# On The Hill

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR PRIMROSE HILL PEOPLE

OCTOBER 2019 | ONTHEHILL.INFO




## INCOMING
A newcomer's perspective on moving to Primrose Hill

## GREEN FINGERS
Catherine Horwood on gardening and her latest book

## NAILING GADDAFI
David Justice talks about his life

Produced by Primrose Hill Community Association

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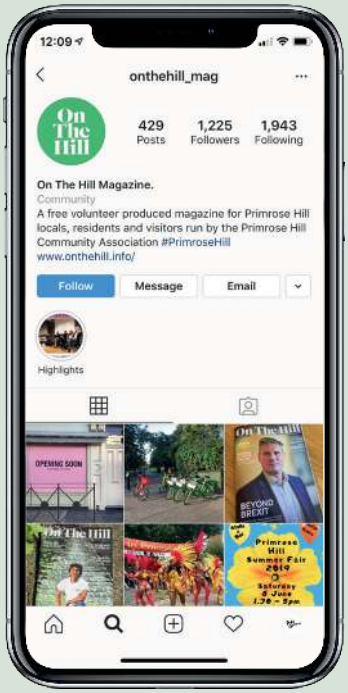
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**If you are interested in volunteering or contributing to *On The Hill* then please get in touch**

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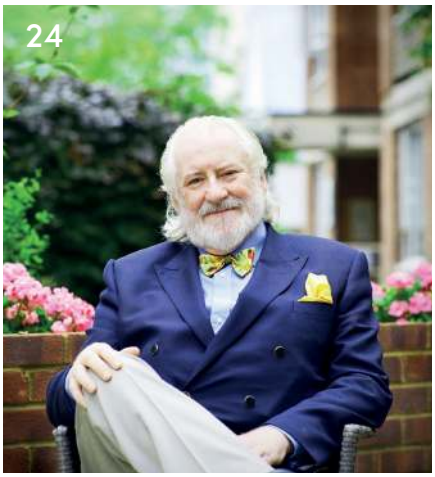
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# October 2019

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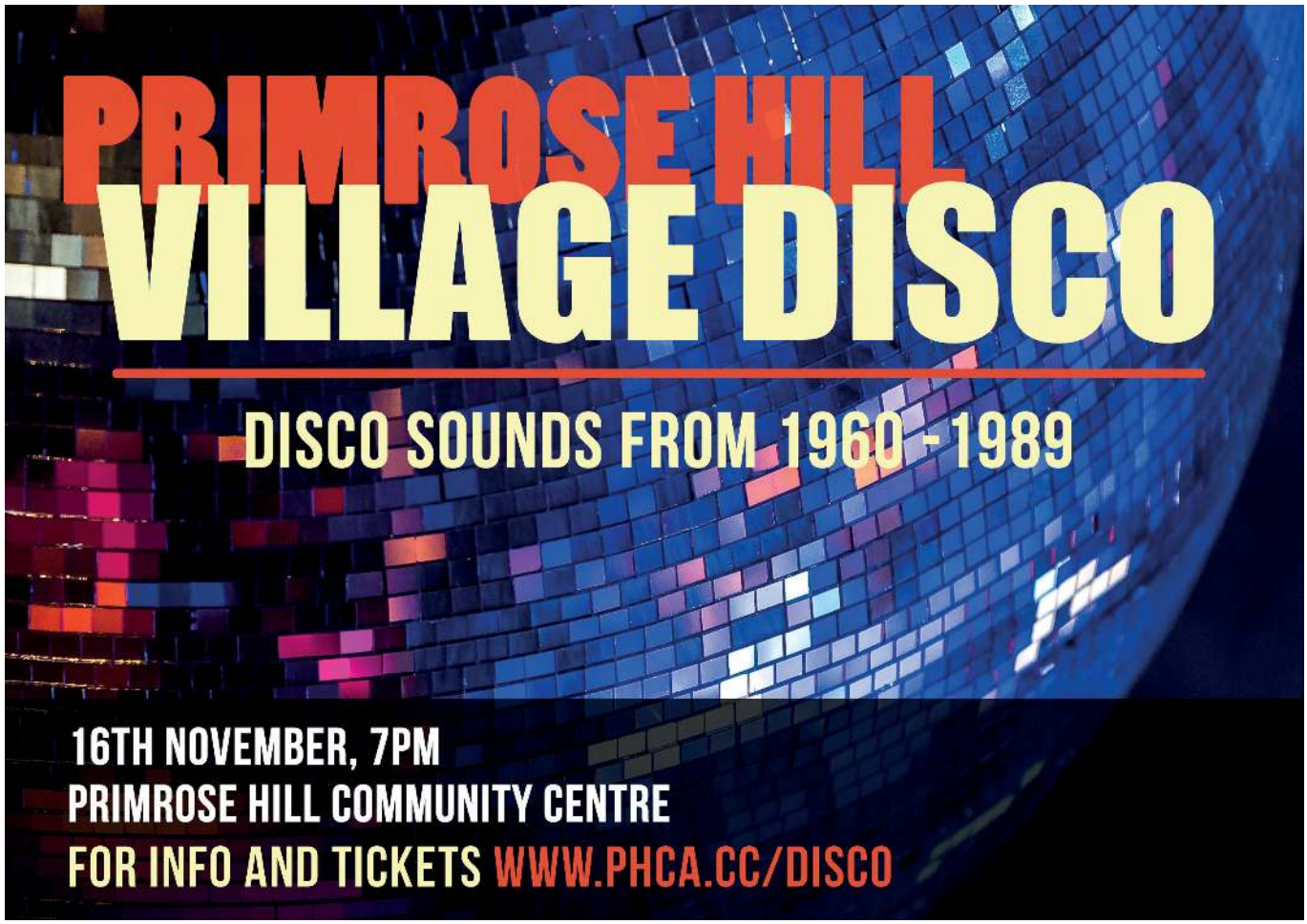
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# Primrose Hill in the 1960s

A view from Regent's Park Road during the swinging sixties



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Special thanks to all our contributors.

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**
ILLUSTRATION BY Holly Collis

ISSN 20-6175






# Welcome to October

Happy birthday to *On The Hill*! Your local magazine has been running for five years.

I like to think that David Bowie would have sung 'Five Years' to us if he were still around. It's not entirely implausible, as he did spend time in Primrose Hill. If we had a time machine, we could see him arrive at a photoshoot on King Henry's Road wearing the red boots and quilted jumpsuit he'd worn a month earlier on 'Top of the Pops' for his performance of 'Starman'; or recording at the Mayfair studio in Sharpleshall Street, the building which housed the Museum of Everything and is now Eglon House.

Over the past five years *On The Hill* has brought you a taste of all the characters, charitable ventures and events which our community in Primrose Hill does so well. It's all a bit like the Museum of Everything, but on a larger scale. And without the stuffed squirrels.

As we hit the five-year mark, I'd like to thank everyone who helps to create *On The Hill* every month; especially all the people who volunteer on the magazine, our wonderful advertisers who support and keep us afloat, and of course our readers.

The Primrose Hill Community Association had the idea to start the magazine five years ago, and it's expanded over time to become what it is today. As well as being entertainment, it's a community magazine and therefore a valuable resource to garner support for local causes.

'Five Years' has recently been adopted as the anthem for the climate change protests, because of its warning of Earth having only five more years left. So let's start the next five years on a positive note, for both *On The Hill* and our planet.

*Maggie Chambers*

JOB OPPORTUNITY

# St Mary's Centre
## Part-time Administrator

St Mary's Centre is a local charity that works with vulnerable young people at risk of school exclusion and gang exploitation. We have 13 years' proven track record of helping local youth stay safe.

We are now looking to recruit a dynamic Administrator to work alongside our youth workers and volunteers and ensure the smooth running of the youth service.

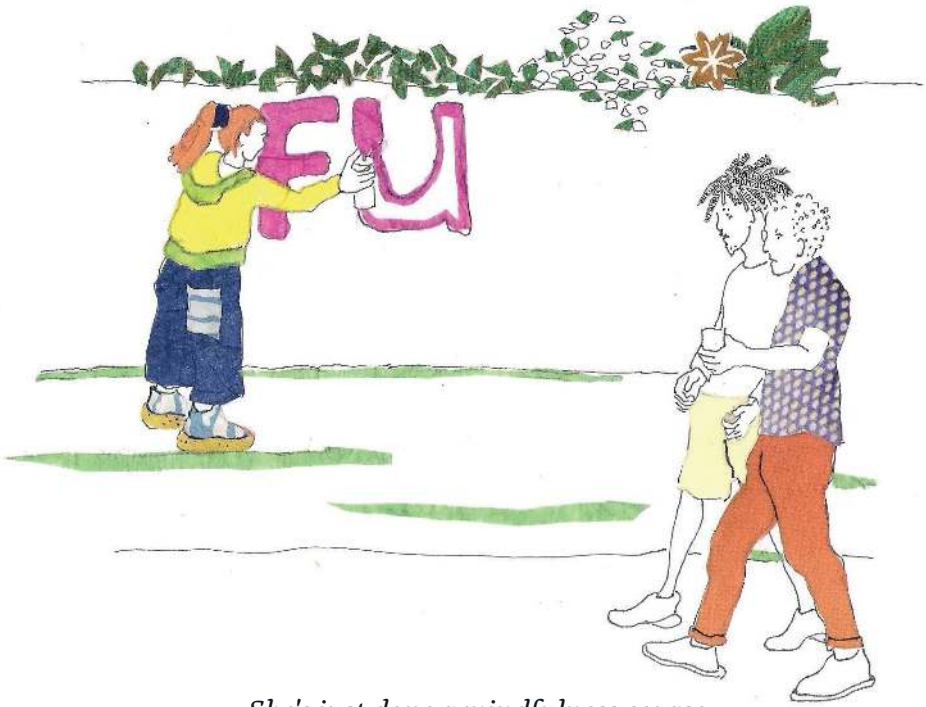
Must be a good communicator, efficient, friendly, flexible, outgoing and proficient with Microsoft Office. The role requires strong organisational skills, building and creating structure and managing numerous aspects of fundraising activities.

