 7692 5440
email: office@u3alondon.org.uk

NEWS & VIEWS



Resourceful Residents

The Oldfield Estate on Regent's Park Road, overlooking Primrose Hill park, is home to some of the area's most distinguished and beloved residents.

The Oldfield buildings are nestled within beautiful gardens and courtyards, which give much pleasure to occupants and passers-by. A great deal of effort goes into maintaining these communal outside spaces, led by an enthusiastic and committed team who have tended the gardens for many years.

Vital to their efforts are the tools they require to carry out their work. Recently these precious tools inexplicably went missing, which has made it extremely difficult to tend the grounds.

Ever resourceful, they have found a way to fundraise for new tools by running a pop-up stall selling books, DVDs and sheet music. This is outside the entrance to the estate on Fitzroy Road every Saturday and Sunday, from mid-morning to mid-afternoon, weather permitting. Amazing bargains are to be had, with prices ranging from 50p to £5 and all proceeds being directly channelled to the purchase of much-needed gardening equipment.

Donations of plants, quality books, DVDs and any other desirable items (non-electrical) can be left at the reception office of Jacqueline House, 52 Fitzroy Road between 9.30 am and 4.00 pm on weekdays and will be very useful in helping with this initiative.

Get on down to Oldfield, bag a bargain and help green the neighbourhood!

A Bonus Primrose Hill Lecture

In addition to the series of six Primrose Hill Lectures this summer (see p 6), a seventh 'pop-up' lecture has been arranged. On 21 July Kate Bingham will be in conversation with Mishal Husain as they go 'Inside the Vaccine Taskforce'. Tickets £12/£10 concessions from EventBrite, Primrose Hill Books (020 7586 2022), or St Mary's Primrose Hill (**www.stmarysprimrosehill.com** or 020 7722 3238).



Primrose Hill Art Trail 2021

Following the huge success of last year's Art Trail, it will be taking place again on **Sunday 13 June, 2–6 pm!**

Let's make this year's art trail an even bigger and better celebration of all local creativity and talent!

If you are a painter, craftsperson, photographer, potter, or indeed any kind of artist, do come and show your work in the Primrose Hill Art Trail.

Just find a place to show off your creation where it can be seen from the street. This could be your own front window or railings, another person's house, or a public window such as a shop, café or pub.

A Google map with 'pins' indicating the locations, and linking to more information on each artist and their work, will be available. Register in advance for access to the map at **phca.cc/events/primrose-hill-art-trail-2021**. A paper map will also be available for those who are less smart-phone savvy.

This is not mainly a selling event, but we hope that artists may receive enquiries through their websites, or indeed face to face if they are around to meet the public. Professional artists will have their own category on the map.

To exhibit, register at **phca.cc/art-trail**. This year there will be art activities for children in Chalcot Square between 2.30 and 4.30pm. Come along and join Roz from Sew Much Fun and Jennifer from Art Buddies to get creative.

For any enquiries, please email trail@phca.cc



Passing of Myra Schehtman – the Eternal Library Lady

It is with great sadness that we learn of the passing of Myra Newman: a loyal Camden Council employee for 40 years, and best known to many of us as the Library Lady at Chalk Farm (now Primrose Hill) library.

How difficult it is to capture in a few words the importance of Myra's contributions to families, children and the elderly; her benevolence and kindness were quite unforgettable. She touched many lives, from young to old, becoming in a real sense a local Institution. Her Rhyme Time for children and her Book Club efforts will benefit the next generation of school-goers for years to come, and many a family around the community remembers her fondly. You couldn't walk 50 yards with Myra without her stopping to chat with local mums and kids.

She will be much missed, and a memorial will be held shortly in her memory, with classic Myra stories and quotes; her secretive Arthur Rackham project will also be fulfilled in her honour. Rest in Peace, Myra. Thank you for all you did for our community.



Partying in the Park

Much has been written in the press and on social media about the ongoing situation in the park, which has become a magnet for groups of people to socialise at night. There are varied opinions as to how best to deal with the situation including gates, extra policing and more toilets, but everyone is keen to find a solution. The noise, drug dealing and lack of toilet facilities have created an intolerable situation for people who live around the park.

Primrose Hill is the only Royal Park in central London which isn't locked at night. Putting up gates may be a deterrent, but they would also prevent everyone else using the park after dark.

The past month has seen the park closed at 10 pm, but crowds have gone down into Regent's Park Road where shop windows have been broken, and there has been violence.

We are living through difficult times, and there have been no other venues for young people to meet. Many are hoping that as clubs reopen, young people will have more options and the situation will ease.

Meanwhile police, councillors and our MP Kier Starmer met in mid-May to discuss the situation, and further talks are due to be held.

Temporary gates have been installed in the park until a more permanent decision is found, and volunteers are assembling to collect litter and monitor the hill.

Erasure Remix Lanah P's 'Pistol in My Pocket'

In 1986, local resident Lanah P, Britain's first out non-binary artiste of colour, released the international number one dance track 'Pistol in My Pocket'. The song was a favourite of Andy Bell and Vince Clarke of the pop duo Erasure. Thirty-five years on, Erasure have done a hi-energy remix with new vocals from Lanah.

Regarded as the theme tune to Leigh Bowery's night club Taboo, 'Pistol in My Pocket' was an anthem for millions of clubbers in the 1980s.

On the release of the track, Lanah P said, "Erasure are icons of the music industry and very popular with my record player; to have Vince Clarke surprise me with a remix of my song is a wonderful privilege."

Andy Bell, lead singer of Erasure, said, "Lanah is an absolute legend, so this was always going to be a natural fit for us."

The Erasure remix of 'Pistol in My Pocket' will be released on all major platforms on 20 June.

@lanah.p



Harriet Kelsall Wins Award

Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery has won 'Bespoke Jewellery Retailer of the Year' at Retail Jeweller's UK Jewellery Awards.

The 2020 awards ceremony, which was originally to be held at the Tower of London, took place online, with participants at home encouraged to raise a glass to the hard-hit sector.

The 'Bespoke Jewellery Retailer of the Year' category was introduced for 2020, specifically celebrating bespoke retailers. Judges commended Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery, describing them as "a true bespoke jeweller in every sense of the word".

Harriet Kelsall specialises in individual design made by a team of qualified designers. The tagline 'Your Story, Our Design' is carved into the feature wall in the studio in Primrose Hill. Customers can work with the designers to create a unique piece of jewellery which reflects their individual stories.