To apply for an information pack contact Nick Walters:
**07704 715 367 · nwalters@smvph.org.uk**

**Details**

- 5-10 hours weekly
- This post will require occasional evening working
- Six month initial contract
- Pay negotiable, subject to experience
- Place of work: St Mary's Church, Primrose Hill, Elsworthy Road NW3 3DJ

## Primrose Hill LAUGHS




*She's just done a mindfulness course*

# On The Street

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AND MORE



## INCOMING

### A newcomer's perspective on moving to Primrose Hill

By Lizzie Allen

On the day we moved to Primrose Hill, a complete stranger in the street invited us to dinner. I'll be honest, we were sceptical at first, but then other Primrosers reached out and we realised it was a 'thing' on the Hill: an unwritten code ensuring that newcomers are made to feel welcome. By taking up citizenship we'd crossed some invisible Narnia-styled threshold and joined a tribe, as friendly and open-hearted as a medieval Hebridean mountain village.

*Continued on p 8* ▶

# Incoming

Continued from p7

What we had thought was just a pretty high street we soon realised was so much more. Independents thrive because locals look after their own. How lovely to purchase a book from a bookworm who actually owns the bookshop, or a leg of lamb from the local butcher. We've yet to attend a cupcake masterclass at Primrose Bakery or sip Chardonnay at the Bottle Apostle's free wine-tasting, but no doubt we'll be there soon.

Even the canine residents have absorbed this convivial hospitality. Our elegant, gay Vizsla (famous for his signature red bandana) is over the moon about the move. He's gay in the cheerful sense of the word, but also the gay sense of the word as he is bored by lady dogs but has a very active imagination when it comes to the same sex of his species. Imagine his delight to discover a speed-dating service on the Hill, the participants seeming to take no offence at his over-enthusiastic advances, whether they fancy him or not. He is also a refined dog who is picky with his food and likes to smell flowers on his way through life, so he positively beams with happiness each time he is invited into Greenberry cafe and Fitzroy's florist and fawned over by the staff.

The celebrities who live here seem equally committed to perpetuating this spirit of connectedness. Within a few weeks of arriving I'd read contributions by Mary Portas in *On The Hill* and seen Stephen Mangan and Andrew Marr speaking live at local fundraising events. I must confess to being particularly excited by the prospect of Andrew Marr's talk, as he's been my not-so-secret heartthrob for many years. In fact, it's been a long-standing joke in my family that Andrew is the only real threat to my marriage. The irony is that Marr is most probably the only bloke my husband would most willingly relinquish me for, as he's more keen on him than I am! Many a night's pillow talk has been stupefied by yet another résumé of Marr's book, *The History of Modern Britain*. My husband's excitement at hearing Marr speak was only topped by his discovery that St Mary's church, which hosted the event, brews its own label of craft beer in their crypt. Needless to say, we went home with a bountiful supply that night.

The friendly demeanour of the Hill's celebrity residents has left me somewhat confused as to my own behaviour in relation to them. Previously, I had discreetly averted my gaze on spotting a celebrity elsewhere in London; however, now these famous people are part of my community. Averting one's gaze is tantamount to blanking someone. How would I feel if my neighbours constantly ignored me and disregarded my existence? Surely celebrities deserve to be treated like humans too? But then, on the other hand, how annoying to be constantly approached by random strangers.

This confusion began to dog my morning walks, as I frequently crossed paths with one particularly famous individual. I won't reveal his name lest I scupper the privacy of his morning exercise loop, but suffice it to say he has kind eyes and a sad smile (many of you will guess who). On passing him, I used to be thrown into a fit of indecision that would propel me into maniacally barking 'good morning' at him, or else throwing myself behind a bush. Despite his pleasant greetings, I have since diverted my own exercise loop to save me the stress.

The other downside of living amongst celebrities is that my own husband, Matthew, looks like one, specifically Daniel Craig. In our first years of marriage he resembled every other normal dad at the school gates, but no sooner had Casino Royale premiered than middle-aged mums across England began drooling at the sight of him. Women who had previously ignored Matthew suddenly decided he was hot stuff, so he was plunged into a maelstrom of hormones that left him walking a tightrope between pretending not to notice the attention and positively wallowing in it. I prayed that Craig's star would fizzle and burn out quickly, but it just went from strength to strength. Clearly there would be not a single quantum of solace coming my way, and the sky continued to fall on my head as the spectre of drooling women become a permanent fixture in my life. One night our Kensington dinner was actually interrupted by a breathless autograph-hunter. An autograph-hunter! After that my husband began raising his left eyebrow suggestively each time he left a room. Let me tell you, it's no fun being married to 007 unless you actually are married to 007.

In time, I pinned my hopes on the idea that my husband might eventually go to middle-aged seed like the rest of us and develop a huggable pot-belly and balding pate, but in that too my hopes were thwarted. Like Daniel Craig, he seems to have grown more handsome with age, and now that a Bond bonanza is being filmed to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the rakish hero, it seems I shall be plagued by his fan club into my dotage.



Lizzie's husband and unwitting Daniel Craig impersonator, Matthew

Rooting around for sympathy, I cried on the shoulder of a male friend. "Oh no!" I groaned. "As I hit my fifties and look less and less like Pussy Galore, now he starts looking like James Bond." "Yes," replied the friend thoughtfully, "less and less like Pussy Galore and more and more like Bagpuss." We don't see much of that friend any more.

So our tenuous existence around the margins of celebrity limps on. On the upside we often get the best tables at restaurants, so I do have a vested interest in keeping the subterfuge going.

Other than the constant reminder that I'm more Bagpuss than Pussy Galore, my naturalisation process into the nation state of Primrose Hill has been a privilege and a joy. On Sundays we spread picnic blankets and watch the sunset over London with an impressive cross-section of humanity, all chillaxing in affable harmony and savouring the fresh green air. As I watch my colourful neighbours playing ball, walking their dogs, flying kites, hip-hopping, snogging and sipping lager, I close my eyes and think with gratitude how lucky we are to have alighted here.

So thank you, Primrose Hill. We see your love and we raise you. Long live The Hill!

INTERVIEW

# The Voice of Pokemon

*Children from Haverstock School's young journalists interview actress Veronica Taylor.*

"Welcome to my living room!" This was the greeting from actress Virginia Taylor as she welcomed us to the MCM Press Room with a huge smile and our interview began.

Virginia's journey started as the voice of television character Ash, over 20 years ago. The Japanese Pokemon (translated as 'pocket monsters') dynasty was at its peak and despite schools banning Pokemon, children all over the UK traded Pokemon cards, played the game on their Gameboys and devotedly watched the Saturday morning cartoon series.

Virginia told us, "Whether you're actually 10 years old or an adult, the story still links to the 10-year-old child inside you."

Most of the adults in the room nodded at this statement, and we were surprised to find out they had been Pokemon-mad as children!

We asked her:

**Q: How did you get the part of Ash?**

VT: *As an actor you are always auditioning, and you never say "Oh I'll take that but I'm not right for this." So Pokemon was one of those things where I was lucky to get the audition and then lucky to get the job.*

We wondered where Ash's voice came from. It is hard to write this because suddenly Ash's voice appeared from the back of Virginia's throat! VT explained about her original voice.



VT: *We got to go in and see a tiny clip from the original Pokemon animated series; after listening we just jumped into the sound booth and did our best kind of impression of the voices. But I was allowed to transform Ash's voice into what it eventually became.*

**Q: What was it like being a female playing a 10-year-old boy?**

VT: *Extraordinary! Yes, I was playing a boy, but I capture the 'essence' of the character, and Ash is exuberant, positive and just kind of naïve, especially in the beginning and out on his own. I could have played that part of him if he had been a sheep!*

The Pokemon dynasty carries on with another feature film in 2020; and for those of you who are still collecting comics, the MCM comic stands will buzz with the vibes of past Pokemon adventures.

MCM Comic Con takes place this year on 25–27 October

**www.mcmcomiccon.com/london**

*Emma & Declan (Year 7), Yousuf (Year 10)*



# POSTCARDS FROM PRIMROSE HILL




Here is a colour postcard of King Henry's Road in about 1905. In the background you can just about make out the church of St Mary the Virgin on Primrose Hill Road. Such a pretty, peaceful image! None of these houses survive, unfortunately. The road was semi-destroyed by developers, councils and a V1 doodlebug during the Second World War. On the left is now a block of flats named Whitton. The Expressionist painter Oskar Kokoschka lived briefly in the road at the beginning of that war.

@old_primrosehill_postcards

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# News & Information

from Primrose Hill Community Association

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

## AGM

You are warmly invited to our Annual General Meeting at the Community Centre on Thursday 3 October. We start with drinks at 6.30pm, followed by the meeting at 7pm, after which local author Andrew O'Hagan will give a talk. The names of those standing as trustees will be posted on the noticeboard in the Centre beforehand. Do come along to enjoy the evening and mingle with your neighbours with a glass of wine.



Andrew O'Hagan

## Open House

All Open House events take place on Wednesdays at 2pm at the Community Centre.