Owner and founder, Harriet Kelsall, responded by saying: "We couldn't be happier. 2020 has been such a challenging year for everybody, including those of us in non-essential retail. It has been tough but still successful thanks to our amazing, loyal customers and our brilliant, agile and hard-working team.

She went on to say: "This award is such a wonderful prize to win after such a tricky time, and we are all even more inspired than ever to keep telling our customers' love stories and life stories in the form of beautiful bespoke jewellery."

The bespoke jewellers have won numerous previous awards for their ground-breaking concept of a working design studio combined with eye-catching retail, including winning 'Bridal Jewellery Retailer of the Year' at 2016's UK Jewellery Awards and 'Boutique Retailer of the Year' in 2013.

www.hkjewellery.co.uk

Primrose Hill Soccer Academy

Calling budding young footballers! Need under-15s, boys or girls, to join a local team.

Contact editor@onthehill.info



Filming in Primrose Hill



The Primrose Hill Community Association has an agreement with Camden Film Office about trying to mitigate the often disruptive effects of filming on our streets. This means that the Association is notified when filming is planned to take place within the area, ideally three weeks ahead of the actual filming. It can then pass and linking its members and other residents, giving details of the filming and removal of on-street parking spaces, and similarly process feedback through Camden Film Office to the film company.

Often the Association looks at and comments on the film company's letter to local residents and suggests varying times and places for such disruptive activities as set-up, special lighting, cranes, large vehicle parking, etc. The Association is permitted to ask the film company for a donation and then informs its members of this. Donations go into a fund to help pay for special projects; over the years, these have included the purchase of a new barbecue, seaside outings for older people and the purchase of a defibrillator.

The recent filming by Apple TV is an example of local filming in which the Association has been involved. Mick Herron's book *Slow Horses* was recently filmed on the canal below St Mark's Church, which also served as a facilities base for the film company.

My Family Treasure

By Dave Burgess



I have a family connection to Primrose Hill through my late aunt, who nursed Arthur Rackham at his home off England's Lane until he died in 1939.

My most treasured possession is a 1929 copy of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for which Arthur Rackham was the illustrator. Not only did he sign a copy of this book for my aunt, but he also wrote her a message, and added one of his fairy-like sketches on the inside of the cover. The message reads:

To Nurse Morley, from her obstinate (so it is alleged!) but grateful patient.
Arthur Rackham
Limpsfield 1938

I am afraid I don't know much about my aunt. I had a very strict upbringing, and things were told me on a sort of 'need to know' basis. I wasn't a very inquisitive child either, so that doesn't help matters.

She was born Marjorie Morley (always known as Madge) in 1912. She devoted her life to nursing. I was born in 1953 and have fond memories of having four aunts and uncles. My mother (Beryl) was one of five girls. Madge was the only one of my aunts never to marry.

I can remember that from the age of around 6 or 7 I used to visit her at weekends. She was at that time a ward sister in a local hospital, only a few miles from where we lived. She had live-in accommodation at the hospital, and I used to think it quite strange when a man would arrive to light the fire in the sitting room and bring fresh supplies of coal throughout the day. Occasionally my aunt would come to my mother's house for the weekend, where she had her own bedroom. It was in that bedroom that she stored her old army trunk. Stamped or stencilled on the top of this sizeable black metal trunk was an address. It was always covered with an old bed blanket, but inside she still had her khaki army sleeping bag from her service there. This is the bit of her I know nothing about. What did she do in her early career?

She was eventually promoted to matron at the hospital, and I think she retired at some point in the late 1960s. She bought herself a car and a small one-bed flat, but stayed in the same locality as the hospital. When I was 17 she taught me how to drive and helped me buy my first car. She was quite a traveller, and used to take a lot of foreign holidays, as I remember. Madge died in 1983, having been hospitalised with a brain-related illness. Madge left all of her possessions to my mother.

Several years later my mother gave me the book. All she could tell me about it was that Madge had been a nurse to Arthur Rackham when he was ill. As I know that Arthur died in his home, I presume she was nursing him privately, but I don't know for sure. I think the book has been well preserved over the years; my mother kept it wrapped in Christmas paper and stored away, and today it sits in a drawer wrapped in the same paper. It contains forty colour plates mounted on brown art paper and protected by tissue paper. Considering the book is 83 years old, it's still in very good condition.

DO YOU NEED FINANCIAL ADVICE?



Jeremy Duke DipFA

Financial Planning Consultant

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- I am a long-time resident of Primrose Hill

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Here to help in these difficult times.

The value of pensions and investments can fall as well as rise and you can get back less than you invested.

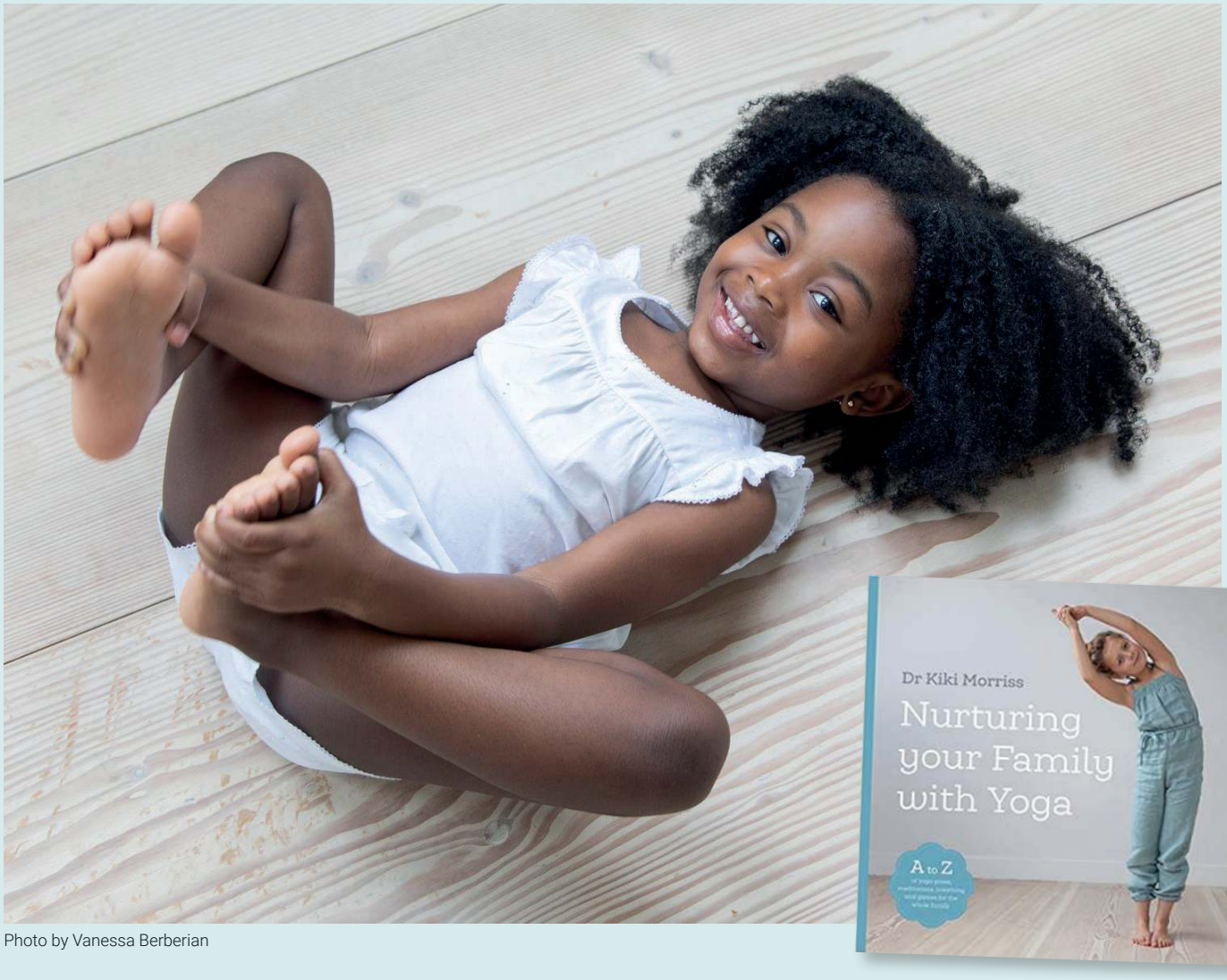


Photo by Vanessa Berberian

Nurturing Your Family With Yoga

"My yoga journey, from childhood to adulthood, has been one of the most beautiful experiences of my life and this ancient practice never fails to nurture or strengthen my family and me... I want children to enjoy yoga because I know how incredibly good it is for them and how great it can make them feel." Dr Kiki Morriss

If you were at the last couple of Primrose Hill Community Association Summer Fairs, you may have attended a yoga session with Kiki Morriss under the trees in Chalcot Square.

Now Kiki, who founded Primrose Hill Yoga, is due to bring out a yoga book this month. If we're to be denied our Summer Fair yoga, then at least we can still be keep ourselves balanced, calm and supple at home.

Nurturing Your Family with Yoga is an essential guide to the practice of yoga for families and children. It demonstrates how it can be a real part of everyday family life and bring calmness and harmony. There are inspiring photographs – taken by local photographer Vanessa Berberian – of children and adults practising yoga together, with clear, concise explanations. The book is packed with fun and practical suggestions, including the A–Z of Yoga – an engaging game that introduces children to 26 classic yoga poses; breathing exercises to strengthen and balance the nervous system and steady the mind; visualisations to reduce anxiety and build resilience; and best of all for those with young families, a 'Yoga in Bed' sequence to help children settle down and sleep soundly.

There are guided meditations, affirmations and reflections that will inspire and inform interesting and thoughtful discussions with children, as well as tips and tricks for adults to help you share yoga successfully.

Kiki fell in love with yoga at the age of 6 when she took a class in a friend's playroom. Since then she has become a trained medical doctor, yoga teacher and yoga therapist. She studied medicine at King's College and has worked at University College Hospital and the Royal Free Hospital in various specialities, including Rheumatology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Urology, Old Age Medicine and A&E. She started teaching yoga to 2-year-olds and subsequently taught yoga therapy at Triyoga.

Nurturing Your Family with Yoga by Dr Kiki Morriss is published by YogaWords, price £16.99, and is available from Primrose Hill Books.

www.primrosehillyoga.com
@kiki.yoga (Instagram)



‘There’s No Place Like Homelessness’

By Phil Cowan

For those who have suffered with Covid, lost loved ones, endured loneliness or lost their livelihood, the effects of the pandemic have been devastating. It’s hard to think of anything good that has come out of it.

But let me tell you a story that I hope may be as inspiring to you as it has been for me.

I was walking my dogs late one evening in mid-December and came across a pile of bedding in a doorway on a street in Primrose Hill. I knelt down and gently enquired if there was anybody at ‘home’ to which a very weak voice replied “Yes”.

We got chatting and Mr M (a pseudonym) revealed to me that he had been sleeping rough in Camden Town for some time but had been threatened and assaulted on so many occasions that he had sought a more secure place to sleep. He hoped our neighbourhood would provide a better degree of safety.

A few mugs of hot soup and camaraderie later, we agreed to meet in the morning to try to resolve his situation. This led us to Routes Off The Streets on Greenland Street, just off Camden High Street. This is a hub for supporting homeless and rough-sleeping people which aims to provide temporary or permanent solutions for those who find themselves in these difficult circumstances.

The best we could do was put a ‘sticking plaster’ on Mr M’s predicament that morning. This involved him being accommodated at a hotel in West London very far away from the only two constants he now had in his life: the medical centre in Camden, which he relied on to treat his addictions; and myself.

I was deeply concerned that Mr M being ‘shipped out’ of our borough would be detrimental to his well-being; but at the same time I was relieved to know he would be secure and warm for a while at least.

Unfortunately I was right on the first point. Despite his best efforts, Mr M was in a strange place with no connections nearby; he was understandably panicked and fled after experiencing alleged harassment at the hotel where he’d been sent.

We lost touch for a number of weeks, until out of the blue I received a phone call from him in mid-February. My heart soared and sank at the same time. I was hugely grateful that he had contacted me, but apprehensive about the mountain we would have to climb together to achieve a positive outcome that could change his trajectory for good.

Be in no doubt that if you become involved with a person such as Mr M, you must commit to the highs and the lows, but accept them and try to keep a level head throughout! And be prepared to come up against many brick walls along the journey.