2 October – **TBA**

9 October – **West Hampstead**, an illustrated talk by Tudor Allen of Camden Archives Centre

16 October – **Us and Them**: Reflections on hospitality, home-making and European identity, by Professor Tom Selwyn

23 October – **TBA**

30 October – **The Woman in Black**, film starring Daniel Radcliffe, from the ghost fiction novel by Susan Hill

All events are free and include tea and cake.

## The Village Disco

The usual brilliant DJs, cocktails and drinks will be featuring at our next Village Disco on Saturday 16 November. It runs from 7pm until 10.30pm, and tickets are £8 via Eventbrite (see www.phca.cc) or £10 on the night. Come and join the party!

## Pre-school Storytelling

You are invited to a new pre-school activity, Storytelling, which replaces our Music and Rhyme Time sessions. Storytelling will take place every Thursday from 10.30am to 11am, starting on Thursday 3 October. All welcome and free of charge, no booking required. Do then stay for the drop-in session afterwards at 11.15am.

## Free Yoga

Payal will be leading a free beginners' yoga session every Thursday evening from 7.30pm to 8.30pm. All welcome.

## Filming

In October there will be a single evening's filming on Regent's Park Road with road closures, Maggie Smith and fake snow. The film is *A Boy Called Christmas*, and is based on the bestselling book. There will be an information evening on Monday 30 September with presentations at 6.30pm, 7pm and 7.30pm, explaining which roads will be closed, how much parking will be used etc. Venue tba, visit **www.phca.cc** for more information. PHCA have been involved to try and reduce the impact on residents and business.







# Scootergeddon

## By Dr Garry Mancini

I have been watching with interest and concern the evolution of electric scooters and bicycles in Primrose Hill, Regent's Park and London as a whole, so was greatly saddened this summer to hear of the first related London fatality. I of course welcome any mode of transport that is environmentally friendly, providing that it comes with appropriate regulation.

We must pick up on lessons learned in other countries, such as France and the United States. I recently visited Santa Monica in California and was horrified to see the proliferation of e-scooters and bicycles. Every street corner was littered with APP-driven rentable scooters and bicycles provided by an array of companies. Further enquiry revealed that in Santa Monica there are official providers with appropriate licences granted by the city, but in addition there are several rogue companies trying to get in on the act. This means that the safety of each scooter/bicycle cannot be guaranteed and therefore riders and other road and sidewalk users are at significant risk.

The human factor must also be addressed, as many of the riders are not experienced road users and are of varying ages and abilities. I witnessed one Californian rider careering into a toddler on the sidewalk, much to the distress of the parents. Thankfully the child was not seriously injured, although I think the rider was in danger of being assaulted by the child's father!



As an amusing reminder, the idea of personal motorised scooters is far from new, as this photo of Lady Norman's scooter c 1916 attests!

On the very weekend that I was in Santa Monica, an article in the *LA Times* revealed that a local law firm had received 300 calls relating to scooter accidents and injuries. The firm's website featured a gruesome gallery of fractured bones, skin abrasions, broken teeth, broken jaws and traumatised extremities with deformed anatomy.

The most common e-scooter injury for riders is a broken tibia and fibula. Lawyers in the United States call it the 'Tib-Fib Special'. The scooter malfunctions or you lose control, you put your leg down to try to stop, and snap! You just got the Tib-Fib Special!

Road users and companies need to be accountable and should be subject to strict regulation, including obeying all road and pavement rules and also complying with drug and alcohol laws. The need for riders to have some form of licence, compulsory basic training (similar to moped and motorcycle riders) and insurance should also be part of the conversation.

In London, e-scooters and e-bicycles are becoming increasingly common and their legality is somewhat open to question, with alleged police crackdowns in operation. Clear regulations need to be in place to protect riders and all members of the public. I think we all agree that our NHS casualty services have enough work as it is.



# The Kids Network

The Kids Network is a London-based organisation working in Camden to help support children aged 8–11 through one-to-one mentoring. At a crucial age in a child's development, during the transitional period between primary and secondary school, mentors help with their social and emotional development: they help build confidence, resilience and curiosity for ambitious futures by sharing a heap of fun and positive activities and experiences, opening up London in accessible and interesting ways.

Currently 50% of children's mental health is diagnosed before the age of 14, with more and more children feeling the effects of exam pressure, bullying and social media addiction. Children are stressed, depressed, anxious and angry, and this affects the disadvantaged disproportionally. Moreover, modern living can be hard for adults too, with many young adults impacted by loneliness. But many want to give back in a meaningful way. The Kids Network supports children by matching a local adult with a child in their community, to help connect our disconnected communities.

Week by week, mentors get the chance to see London through a child's eyes. Mentors have the opportunity to try new things with their mentees, such as archery and bouldering, but also to discover the magic in all the free, local opportunities available in the city. In addition, mentors connect with one another through peer-to-peer support, both online and in regular mentor meet-ups.

Maisie and Georgie met nine months ago and never looked back. Georgie is one of our fantastic mentors, an ex-teacher whose kindness and calmness are infectious. The pair have been up to every kind of fun, taking advantage of all the exciting activities that London has to offer.

We asked Georgie what it was like being a mentor, and she said: "Maisie's resilience and enthusiasm to get out and do things in London is inspiring. My mentee faces many challenges, but she doesn't complain; instead she is always looking forward to new things, and appreciating what she has."

Maisie said of her mentor: "Before, I didn't feel like I had a place to play, and I felt lonely. I'm not lonely any more. We get to do fun things together, and I have someone to talk to. Our activities include making slime, trampolining and rock climbing. Having a mentor has helped. It's given me a boost. I have more energy and want to do things better. I've set goals and I've achieved them, which makes me feel amazing."

Georgie responded: "I feel more connected to a community in London. I've seen and done lots of things in London that I wouldn't have otherwise, such as art in the Barbican, watching *Gangsta Granny* in the West End, and exploring London's museums from a new perspective. It's refreshing to have a funny and curious person to enjoy London with!"

Georgie loves "seeing how much fun my mentee has when we do things together. I love it when her face lights up and she says 'wow' at a new experience: from seeing what the houses are like in Acton (a totally new area of London for her), to her excitement at being in a West End theatre for the first time, and when she went to the V&A with me. A highlight was the smile she had after she first went rock climbing – it was one of her goals and it's the happiest and proudest I've seen her."

Right now, the Kids Network supports over 30 children in Camden, thanks to the support of Camden Giving. Our borough is rapidly changing and more children need support to help them navigate their transition from primary to secondary school. They are proud to have mentors who represent a really diverse range of professions, interests and backgrounds, but are looking for further committed and passionate people to join their community. Could that be you? They offer ongoing support and training to help you be the best mentor you can be.

Become a mentor with the Kids Network today! For more information contact Minami on 07378 316570 or at m.inoue@thekidsnetwork.org.uk, or visit **thekidsnetwork.org.uk/become-a-mentor** for more information and an application form.

# NEWS & VIEWS





## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

The OTHER Poets' Corner . . .
Yeats, Fitzroy House, where his blue plaque adds grace,
Auden, adjacent, with his charming place,
Manley, alone, left,
Gerald Hopkins bereft,
His offspring may be
In Hopkinsons' Place?

Yours faithfully,
Howard Richards

## A Weekend of Needlepoint

Would you like to spend a weekend exploring a new hobby, learning needlepoint/tapestry or improving your skills?

Anna Pearson, author of *The Complete Needlepoint Course* and *Needlepoint Stitch by Stitch*, will be running a workshop in Primrose Hill over the weekend of 18–20 October. Two projects will be on offer: a glasses case; or a small panel stitch fantasy with more than 30 stitches to try. Both are suitable for beginners and those who have already done needlepoint but wish to learn extra tips and stitch in a friendly atmosphere.

Friday (6–7.30pm) starts with prosecco and nibbles, a short background to needlepoint and collection of kits.

Saturday runs from 10am to 5.30pm with plenty of time for coffee, lunch and tea.

Sunday runs from 10.30am to 4pm and includes coffee, lunch and tea.

You can stitch, ask questions and admire each other's work. Anna will be on hand throughout.

The cost of the weekend is £149 plus £12 for the glasses case or £25 for the Florentine panel. Contact Anna at anna.pearson365@gmail.com, or on 020 7419 9941. Ten per cent of proceeds from the workshop will be donated to the youth work at St Mary's.




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# Press by Melanie Press opens new store in Primrose Hill

The boutique Press has moved location from Erskine Road, where it was situated for fifteen years, to 160 Regent's Park Road. The new store will showcase the Melanie Press Collection, which was launched in 2016.

"The Melanie Press Collection is the look of the urban village of Primrose Hill", says former Central St Martin's fashion graduate Press, who went on from St Martin's to work with Mark Jacobs, Ralph Lauren and Karen Millen.

Press, who lives locally, adds: "Expanding to a new, more visible location is incredibly exciting. Primrose Hill is part of the DNA of the Press collection. It has been a natural step forward to embrace our growing profile as the collection gains more international attention.

"Press is inspired by the way my clients live – mindfulness with rock and roll." Repeat customers include Rose Byrne, Helena Bonham Carter, Kirsten Dunst and Sadie Frost. In fact, Sadie Frost's new yoga collection has just launched at Press.