Navigating the system as a non-professional outsider is no easy task; but it is possible, as I have found out. The journey has many crossroads and decisions that differ little from those that a character called Dorothy, featured in a certain Hollywood epic film, was required to take. The difference here and now is that it’s not in technicolour so it doesn’t look so pretty!

Through sheer persistence, steadfast purpose and believing in a dream, there is a way to help people such as Mr M.

With the help of Routes Off The Streets, Camden Council, St Mungo’s and a notable local councillor (who shall remain anonymous), Mr M is now in supported accommodation not a million miles from here and making his way towards a new and better life.

The first time I met Mr M I had a song in my head all night from *that* film: “If happy little bluebirds fly beyond the rainbow, why, oh why can’t I?” Well now he can and he will.

So the next time you pass by a pile of bedding in a doorway, please stop and say hello; you never know what it will bring to the person who is underneath it, or to yourself.

I now have a friend called Mr M.

All names in this article have been changed to protect identities (apart from Dorothy Gale!).

@Primrose_Phil

Useful resources:

www.camdenrts.co.uk
0207 846 3535

www.streetlink.london.org
0300 500 0914

www.streetskitchen.org
Provides food, hot drinks, safe chat and outreach in Camden and other locations.

www.chalkfarm.foodbank.org.uk

www.mungos.org

www.camden.gov.uk/homelessness-in-camden

If you see a person in an emergency situation please always dial 999



Photograph by Rosie Powell

COMMON GROUND
WITH NAOMI ISHIGURO

BY MICAEL JOHNSTONE

Naomi Ishiguro is a rising star in the literary world and a local resident. Micael Johnstone spoke to her about life during lockdown, her inspirations, creative processes and new book, *Common Ground*. Her first book, *Escape Routes*, was a collection of short stories. Naomi previously worked as a bookseller before beginning her writing career.

How was life working in a bookshop?
I really enjoyed it. I was living in Bath at the time and we had a brilliant circle of regulars at Mr B's Emporium of Reading Delights. Everyone would gather around, reading books and drinking coffee, and I met so many friends. Now I go into Primrose Hill Books a lot – it's a brilliant shop and they've kept me going during lockdown. Knocking on the door and collecting books has been one of my few sources of human interaction – it's a great part of the community.

How has lockdown been for you?
It's been all right! We're lucky with green space: being able to go to the Hill, the Heath and Regent's Park has been fantastic. It's quite tricky to write and be creative in lockdown. The lack of external stimulus, and having new ideas, doesn't really happen when you don't have that interaction with the outside world. I've been very lucky that my friends and family have all been OK. Some people I know have had Covid, but they've all been fine.

How have you been keeping busy?
My partner has been very into plants. We have lots of new plants in the flat, so I've been enjoying that. We have a Chinese Money Plant that keeps having plant babies, so we have about 10 of them now! Learning about growing things has been nice. Learning to cook new things has been keeping our spirits up. I have an amazing yoga teacher in Norwich, so it's been nice to be able to go to her classes again as they're now virtual.

I've also got really into podcasts on my daily walk: that's been a whole new thing to discover in lockdown. The High Low is brilliant: it feels like two interesting friends talking. I also got addicted to Americast in the run-up to the election and during it. I've been learning about the book ones too. Shelf Life is brilliant: it's people sharing seven books that have changed their lives, like Desert Island Discs but for books, and I've got loads of good reading

recommendations. Slightly Foxed is also good – it has a nice atmosphere and books focus.

What are you looking forward to most as we come out of lockdown?
That's a dangerous question as I don't want to get too excited! Seeing friends, obviously – I miss people. I'm looking forward to getting involved with events in the local community. I'm hoping to visit friends in Bath and Bristol and also do international travel, although that seems far away. I'd like to make some train journeys around Europe. I'm not sure we want to 'go back to normal', as that created the climate crisis and attitudes in the hyper-capitalist business world. I don't know if that has changed that much, but the idea of taking this as a reset is a good one.

Where are your favourite places to hang out?
Well, it's tricky because of lockdown. But my daily walks are Primrose Hill and Hampstead Heath. As well as Primrose Hill Books, I also like going to West Hampstead, to West End Lane Books. I was just on a podcast with a writer called Sheena Patel. She's written about how much she loves the North Circular, where it opens up on the flyover right by Brent Cross – I love that part of the road too! Lockdown has made me appreciate comfortingly familiar local scenes.

What inspired you to get into writing?
Well, my dad is a writer [Nobel prize winner Kazuo Ishiguro] and I always liked the way writing gives you a voice beyond your usual circles. When I went to university I was studying English, but academia wasn't really for me – I wanted to be making work rather than thinking about it.

Which writers and creative thinkers are you most inspired by?
Good question; you'd think people would ask me that, but no one ever does! At the moment I'm inspired by other young writers: people roughly my age who are coming out with debuts who are really good. Molly Aitken who wrote *The Island Child*, Okechukwu Nzelu who wrote *The Private Joys of Nnenna Maloney*, Alex Allison who wrote *The Art of the Body*; Gemma Reeves, her book *Victoria Park* I highly, highly recommend. They are all in their late twenties / early thirties and coming out with brilliant novels. These are people who are in some ways peers, but I also really respect them as they're so good. It's an inspiring world to be involved with, and it makes me want to write better!

How about non-fiction?
I loved reading Michelle Obama's book. I found it empowering and real. The fact that she manages to be relatable and authentic despite the fact that she's one of the most powerful women in the world is an amazing gift. I love that.

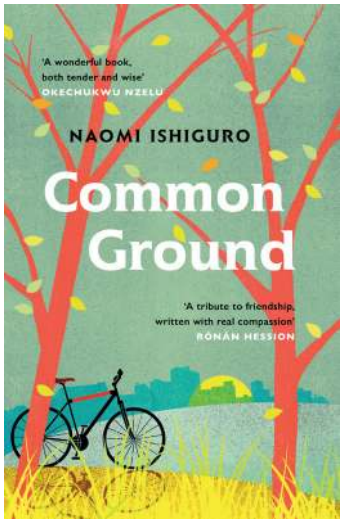
I also did a lot of reading in the research for my book, learning about people in the Romany world. There's a brilliant book called *The Stopping Places* by Damian Le Bas, an exploration of Romany Britain and his own identity as a Romany. It's stunningly written, incisive and sharp, and opens a window to a world many people may not be aware of.

What inspired you to write *Common Ground*?
I started off thinking a lot about public space. Years before I knew I was going to write this book, I played at open mics in Bath and had friends who busked. I had lots of interesting conversations about space and public space with those friends, and what you're allowed to be doing where; why you can't just sing in the street. I remember talking to someone about wild camping, and why we're not legally allowed to do it in England. I used to visit a lot of libraries to do my research, and was thinking how valuable they are as a public space, but loads of them are closing or reducing their opening hours.

There were lots of thoughts in my mind around 2016 and the Leave campaign, including racism and what was an increasingly hostile environment. I thought to myself, "who would really feel this more than anyone else?" I thought about people from the Romany community. Just now the government is trying to make trespass illegal. It's quite terrifying. They are trying to make a whole way of life – a whole community – illegal, essentially. So thoughts about who's allowed to take up space and who isn't were at the front of my mind when I came up with this book.

Could you tell us a bit more about the new book?
It's about two boys growing up in a fictional Surrey town, loosely based on Guildford, from very different backgrounds. Stan is 13 and suffering from bullying at school; he is awkward and trying to find his feet. Charlie is a bit older and is Romany and he lives on a Traveller site on the outskirts of the town. They happen to meet one autumn afternoon when Stan's bike breaks and Charlie stops to help him fix it, and they form a friendship. We follow their friendship as children when the differences between them aren't so apparent, and then later as they reconnect in 2012 when the Hostile Environment policy began. Their paths then are offering them very different opportunities. The book is really about friendship and the strength of their friendship. It's also about the stresses and strains that structural inequality can put on friendship, but also how solidarity across cultural boundaries can be a force to defy those negative aspects of society.

Common Ground by Naomi Ishiguro (Tinder Press, £16.99) is available from Primrose Hill Books.





Neighbourhood Nosh

A new initiative at the Community Centre is providing cooked meals for those in need.

By Hattie Hartman. Photographs by Sarah Louise Ramsay

The first lockdown witnessed an extraordinary outpouring of community support networks, hand-clapping for the NHS and neighbour helping neighbour. As the seemingly endless months of London's third lockdown wore on, pandemic fatigue and isolation set in. Yet during the darkest winter months, a determined group of local residents quietly established new networks, cooked nourishing meals and delivered them to those in need in our community.

Dubbed 'Neighbourhood Nosh', the volunteer initiative seeks to serve those in food poverty by distributing delicious plant-based meals on a regular weekly schedule. The first indication of something new afoot was the appearance around Primrose Hill of alluring posters affixed to lamp posts. The posters captured the ethos of Neighbourhood Nosh, calling for people to share their skills and time, donate food, contribute to running costs, and of course to identify those who could benefit from the meals.

> "We had a very close relationship with the community, helping with the summer fair and the library campaign. That's what brought me back; I wanted to help when Neighborhood Nosh started."

Like many good ideas, Neighbourhood Nosh's promising start was a convergence of circumstances, timing and a handful of committed individuals. The seed of the idea grew out of the Oldfield Lunch Club (suspended due to Covid), which has been operating under the auspices of the Primrose Hill Community Association since 2010, and the fact that a new kitchen (courtesy of Roundhouse kitchens) had been installed on the Community Centre's small

mezzanine on the eve of lockdown. Local resident Nikki Hayden had volunteered both at the Oldfield Lunch Club and at the Chalk Farm Food Bank, so she brought insider knowledge of both communities' needs. Primrose Hill Community Association trustee Doro Marden, another volunteer, spearheaded Association support and a fundraising appeal for an additional fridge and freezer.

Volunteers coalesced around the idea of offering meals at lunchtime on Thursdays, timed to coincide with the hours of the Food Bank, visits to which tripled in 2020. Neighbourhood Nosh deliberately started small and local. Donations were solicited from the shops on Regent's Park Road, with support forthcoming from Yeoman's, Greenberry, Andy at Primrose Hill Butchers through his contacts at a Sainsbury's in east London, together with Helen Sweeney and Zam from Primrose Corner, as well as Bens, Shepherds Foods, and further afield, Parkway Greens.

The arrival of JC, aka Jean Christophe Slowik, charismatic ex-owner of L'Absinthe who embraced the role of volunteer chef, instantly bolstered Primrose Hill's nascent community food project. JC responded to the Community Association newsletter's callout for volunteers and rapidly emerged as chief animator and raconteur of Neighbourhood Nosh's weekly Zoom calls. A veteran of almost two decades at the side of Marco Pierre White and 11 years at the helm of L'Absinthe, JC combines cooking expertise with deep managerial know-how. In a recent interview from his home overlooking Ally Pally, JC observed, "One thing I've learned from many, many years of working for Marco is troubleshooting and fixing. I'm very good at reacting quickly to a situation. The fear of all of us was that we would start something that we could not sustain. So we decided to start on a very small scale because this was feasible."

Equally important, JC understands and cherishes Primrose Hill's strong sense of community. Describing the early success of L'Absinthe and the



Cooking and delivering a few dozen meals weekly may sound simple, but in fact it's an organisational feat which Neighbourhood Nosh's core group of 10 has perfected over recent months

positive reviews in the broadsheets that attracted diners from as far away as Croydon, JC explains that he was convinced that L'Absinthe would only succeed on the tricky corner location where three restaurants had failed in the preceding five years if he could build a local clientele. And that's what he set about doing, even finding love in Primrose Hill and marrying his hairdresser, Karmen Alcala of Hackett's, in 2017. When L'Absinthe's lease came due in 2018, JC opted against renewal in favour of a new horizon. He has since established Vinsducru Ltd, a small wine company that sells to private clients in north London. "We had a very close relationship with the community, helping with the summer fair and the library campaign. That's what brought me back; I wanted to help when Neighborhood Nosh started," JC explains.

Cooking and delivering a few dozen meals weekly may sound simple, but in fact it's an organisational feat which Neighbourhood Nosh's core group of 10 has perfected over recent months, putting their considerable energy, life experience and connections into the project. At the time of going to press, over 120 meals per week are regularly being cooked and distributed. Regulars now receive meals on Tuesdays as well, with extra food provided by Greenberry until the recent ease of opening restrictions. It's all about building networks: sourcing the food, marshalling volunteers, and delivering to people in need. "The volunteer team has been amazing. Everyone actually does what they say they are going to do," says Sally Mackenzie, responsible for sourcing supplies. Because of the unpredictability of food deliveries from the local shops, Mackenzie looked further afield. Through an introduction from London Borough of Camden's Covid response officer, Neighbourhood Nosh was fortunate to partner with the Felix Project, a London charity which collects surplus food from over 450 supermarkets, wholesalers and restaurants and distributes it to frontline charities. Another charity, City Harvest, has recently joined the suppliers.