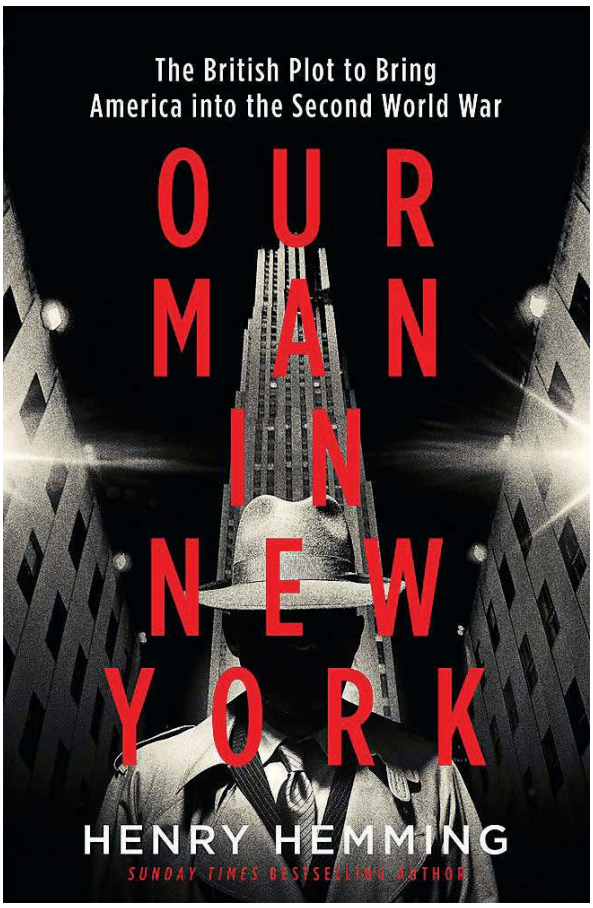
Press designs are made in limited edition runs to ensure exclusivity and ethics, adding to the label's signature appeal.

# The Other Art Fair



Primrose Hill resident Ryan Stanier founded The Other Art Fair in 2011. It now has versions in the US and Australia and is considered the best place to meet and buy art direct from emerging artists.

The Other Art Fair presented by Saatchi Art will be held during 3–6 October at Victoria House, Bloomsbury Square, London WC1B 4DA.




# *Our Man in New York*

*Our Man in New York* by Henry Hemming, bestselling author of *M*, recounts the covert operation to manipulate American public opinion and bring the USA to the Allies' aid in World War II.

Henry Hemming's grandparents, Alice and Harold, were based in Primrose Hill, but during Hitler's first two years in power they lived in Berlin. In the early 1940s they travelled to America, trying to gain support for the British war effort by lecturing on their experiences in Nazi Germany.

Alice and Harold both worked for William Stephenson – 'our man in New York' – who masterminded the MI6 operation and was, like them, a Canadian who adopted Britain. In fact, Stephenson plucked Henry's father from a pond as a toddler, saving his life and ensuring Henry's existence!

William Stephenson arrived in the United States in June 1940 with instructions from the head of MI6 to secure aid for Britain and 'organise' American public opinion.

Aviator Charles Lindbergh feared a British-led plot. Others believed that the British were manipulating the US media, that the government was riddled with British stooges and the British were using dirty tricks to smear anti-war politicians. These claims were shocking and paranoid – but also true. And they were the very least of it: Stephenson set up a Canadian forgery factory; he paid astrologers to predict Hitler's death; and was instrumental in setting up an organisation which became the CIA.

Stephenson's daring changed the course of the war and his story can now be told in full. Henry Hemming has had access to private and previously classified documents, including the diaries of his grandparents.

*Our Man in New York* reminds us that 'fake news' is not a new phenomenon and that governments have long meddled in other countries' political processes.

Available at Primrose Hill Books

# What's On October

## NEW THIS OCTOBER

### TUESDAY 1 OCTOBER
**Film Show at the Library**
Winner of three Oscars and the Palme d'Or, *The Piano,* starring Holly Hunter, Harvey Keitel and Sam Neill, directed by Jane Campion. PHCL. 7.15pm. £8 in cash, including a glass of wine, in advance at PHCL or on the door.

### WEDNESDAY 2 OCTOBER
**Open House**
TBA. PHCA. 2pm. Free.

### WEDNESDAY 2 OCTOBER
**Heg and the Wolf Chorus**
Theatrical folk, taking inspiration from folklore, fairytales and modern-day myths. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £13, or £10 under 26s.

### THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER
**PHCA Annual General Meeting with guest speaker**
AGM followed by talk by local author Andrew O'Hagan. PHCC. 6.30pm for 7pm.

### SUNDAY 6 OCTOBER
**Family Barn Dance**
Bring all the family and take part in lively dances from Britain and beyond in a supportive and fun environment! CSH. 3–5pm. £8 adult, £6 child, £2 under 2s.

### SUNDAY 6 OCTOBER
**The Young Folk Club**
This session features a live performance, Q&A, and informal playing session with folk group Solasta. For 12–25-year-olds. CSH. 6–8pm. Free, but booking required.

### TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER
**Gardening at the Library**
Local author Catherine Horwood talks about her biography of the enduringly influential Beth Chatto, with colourful photos. PHCL. 7pm. £2 at door.

### WEDNESDAY 9 OCTOBER
**Open House**
'West Hampstead', an illustrated talk by Tudor Allen of Camden Archives Centre. PHCA. 2pm. Free.

### WEDNESDAY 9 OCTOBER
**The Road to Peterloo: Ballads and Broadsides**
Pete Coe, Brian Peters and Laura Smyth tell the story of the 1819 Peterloo Massacre through ballads composed at the time, accompanied with concertina, melodeon, bouzouki, guitar and cello. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £15, or £10 under 26s.

### THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER
**Leveret**
Traditional tunes performed with captivating spontaneity by three of England's finest folk musicians: Sam Sweeney, Andy Cutting and Rob Harbron. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £16, or £10 under 26s.

### WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER
**Open House**
'Us and Them: Reflections on hospitality, home-making and European identity', by Professor Tom Selwyn. PHCA. 2pm. Free.

### WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER
**Trad Night: Peter and Barbara Snape**
Traditional British folk from the north of England, delivered in an intimate, unamplified setting. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £10.

### WEDNESDAY 23 OCTOBER
**Youth Folk Workshop**
Rosie Hood and Cohen Braithwaite-Kilcoyne run a practical workshop for 12–19-year-old musicians of any instrument. No folk experience required. CSH. 1.30–4.30pm. £20, £15 concessions, £25 workshop and evening performance.

### WEDNESDAY 23 OCTOBER
**Rosie Hood and Cohen Braithwaite-Kilcoyne**
Rosie Hood delivers strong, pure renditions of traditional songs, particularly those from her native Wiltshire. Cohen Braithwaite-Kilcoyne is a fine melodeon player and also a member of award-winning group Granny's Attic. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £14, or £10 under 26s.

### THURSDAY 24 OCTOBER AND FRIDAY 25 OCTOBER
**Circus Glory Workshops**
PHCC. Children 10am–3pm. Teenagers 3–5pm. £15 per hour; £28 for morning or afternoon; £50 per day; £90 for both days. Contact circusglory@gmail.com

### THURSDAY 24 OCTOBER
**Rising Up: Peterloo 2019**
An evening of dramatic narrative and song to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre. Written by Debs Newbold. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £15, or £10 under 26s.

### SATURDAY 26 – SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER
**Dance Around the World**
A two-day community festival celebrating traditional dance cultures from all over the world. CSH. 10am–11pm. £30 for weekend, £17 for full day, £10 for evening.

### WEDNESDAY 30 OCTOBER
**Open House**
*The Woman in Black* film starring Daniel Radcliffe, from the horror novel by Susan Hill. PHCA. 2pm. Free.

### WEDNESDAY 30 OCTOBER
**Louise Jordan: 'The Hard Way'**
A storytelling performance examining the representation of women throughout history through the story of English suffragette Hannah Mitchell. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £13, or £10 under 26s.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### TUESDAY 5 NOVEMBER
**Film Show at the Library**
The wall may be down, but keep it secret! *Goodbye Lenin*, starring Daniel Brühl, Katrin Sass and Maria Simon, directed by Wolfgang Becker. PHCL. 7.15pm. £8, in cash, including a glass of wine, in advance at PHCL or on the door.

### SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER
**Primrose Hill Village Disco**
Come and party with the neighbourhood! PHCC. 7–10.30pm. Tickets £8 via Eventbrite or £10 on the night.

## FOR KIDS

### MONDAY
**Rhyme Time**
Library Rhyme Time for under 5s. PHCL. 10.30–11.15am. Suggested £2 donation. Contact 020 7419 6599

**Ready Steady Go ABC**
Exploratory play, singing, dance and stories for babies and toddlers 6–18 months. PHCC. 9.45am–12.30pm. Contact 020 7586 5862

**Circus Glory**
Trapeze for ages 3–12. All levels welcome. PHCC. 3–6.30pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastresse@googlemail.com

**Homework Club**
Do your homework in the Library with a qualified teacher. PHCL. 4–6pm. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

### TUESDAY
**Monkey Music**
Award-winning music classes for babies and toddlers: music, movement, percussion, bubbles and fun. PHCC. 9.30–11.30am. Contact 020 8438 0189 for a free trial class.