Neighbourhood Nosh is currently a Tuesday-to-Thursday almost military-like operation, supported by a 25-strong volunteer list,



"This is the 21st century, and for some of the people from the Food Bank who come, that bag of food has got to last them a week. It's tough for lots of people. This grounds you."

ably coordinated each week by Sue Bolsom. The Felix Project and City Harvest deliver to the Community Centre on Tuesdays, when JC surveys the week's supplies and determines on the spot what he'll cook the next day. Because the whole enterprise depends on donations, some weeks are abundant while others are lean.

A first round of Tuesday volunteers preps for Wednesday (mostly vegetable chopping). If any ingredients are missing, JC collects them on his way home. A text to Phil at Yeoman's, well-known to JC from his L'Absinthe years, takes care of any missing vegetables, which Yeoman's delivers to the Community Centre early Wednesday.

Wednesdays is JC's cooking day. Until March, he was ably assisted by George Barton, a young ex-chef who lives locally. Sometimes volunteers accustomed to home cooking are taken aback by the quantities. JC explains, "We're talking industrial cooking. You don't chop five courgettes, you chop 10 kilos of courgettes. Every time, we try to do something different. Last week, we were given some chocolate from KFC – I believe it's what they use to make hot chocolate, so we made a chocolate mousse, and actually it was a very nice chocolate mousse." Additional volunteers – all socially distanced on the Community Centre's tiny mezzanine – chop, wash up, package and store the day's production. According to JC, it's now "a very slick operation. Cooking 25 meals the first day was much harder than the 100+ we did last week, because I probably had a casual approach and thought I could turn up and cook anything, but in fact half the equipment was missing." The biggest challenge is chilling food rapidly so that it can be refrigerated. The purchase of a blast chiller has been put on hold with the ever creative JC using ice water *bains maries* to cool down soups and stews.

"Wednesdays are a beautiful day for me," says JC. "It has been eye-opening because it made me realise that although I might not have much in my life, I have so much. This is the 21st century, and for some of the people from the Food Bank who come, that bag of food has got to last them a week. It's tough for lots of people. This grounds you," he says.

On Thursday mornings, Hopkinson's Mews buzzes as volunteers lay out welcoming stalls ready for collection from 11 am. Neighbourhood Nosh meals, individually bagged and labelled so that recipients know what they're eating, sit alongside an array of fresh produce and tinned goods from the Felix Project and City Harvest. In addition to twice-weekly deliveries next door to Oldfield, approximately 40 meals currently go to the Family Support programme at The Winch, a children and young people's charity behind the Swiss Cottage Leisure Centre in Winchester Road. The Family Support programme caters primarily to single mums with under-fives in the Swiss Cottage area and on Chalcot Estate.

Winch staff member Page Victor reports that the single mums, many of whom have been extremely isolated during the pandemic, have found "the care and quality of the Neighbourhood Nosh meals extremely nurturing". "I wanted to say that the broccoli soup from last week was delicious – the best I've had," read one of numerous appreciative texts that Page received. Broadening its community networks further, Neighbourhood Nosh partnered with the Queen's Crescent Community Association to deliver any excess food, so that nothing goes to waste.

It's still early days for Neighbourhood Nosh. "A lot of it has been hard work, and a lot of it has been luck. Everybody has just given. Local businesses have given and the volunteers have given. It's been very uplifting. But we must ensure that we are meeting the need," observed one regular volunteer. It can be a challenge to work out who needs support, because people in need often stay quiet.

As for what's next, Primrose Hill Community Association are in negotiation with Oldfield to get back into their large catering kitchen, running a lunch club there again while keeping up deliveries to others in need. And then the kitchen at the community centre will be available for other food initiatives – a drop-in café? Cooking classes? A supper club? A 'community fridge' to tackle waste food? Watch this space!

For more information or to volunteer, contact nosh@phca.cc.

If you could make a donation to help with costs of the project, please go to www.phca.cc/donate

The Cavendish School

In April this year, Taryn Lombard was appointed Head of The Cavendish School, a local independent primary school for girls. She talks about moving into the area and the ethos of the school.



What attracted you to The Cavendish School?
When I first met the girls, I was struck by the heady mix of their thirst for learning, their enthusiastic appetite for throwing themselves into new experiences and their strong sense of social conscience. The friendly and dedicated staff are exceptional, both in the classroom, and in their nurturing and pastoral care. All of this, happening in the middle of one of the most vibrant, diverse parts of London, made me know it was the place I had to work.

What makes it distinctive?
The energy of the school. When you walk through the gates, you feel it immediately. It's like a big family. Everyone is given what they need to thrive and succeed. The breadth of experiences on offer, together with the passion of the staff, means that despite our non-selective intake, our girls make excellent academic progress and secure great senior school places.

How would you describe the atmosphere?
Electric. The school always buzzes with laughter and the noise of excited and enthusiastic collaboration, both in the classroom and playground or in Regent's Park on our 'Out There' outdoor education programme.

How would you describe your personal educational ethos?
I have a total commitment to providing meaningful and purposeful educational experiences that equip girls with ever-curious minds and the confidence to be true to themselves.

What plans do you have for changes to The Cavendish School?
I see it as my responsibility to protect and strengthen the rich legacy of The Cavendish's history. It has been educating girls for almost 150 years, and I will ensure that we continue to provide educational experiences and opportunities of the highest calibre. The school's strong sense of community is definitely something I want to continue to develop. We are looking forward to making even stronger links with our local community, with other schools, theatres, sports clubs or stand-alone businesses. The past two years have meant that schools had to operate at a distance, and I believe it is now our responsibility to rekindle and re-spark these connections with local communities.

What do you like about working in Camden?
The vibrancy! It's a privilege to lead a school that is in the heart of one of the city's most culturally rich communities, and wonderful to be able to take advantage of the greenness and open spaces of Regent's Park and Primrose Hill, so close to our school.

I have been impressed by how many of our pupils walk or cycle to school, using the canal or public transport. Clearly our staff, parents and girls understand the importance of being environmentally conscientious; and they embrace and promote green living.