**Baby Ballet**
Classes for 2 years+. PHCL. 10–10.45am. From £11. Contact Katie Pick, Primrose Hill Ballet Schools, 07769 353 528, katie@primrosehillballet.co.uk, www.primrosehillballet.co.uk

**Hartbeeps Multi-Sensory Sound Classes**
Multi-sensory classes for mums and their little ones. Music, movement and drama for under 5s. PHCC. Baby Bells 2pm; Baby Beeps 3pm; Happy House 4pm. Classes from £9.50. Contact clarelouise@hartbeeps.com

### WEDNESDAY
**Les Petits Bellots**
A new type of childcare, offering a perfect solution for parents who don't want to commit to long-term nursery care. PHCL. 9–11.30am. Contact 07401 862326, www.lespetitsbellots.com

**Circus Glory**
Trapeze for ages 3–12. All levels welcome. PHCC. 2.30–6.30pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastesse@googlemail.com

**Primrose Hill Children's Choir**
Enjoy fun songs and games, and learn to sing well. Ages 4–11. St Mary's, NW3 3DJ. 4.10–5.10pm. First time free, then £8 per week. Contact Matthew 07817 234 925, www.primrosehillchoirs.com

**Homework Club**
Do your homework in the Library with a qualified teacher. PHCL. 4–6pm. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

**Chess Club**
Learn chess at the Library with a trained instructor. PHCL. 6.30–8pm. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

### THURSDAY
**Mini Mozart**
Musical story time. PHCL. 9.30am for young children; 10.15am for babies. Contact hello@minimozart.com

**Pre-school Storytelling**
NEW. Every Thursday morning. PHCC. 10.30–11am. Free, no booking required. Contact 020 7586 8327, info@phca.cc

**Drop-in for under 4s**
Drop in and take part in a variety of activities. PHCC. 11.15am–1pm. £2.50 to include snack and tea and coffee for parents and carers. Contact 020 7586 8327

**Catherine's Ballet**
Ballet classes for under 5s. PHCC. 4–5pm. Contact info@chalkfarmschoolofdance.co.uk, www.chalkfarmschoolofdance.co.uk

**First Class Learning**
English and Maths tuition. PHCL. 3.30–6.30pm. Contact primrosehill@firstclasslearning.co.uk

### FRIDAY
**Mums' and Dads' Morning**
Meet other parents while your children play. PHCL. 10.30–11.30am. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

**Circus Glory**
Trapeze for ages 3–12. All levels welcome. PHCC. 2.30–6.30pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastesse@googlemail.com

**Pitta Patta**
Funky dance classes, ages 4–16. PHCC. 4–7.15pm. Contact Juliet 07971 916 174, Juliet@pittapattadance.co.uk, www.pittapattadance.co.uk

### SATURDAY
**Rhyme Time**
For all ages, with an adult. 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month. PHCL. 10.30–11.15am. Suggested donation £2.

**Ready Steady Go: Move It**
Monthly Saturday sessions for 0–1 year-olds with Carol Archer, child movement specialist. Encourage your baby's movement development. RSG, 12A King Henry's Road. 10.30am–12pm. Contact 020 7586 5862

### SUNDAY
**Perform**
A unique mix of drama, dance and singing classes to bring out every child's true potential. Ages 4–7. PHCC. 10–11.30am and 11.30am–1pm. Try a free class. Contact 020 7255 9120, enquiries@perform.org.uk, www.perform.org.uk

## FOR ADULTS

### MONDAY
**Mary's Living and Giving for Save the Children**
Take advantage of 50% off books, movies, pictures, records and CDs, every Monday, 10am–6pm.

**Lunch Club**
At Jacqueline House, Oldfield Estate, Fitzroy Road. Freshly cooked lunch served at 12.30pm sharp. £5 for 2 courses. More info from PHCC.

**Bridge Club (ACOL)**
PHCC. 1.45–3.45pm. £3. Contact Maureen Betts 07919 444 187

**Circus Glory**
Trapeze for adults. All levels welcome. PHCC. 1.30–2.45pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastresse@googlemail.com

**Neighbourhood Information Centre**
Drop-in advice centre. PHCL. 2–4pm. Free. Contact 020 7419 659

**Trauma Release Exercises (TRE)**
Drop-in class to release chronic tension patterns and return the nervous system to balance. PHCC. 4–5.30pm. £15 per class, or 5 for £50. Contact Tim Kirkpatrick, www.back2base.co.uk

**Bridge Class**
Join us in the Library for a game of bridge. Beginners/intermediate. PHCL. 6.30pm. Contact jojarrold@gmail.com

**Chilled Strings**
Small amateur string chamber orchestra, guided by professional tutor Kwesi Edman. PHCC. 6.30–8.45pm. £10 for each evening. Contact sueandhercello@gmail.com

**Primrose Hill Choir**
Love to sing? All styles of music, all welcome. PHCC. 7.30–9.30pm. £7. Contact Matthew 07817 234 925, www.primrosehillchoirs.com

## TUESDAY

**Mary's Living and Giving for Save the Children**
Take advantage of 20% off men's items every Tuesday, 10am–6pm.

**Free English Classes**
Learn English at the Library. PHCL. 12–1pm. Free. Contact jojarrold@gmail.com

**Pilates**
Dynamic sessions, 9am and 10.15am; gentler session 11.30am–12.30pm. PHCL. £12 per class, £100 for 10 classes. Contact lizacawthorn@gmail.com

**Lunchtime Laban**
Workshop for actors, dancers, singers and the rest of us. Explore the where and how of movement with Rudolf Laban's Scales and Efforts. PHCC. 12–1pm. £10. Contact Jenny 07970 536643, jennyfrankel.laban@gmail.com

**General Yoga**
6.30–8pm. PHCC. Contact Catriona 07958 959816, cat.b1@blueyonder.co.uk

**Morris Dancing Class**
Have fun, increase your fitness and improve your dance skills whilst learning Cotswold Morris dances. CSH. 7–9pm. £8, or buy 5 and the 6th is free.

## WEDNESDAY

**Mary's Living and Giving for Save the Children**
Student Day: 20% off all items with a student ID card, every Wednesday, 10am–6pm.

**Lunch Club**
Jacqueline House, Oldfield Estate, Fitzroy Road. Freshly cooked lunch at 12.30pm sharp. £5 for 2 courses. More info from PHCC.

**Circus Glory**
Trapeze for adults. All levels welcome. PHCC. 1.15–2.15pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastesse@googlemail.com

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

**Chess Club**
Learn chess at the Library with a trained instructor. PHCL. 6.30–8.30pm. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

**Bridge Class**
Join us in the Library for a game of bridge. Beginners/intermediate. PHCL. 7pm. Contact jojarrold@gmail.com

**English Folk Dance Club**
Fun for dancers of all abilities and none. No partner needed. PHCC. 7.30–10pm. Drop-in charge £6. Contact camdenfolkdance@yahoo.com

## THURSDAY

**Mother and Baby Pilates**
Want to tone your limbs, flatten your tummy and strengthen your pelvic floor? PHCL. 11am–12pm. Contact pilateswithpaulette@gmail.com, facebook.com/pilateswithpaulette

**Gentle Pilates**
Gentle but effective Pilates class. PHCL. 12.30–1.30pm. £10 per session. Contact annie@mactherapy.org

**Narcotics Anonymous**
PHCC. 1.30–3.45pm. Free.

**Primrose Hill Yoga**
Slow flow yoga: create space and strength in the body, and quieten and focus the mind. PHCC. 5.30–6.30pm. £11 drop-in, or £50 for 5 classes. Contact Carolineshawyoga@gmail.com, www.carolineshawyoga.com

**Kriya Yoga**
Yoga class. PHCL. 7–8pm. This session is not available for drop-in. For cost and further information, contact Hagen, kriyayogauk@btconnect.com

**Hatha Vinyasa Yoga**
Gentle flow yoga, beginners welcome. Strengthen the body whilst calming the mind. Every Thursday (excl 3 & 17 Oct). PHCC. 7.30–8.30pm. Free. Contact payal_vasudeva@yahoo.com

**English Country Dancing**
Explore England's social folk dance heritage (country, ceilidh and barn dancing) in this friendly and inclusive class. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £8, or buy 5 and the 6th is free.

**Life-drawing**
Beginners to professionals, just drop in! PHCC. 7–9.20pm. £10. Contact 020 7586 8327, phlifedrawing@gmail.com, www.meetup.com/Primrose-Hill-Life-Drawing-London, Instagram: @lifedrawingph

## FRIDAY

**Early Morning Pilates**
Stretch and strengthen the whole body to improve balance, muscle strength, flexibility and posture. PHCC. 8–9am. £15 drop-in, £120 for ten sessions. Contact Natalie 07709 543 581, natalienicollfitness@gmail.com

**Mums' and Dads' Morning**
Meet other parents while your children play. PHCL. 10.30–11.30am. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

**Aerial Pilates with Pieta**
Get stronger and more flexible through moving with the support of an aerial sling. PHCC. 10–11am. Class sizes are limited, so book at 07726 721 791, www.circusbodies.com

**Circus Glory**
Trapeze for adults. All levels welcome. PHCC. 1.30–2.45pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastesse@googlemail.com

**Yoga for Seniors**
PHCC. 2.45–3.45pm. Free. Contact 020 7586 8327

**Councillors' Surgery**
Third Friday of the month. PHCC. 6.30–7.30pm.

## SATURDAY

**Councillors' Surgery**
First Saturday of the month. PHCL. 11am–12pm.

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

## SUNDAY

**Hopkinson's Bar**
Meet for a drink with your neighbours. All welcome. PHCC. 12–3pm.

### 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

**Please submit entries for our November issue by Friday 11 October**
onthehillwhatson@phca.cc


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On The Hill onthehill.info

# 119 REGENT'S PARK ROAD

## BOY'S HOME FOR THE TRAINING AND MAINTENANCE OF DESTITUTE BOYS NOT CONVICTED OF CRIME

**An Extract from Caroline Cooper's *Windows on the Past***






Boy's home 1893 or earlier



Regent Automatic Supply (1968)

This residential school was established at 44 Euston Road in 1858. However, it was soon displaced by the construction of railway lines into St Pancras station and in 1865 it re-opened at this site, 115–119 Regent's Park Road. It could house about a hundred boys, and over the next sixty years was home to about a thousand 'destitute boys' who were lodged, clothed, fed and educated there.