What are you proudest of in your career to date?
Being an ambassador for girls' education overall, developing a school culture which promotes leadership at every level, and observing the sheer exhilaration of pupils achieving something they didn't believe they were able to do.

What have you learned about leading/teaching during a pandemic? And what will you keep of that, going forward?
As a school, we adopted a number of EdTech resources in order to create a distinctive online learning experience for all our students, especially those studying from home. We will continue to look at how these resources can enhance the delivery of the curriculum. Returning to the classroom has highlighted the value of social interaction: how a sense of belonging builds self-esteem, and the importance of learning from one another. Our teaching needs to ensure that we structure our students' learning in a way that encourages them to see the world, and themselves, as part of a deeply interconnected and interdependent whole.

Why should parents choose a single-sex primary school for their daughters?
Never before has it been clearer that our society needs confident, assured and incisive women leading and shaping the world around us. Girls' education provides an incredible opportunity to cultivate a culture where they see and believe in what they can achieve and deliver.

What do you think marks out a Cavendish girl?
Her commitment to be true to herself, to care for those around her and always strive for excellence.

What do you do in your spare time?
As a busy mother of three children, much of my spare time is spent supporting their interests. However, whenever I can, I enjoy being outdoors: walking, running or playing golf.
www.cavendishschool.co.uk

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editor,

I was most interested to read your online magazine, *On the Hill* (March 2020), particularly the article entitled 'Before Darwin Court' in which Nos 8 and 10 Gloucester Avenue were mentioned.

In the early 1970s, just before the period buildings were demolished, I lived at No 10 with my husband, where we ran a small boarding school. The school, St Christopher's College, Regent's Park, was owned by my father-in-law. Our students lived in No 8, shown on the right of the photo, and we lived and had the office, recreation rooms, kitchen and dining room in No 10.

It was a hectic lifestyle for us, as we were responsible for our students at all times.

I recall phoning the local laundry in Primrose Hill to enquire about their prices. When I got through, the man said "Madam we do not collect two sheets a week", to which I replied that I wasn't talking about two sheets a week, I was asking for the price for 160 sheets and 80 pillow cases a week. I think he nearly dropped the phone. He was certainly round on my doorstep pretty swiftly with a wicker basket for our use. As a 22-year-old I felt a bit smug having dealt with it in an assertive manner.

During the summer months we used to host parties of overseas students from Italy, Spain and Japan and take them on trips around London sightseeing and to improve their English. They would have a picnic lunch, and I can still see my father-in-law dealing out the sliced bread like playing cards as others in the line would butter, fill and pack the picnics.

I remember Mr Davies delivered the grocery order for us down the back stairs, which would have been the servants' quarters. One day I found the enormous block of cheese he delivered had a semi-circle of teeth marks in it and a substantial amount missing. The culprit was our boxer dog, who stood beside me licking his lips. When I shouted at him he cleared three flights of stairs at some speed; he knew he was in the dog house!

Mrs Davies was a saviour to me as I was newly wed, far from my family in Worcestershire, and knew no one. She was a friendly face and a willing ear, for which I was most grateful.

The photo was taken from the gardens of Cecil Sharp House. Looking at it again, I remember more clearly (old age marches on) that the little maisonette in between the two houses had a bath in the minute kitchen with a lid on it, which I found amusing when we first moved in. We also had five large stone lions in the garden.

I must admit that when I saw the photos of Darwin Court I felt dismayed as the architecture of our house was so interesting. A short time after we'd left, I was sent a clipping from a newspaper saying that it was a pity that the houses had been demolished as they were of particular architectural interest.

I now realise how little I knew about the area whilst living there; I miss a lot. Occasional trips to the Engineer pub, where we sat in the garden, were virtually our only social life, apart from my taking our boxer puppy for walks in Regent's Park and on Primrose Hill.

Best wishes,
Toni Allison

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OPEN HOUSE

PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

June 2021 Programme

ALTERNATIVE KINGS CROSS — Weds 2 June

Christ Foster, a former Bobby on The Beat in Camden, presents a light-hearted meander through the lesser-known Dickensian streets near Euston Road.



WAR MEMORIALS — Weds 9 June

An illustrated talk about the quirks, surprises, and everything else war memorials, by Lester Hillman.



PICASSO — Weds 16 June

Dr David Morgan resumes his talks on Spanish Art with a focus on great modern artist Picasso.



UKULELE (Session 1) — Weds 23 June

Ukulele is one of the easiest instruments to play. We'll form a community band as we learn from a Working Men's College tutor over two weeks. Instruments supplied for the two hour meetings. Please register with PHCA office.



Ukulele (Session 2) — Weds 30 June

The second session of ukulele, please register with the PHCA office.



OPEN HOUSE is funded by 'U3A in London'

Every Wednesday at 2pm Primrose Hill Community Centre

Free of charge - includes tea and cake afterwards!

JOB OPPORTUNITY

PHCA Part-time Administrator

A wonderful opportunity to work in the lively office of a thriving community centre in the heart of Primrose Hill. You will be an integral part of all the work that takes place in this strong local community.