They rose at 5.45 and were made to work and study hard, but they were well fed and were taught domestic work, for which they could be hired. Trades which they studied included carpentry, shoemaking, printing and tailoring. They also learned band instruments – considered useful if they wished to join the army – and would march with their band to Primrose Hill to play football on Wednesday afternoons.

There were morning and evening prayers.

Numbers 109a–117 are also on the site of some of their grounds and buildings.

### Valeting service
John Fitzgerald (1925–35); Tim Galvin (1940); James Foley (1945–50)

### Dyers and cleaners
Certified Cleaners Ltd (1955)

### Amusement machine manufacturers
Regent Automatic Supply (1965–72)

### Window blind manufacturers
Living Daylights (1980)

### Shirt manufacturer
Various proprietors (1985)

### Estate agent
David Birkett (1989–present)



We ate ripe blackberries we picked from flowering hedgerows:

Just children in sunshine weather.

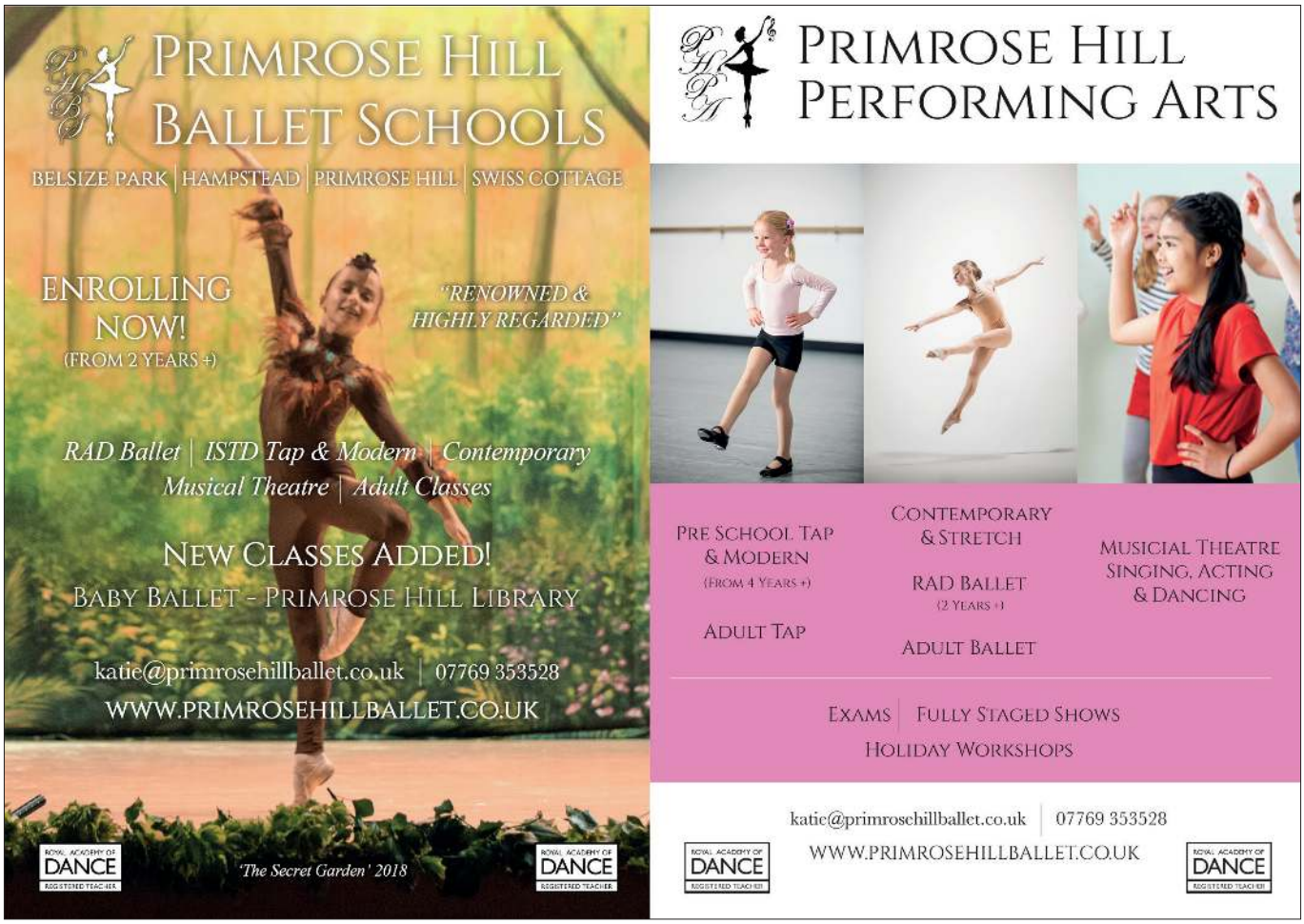
We walked by elms and butterflies and withy willows

Every day as though forever.

As though this ancient world of ordinary joy

Needed no care.  How easy it was to destroy.

***Russell Butler***




# Mine's a Pint

By Julie Stapleton

**Mick and I were going through some papers in the office the other day and found a very old programme of events for the Primrose Hill Community Centre. There used to be a bar in the Lower Hall every Friday, Saturday and Sunday! That's a lot of boozing!**

Now Hopkinson's Bar only runs every Sunday in the Lower Hall, from 12 noon till 3pm. Everyone is welcome.

After many years with Claire and Jack at the helm, our bar is now run by local resident John Sutton. I've not known him long, but he's the kind of person you feel you've known a lifetime. He's easy to talk to, with a great sense of humour and a winning smile.

John was born in Liverpool. One of six children, which included two sets of twins, John was second from eldest. He describes his childhood as 'great fun' with lots of 'mud, muck and laughs'. Every door was open in those days, and everywhere you went you got fed. There were sometimes up to four meals a day each in a different house! Happy times.

John's mum had three jobs. His dad was a school caretaker, and soon progressed to running the education department's team of caretakers and cleaners for all of Liverpool. John left school before he could take his exams as he was offered work at the age of sixteen. His wages were handed straight to his mum.

John's dad then went off to war. He was a Colour Sergeant in the Parachute Regiment, and highly decorated after an important event in the war. In a




PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Louise Ramsay

battle in the south of France he held a major crossroads connecting three towns, until they were relieved by the Americans' Operation Dragoon. In France they still celebrate this triumph annually, and although John didn't go this year, his dad and brother did. There is only John's dad and two others alive from that time now.

John worked in telecoms, then moved to the *Liverpool Echo*. He was a sub-boy, which means he made tea for the sub-editors. He did lots of running around with messages and describes it as 'fun times'.

Because he was a 'good boy' he got promoted to the machine room. It was big and loud but really exciting. John loved it and worked there for eight years.

He then had time working in the publishing department, and was the Union Man for the *Daily Post*; he then changed direction and became a pipe-fitter's mate, which offered more regular hours.

Life was good. John and his mates often went out socialising. On a night out at the famous Liverpool nightclub called the Beachcomber, John spotted Sally and made his move. He asked her to dance at 1.55am. The club shut at 2am! Despite their short encounter he said that night "I'm going to marry that girl", and he was right.

John and Sally met up again the next day to go to Southport. They quickly fell in love. Six years later they were married. But they had already moved in together, even though that was frowned upon in those days. In 1979 they had their first children, twins Ian and Sean, followed by Matthew a year later. John describes Sally as an amazing mum, the perfect mother hen.

In 1985 Sally's sister was running the Russell Arms pub (now the Escape Bar) in Mornington Crescent. She called John to ask him to help. So he left Sally and the children and headed to London to help out for a while. Although he had only worked briefly in a rough pub in Liverpool, he knew he could do it. He really took to it, so Sally and the children followed him down a few weeks later. A move to London was good for the family; they'd fancied a change, a fresh start.

Both John and Sally got stuck in. One of the area managers saw Sally in action and offered her a job as relief manager at the Camden Stores (now the Masala Zone restaurant). Shortly afterwards he asked her if she'd like the job full-time. She then won manager of the year, and a paid holiday in France! The takings at the pub went up to £14k a week in 1985 under the management of the two of them. The top boss at Grand Metropolitan called Sally and John 'the dream team'.

Sally's older sister Rosemary then bought the George IV pub on Pentonville Road in Kings Cross, and they all started working together. Next, they moved to the Old Eagle in Royal College Street. When they arrived the takings were £600 per week; when they left six years later, the takings were £10,000 per week!

John says that the secret to keeping a good clean pub is to stand your ground, be clear, show no fear and never be a walk-over.

Unfortunately the dream team came to an end and Sally and John went their separate ways. Despite their split, they remain close friends. John rented a house in Chalk Farm and was out of work for a while, then got a job at Reeds Bar, Albany Street (now flats), then Delancey Café and Cocktail bar.

Newly single at 53, John walked into the Salvation Army. He admits that he was very down in the dumps. A Major from Liverpool walked over and asked if he wanted to become a volunteer. They needed help cooking the breakfasts for a steady stream of hungry blokes, mainly builders and members of the Serious Crime Squad. John was soon cooking over thirty breakfasts a day! In the end John got a paid job at the Salvation Army and made plenty of money for them over six years, but unfortunately, due to budget cuts, he was made redundant.

**John says that the secret to keeping a good clean pub is to stand your ground, be clear, show no fear and never be a walk-over.**

John then moved in with his twin sons on the Finchley Road. He had no experience in baking, but landed a job as baker at the Co-op in Archway, and soon became Head Baker. The very early mornings were a challenge, but John loved the job, which took him up to his retirement.

He heard on the grapevine about Oldfield, so applied direct; a month later he moved in. John said it felt like winning the lottery and the pools! He soon found out about Primrose Hill Community Centre, and Hopkinson's Bar. So he went along for a few drinks and bumped into some old friends. Bar work was his trade, and Claire and Jack weren't getting any younger, so John took over and the rest is history!

John gives up the middle of every Sunday to run the bar for locals to get together and chat over a drink. What a wonderful way to meet your neighbours and make new friends! Thank you, John, for all you do for our community. You are a treasure.

# Green Fingers



PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Cuttle

## Catherine Horwood talks to *On The Hill* about memories of Primrose Hill, gardening and her recently published book on Beth Chatto.

Local author and historian Catherine Horwood is that rarity in Primrose Hill – someone who was born here and still lives in the area. "It's not strictly true to say that I've lived here all my life," she admits. "I did 'emigrate' to Belsize Park for a few years, but I've been back here for nearly twenty years so I think that counts as a long-term resident."

Catherine grew up in Chalcot Crescent and went to Nesta Brooking's School of Ballet in the centre of what is now the Meadowbank development. "It was an exciting time to be growing up in Primrose Hill, with fascinating people such as the Maschlers and Fay and Ron Weldon as our neighbours. I can still remember Regent's Park Road as it was in those days, with the chemist's shop (now Anthony Delicatessen) run by kindly Mr Alderson. It had enormous jars in the window full of mysterious coloured liquids. The double-fronted sweetshop opposite was where I'd go and spend my pocket money. And I still do now that it's Pamela Shiffer! Of course there have been massive changes, but Regent's Park Road is still one of the best local shopping streets in London."

Catherine's earliest memory is of Chalcot Crescent bedecked with bunting and Union Jacks for the Queen's coronation in 1953. "My stepfather, Vivian Milroy, was then living at no 26, the 'Paddington Bear' family house, and it makes me laugh to see the films because in reality the house is so narrow inside! Vivian ran a film company called Primrose Productions in St George's Mews. They restored the famous silhouette animations of fairy tales by German-born filmmaker Lotte Reiniger. Locksmith Animation is just near where we live now, and I was delighted to hear from them that Reiniger is still an icon among animators.

"By the 1960s my mother yearned for a larger garden, so we moved up to Belsize Park where I stayed myself after getting married. I got my green fingers from her and ended up opening my garden on Haverstock Hill for the National Gardens Scheme for many years."

As a social historian, Catherine has written about many things including fashion history. She did her PhD with Professor Amanda Vickery on interwar dress codes. But now she concentrates on writing about gardening, when she isn't looking after her roof garden which has views of Canary Wharf and the London Eye. "While I no longer have a large garden to play with, I cram an enormous amount on the roof – loads of bee-and butterfly-friendly plants, as well as fruit such as strawberries and raspberries, and vegetables like tomatoes, cucumbers and beans; and roses, of course." Her recent book, *Rose* (Reaktion, 2018), is a cultural history of the world's favourite flower.

The roof garden faces due south, which brings both benefits and problems. "In last year's long hot summer, I managed to produce four melons; this year, despite the heatwave, not one. The rule I try to keep is to grow only varieties that are hard to buy; although with our fabulous farmers' market at St Paul's CE Primary School, there's very little I can't get. But nothing beats the taste of a newly pulled baby carrot, or the scent of a freshly picked sweet pea."

**She was passionate about plant ecology before most people even knew what the word meant.**

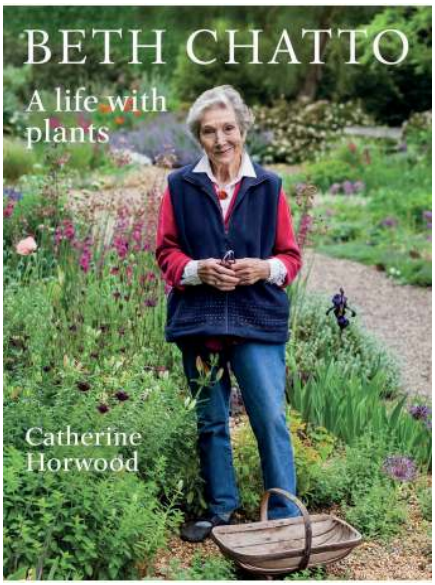
For the last few years, Catherine was working with renowned plants-woman Beth Chatto, who died last year aged 94. "I'd been a fan of Beth's since seeing her gold-medal-winning stands at the Chelsea Flower Show in the 1970s and 80s." After writing about Chatto in *Gardening Women* (Virago, 2010), Catherine was asked to help her with her archives and then invited to write her biography. "It was such an honour, but also daunting to write about someone so well-known and loved in the gardening world."

What stood out for Catherine was Chatto's fight to achieve what she did. "She came across as serene, but like so many she battled with anxiety and depression throughout her life. I think that readers will be surprised by her relatively humble early life, but also by the determination that took her from being an Essex housewife to a world-famous plants-woman. We can all learn from Beth's legacy," Catherine says. "She was passionate about plant ecology before most people even knew what the word meant."

Catherine is now a patron of the Beth Chatto Education Trust, started by Beth in her nineties to carry on her work through courses and events held at her world-famous gardens in Elmstead Market, just east of Colchester. "The gardens and nursery are thriving under Beth's granddaughter, Julia," says Catherine. "Many of the plants on sale aren't available anywhere else, which makes a visit all the more tempting."

One of Beth Chatto's most remarkable achievements was the creation of her Gravel Garden in the late 1980s, which has never been artificially watered – in Britain's driest county! "We were all thrilled when the RHS announced Beth as their Horticultural Icon of 2019." The team from the gardens were asked to recreate the Gravel Garden at the Hampton Court Flower Show this July. "Visitors loved it because, as so many said, 'it was about plants'."

Needless to say, a few of those plant varieties have found their way onto Catherine's roof. "In many ways," she says, "I battle with the same conditions as they do at Elmstead Market – strong sun and a drying wind. I don't have a watering system, as they're tricky to get right. By following Beth's famous idea of 'right plant, right place', I try to keep watering to a minimum even though everything is in pots. For me, gardening, however high up, is the best complement to writing books."

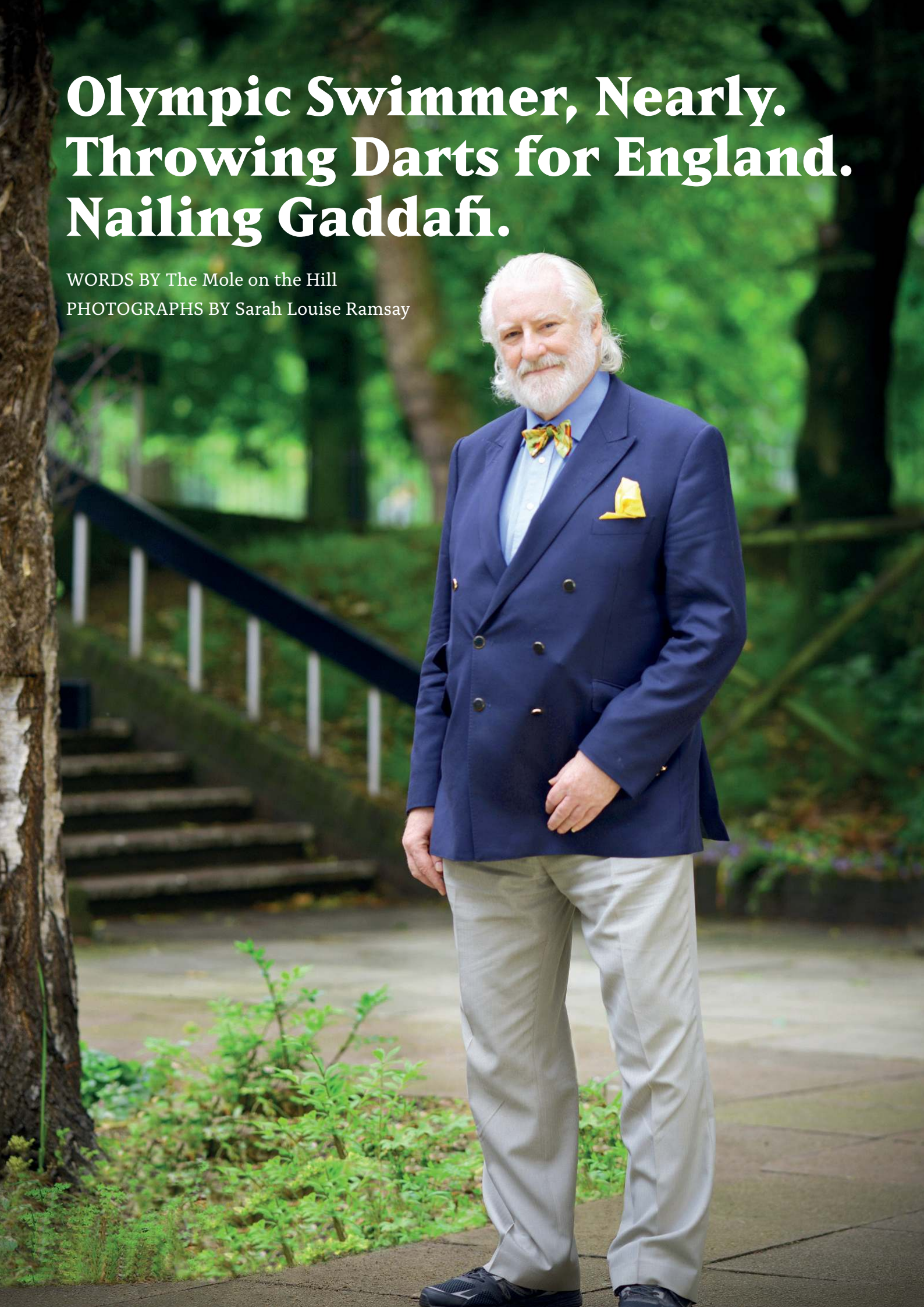



Catherine's latest book, *Beth Chatto: A life with plants* is published by Pimpernel Press. She will be talking about Beth Chatto's life at Primrose Hill Community Library, Sharpleshall Street, on Tuesday 8 October at 7pm. Entry £2 at the door.