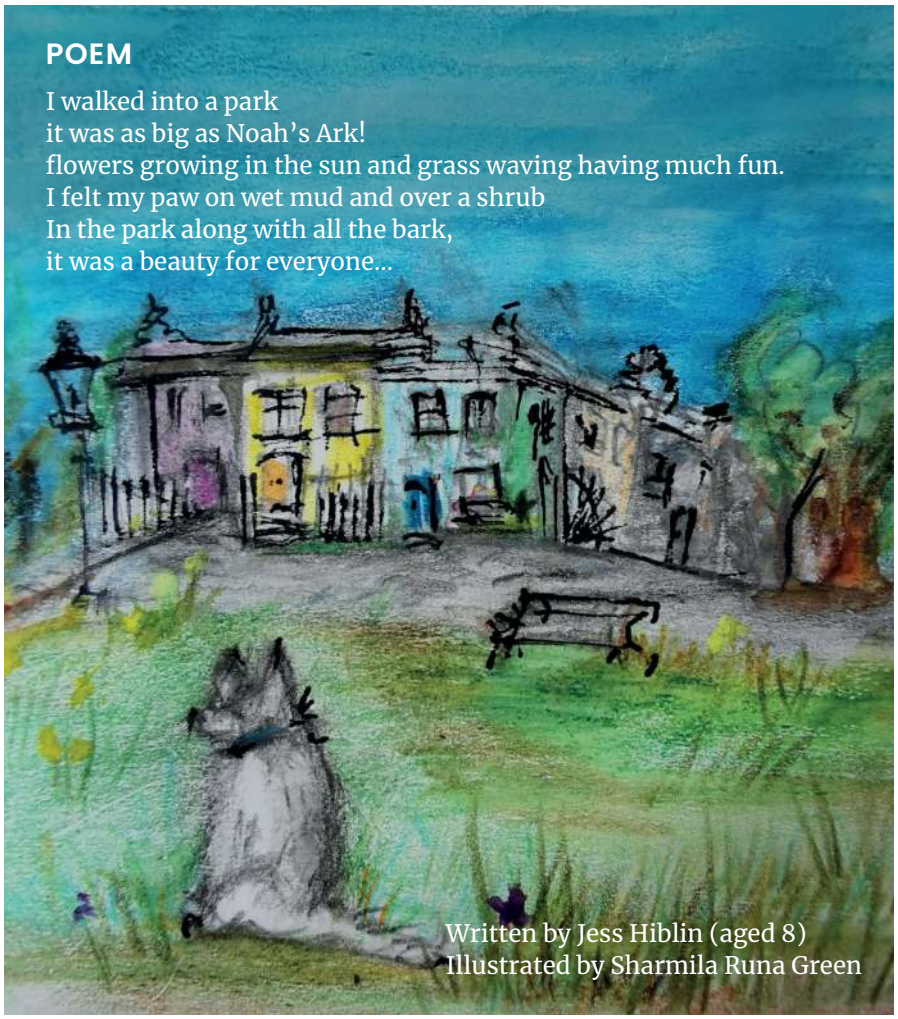
Primrose Hill Community Association (**www.phca.cc**) runs a community centre and a community library. The postholder will help to administer the work of the community centre, which runs many activities, events, projects, hall hire, meetings, etc. It is a lively, busy environment in which to work.

We are currently looking for a part-time administrator to work eight hours per week in the Primrose Hill Community Centre office, days/times by agreement. The work is during normal office hours, but it would be helpful if you could work occasional weekends or evenings.

For more info visit **www.phca.cc/vacancy**

POEM

I walked into a park
it was as big as Noah's Ark!
flowers growing in the sun and grass waving having much fun.
I felt my paw on wet mud and over a shrub
In the park along with all the bark,
it was a beauty for everyone...



Written by Jess Hiblin (aged 8)
Illustrated by Sharmila Runa Green

ON THE HILLIMERICK

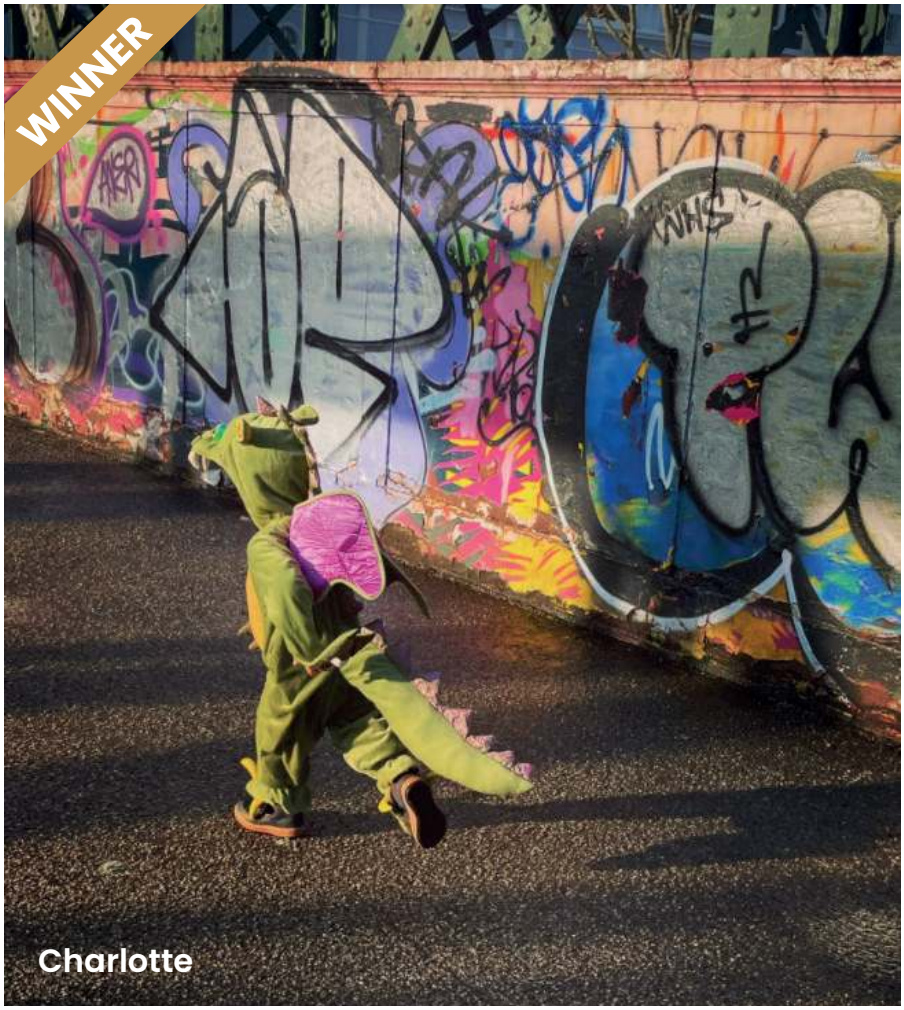
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imprint, worth a mint!
By dint, not of sprint, but
uphill stint,
Highlight publication,
Coiffure celebration,
A hint, of a glint, in your
Hackett's tint?

Howard Richards



Hello, Primrose Hill!

Earlier this year, *On The Hill* held a photo competition with the theme of 'a joyful moment'. In spite of lockdown, there were over 250 entries on Instagram and Twitter, and so many joyful photos. Thank you to everyone who took part, and to Odette's, Bottle Apostle and Reenie's Ice Cream Bar for providing prizes.







Honourable Mentions

1. Brian Wingfield
2. Gabriela Orlandi Salomon
3. Kate
4. Russell Swallow
5. Ruth
6. Sean Hawie















In a binge-watching, video streaming world, there are still those excited by a return to the ballet

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