# Olympic Swimmer, Nearly. Throwing Darts for England. Nailing Gaddafi.

WORDS BY The Mole on the Hill

PHOTOGRAPHS BY Sarah Louise Ramsay



*What's that building down there, Grandad?*
*That's Oldfield. Where the old people live.*
*Oh really?*
*That's right, lass. There's some bright sparks live there.*

David William Justice, aged 72, lives in Oldfield and he is certainly one of the bright sparks. He was born in Gallowshields in Scotland where his father was a volunteer in the Commando Special Service Brigade, forerunners of the SAS. His father met a Scottish girl, Isabel Thompson, up there and married her.

"I still have a little pocket diary he kept, beautiful handwriting in ink. His troop were fighting in Italy so the entry for 1 May 1945 is significant. The war in Italy is coming to an end; Mussolini is dead. And on 3 May just three words, underlined: Hitler is dead. The commandos were volunteers, so immediately after the war my father returned to civilian life. He came down to the family home in Stamford Hill. He was one of thirteen children living in a council house, Victorian, four storeys, eight bedrooms. When I was six we moved to Dalston and I stayed there till I got married."

David was clearly a clever boy. He won a coveted scholarship to Owens, a fee-paying school in Islington where he excelled, loved being part of a community and wore the uniform with pride. He was in the first eleven football and cricket teams and represented the school in the athletics team and in swimming.

"Believe it or not, I learned to swim in the River Lea. One day we had a swimming gala and I won eight events. Three of the people I beat were in the Olympic squad. A couple of weeks later my parents got a letter from the ASA asking for permission for me to go to the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo. I was 17. I started serious training, but three months before we were due to go I broke my ankle playing football so I never got there. But I continued swimming and became an ASA coach. I still swim to this day."

There was clearly something going on with sixteen-year-old David while he was at school because he used to play a lot of darts. And there's only one place you play darts – down the pub.

"I was still at school when I got to the final of the *News of the World* darts competition. I played darts for the London county side through the 1970s and was semi-professional. When I worked for Ladbrokes I was their playing professional. If they opened a new sports shop I'd play an exhibition match. I played thirteen times for England. I didn't exactly travel the world, but it did take me to places I wouldn't otherwise have gone to. I was in Bermuda for an England v Bermuda v America competition and in Sweden. It was just something I had a talent for."

David left school at eighteen. The family culture was to start earning money and set up your own small business, practical things like carpentry and the building trades. So in a sense David was breaking with tradition when he joined a chartered accountant's. But he was bored stiff and after a couple of years walked out and never even collected his money.

**My whole life now is about helping people. I've been very lucky in the life I've lived, the people I've met, the places I've been to. I'm on very good terms with my ex-wife. My ambition is to live a long life, be healthy and carry on helping people.**

"I had a friend who worked in the Connaught Rooms in Great Queen Street. He got me a job as a car jockey, parking cars. As a chartered accountant I was taking home £27 a month. In my first week parking cars I got £82. I stayed there five years. Then I moved on to a night club called Churchill's in Bond Street. Then the Casanova Club in Grosvenor Street. And finally the Ladbroke Club in Mayfair. I was front-of-house manager there til we lost our casino licence in 1979. I saw gambling first-hand, enough so that I never gambled. I think online betting is atrocious. I once saw a man lose his Rolls-Royce. He sold it to a friend and lost all the money. He asked me if I could lend him something. I had a bit of money. There was plenty of ready cash around then, so I lent him £1,000. He went to another casino and came back two hours later, paid me and bought his Rolls-Royce back."

While David was at Churchill's he met a girl who was working at Holborn Town Hall. They were together for three or four years before they got married.

"When I started working all nights at Churchill's, I managed to get her a job as a croupier. She wasn't one of the Penthouse Pets. The girls on the tables had to have gaming board licences and couldn't do any modelling. We had seven years enjoying ourselves. We travelled. Paris was our great love. We loved antiques. We went to fairs, built up quite a collection. We had one daughter in 1976. My job took me all over Europe. I was spending more time abroad than in London. We grew apart, were living separate lives. We divorced in 1981."

For years David was, as his cardiologist said, "burning the candle at both ends and in the middle". The result was three heart attacks in eleven weeks. The last one occurred while he was in hospital. If it had been at home he would have died.

"I was in St Helier Hospital, eating breakfast, when I keeled over. I was clinically dead for four minutes. Fortunately it was heart attacks not heart disease, and two years later I was A1 fit. I had a long hard look at myself and thought about my future career. I didn't want to do anything physical. I had a family and needed to look after them, so I decided to study computing science. I went to Croydon College and studied at the Open University."

As soon as he was qualified, David went to Kensington and Chelsea as their systems analyst/programmer, training all their staff how to use the computer systems. Then he moved to Sutton Council doing the same job. "This was the time IBM PCs came in. I was like a sponge. I soaked up every bit of information I could. Then I realised I was paying freelance trainers more money to work for the council than I was earning, so I set up my own computer consultancy."

David worked for Pitman's and at the Microsoft training centre as an authorised consultant. Nothing seemed to stop him. Microsoft bought some of his software for a tidy sum, and he had eighty companies in his portfolio. One of them was the Ministry of Defence.

"The Ministry of Defence wanted a computer system that would log sightings and observations of car number plates, people. I wrote a database system for them. Up to then everything was in notebooks. I actually did some observations. A couple of



times it was risky, no more than that because I always had back-up. My team and my programme were responsible for proving that Gaddafi was selling arms to the IRA. We traced telephone calls to the Libyan Embassy and from there to an Irish Hotel in Kensington. When the special services boys went in, they found two crates full of weapons with the Libyan flag on them."

David's father died aged 75. In his memory David devotes much of his time to the Commando Veterans Association, open to anybody who has a green beret, together with their partners and first generation as associate members.
For the last five or six years David has been going out to Normandy for the anniversary of D-Day as a carer for one of the veterans. This Chelsea Pensioner died in 2018, so David was unable to go to the 75th anniversary in June this year.

David has lived in Oldfield for ten years. He volunteers there to give back something for the excellent way he has been treated. He is a popular front-of-house man at the lunch club, organises the quiz nights, is a member of the scrutiny panel (was vice chair for a year and chair for three years) and sits on the interview panel for new staff. Perhaps most important is the Oldfield choir.

"The choir was started three years ago as an outreach programme by the Royal Opera House. We have professional training and we give performances at care homes. It's not excellent, but it's above good. We have performed three times at the Albert Hall, at the Mansion House for the 90th anniversary of Central Cecil Housing Association and at Tate Modern. It's about getting the residents out of their flats, and it is succeeding. My whole life now is about helping people. I've been very lucky in the life I've lived, the people I've met, the places I've been to. I'm on very good terms with my ex-wife. My ambition is to live a long life, be healthy and carry on helping people.


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# WHY DO PEOPLE LOVE MAGAZINES?

## Surviving the economic challenge

By David Lennon




*On The Hill* magazine is easier to read than your phone screen or iPad. The pictures look better, the adverts are more attractive. You can recycle it as a firelighter, or a lining for the cat litter box, and if rolled up it is excellent for swatting flies.

Above all, as jeweller Ruth Stephenson said in the last issue: "*On The Hill* connects you with the village community, which is still a place for creative people with fascinating lives and stories."

While *On The Hill* is celebrating its fifth anniversary this month, we are facing the hard economic fact that there is a gap between income and expenditure. So we are considering ways of asking readers for support to bridge this gap.

Of course, it's hard to see how a local magazine can charge readers when most people are accustomed to free local sheets and a huge amount of free information on the internet.

For some of us, printed papers and magazines have romance, a start and an end. They hold my attention and I learn of things I did not intend to learn. I can't just swipe away. Digitalisation may be the height of convenience, but the print version is the height of experience.

To quote from the John D Woods & Co advertisement on the back cover of the last issue: "In an email-centric world, there are still those who prefer pen and ink." Reading a printed magazine is a pleasurable experience, something to be enjoyed, and not just a default way of consuming information. But the reality is that magazine print sales in the UK have been declining for several years, perhaps since the day the inventor of the internet said: "Hey, why don't I invent the internet?"

However, while magazine sales generally have been falling, sales of certain titles are actually going up. News and current affairs magazines are becoming more popular – but celebrity, gossip and fashion publications are still struggling.

We, like most editors, are trying to strike the right balance between the serious and the lightweight; and wrestling with the challenge of how to keep the print version viable in a world of digital content.

While general daily news has been turned into an almost universally available commodity by the internet, specialist journalism such as this, your local magazine is still a service which we believe people value.

The Primrose Hill Community Association launched the magazine in October 2014 for the benefit of Primrose Hill residents and visitors. Like all local publications, it has been a struggle to make ends meet, even with the very generous support of local advertisers.

Here are a few facts from Primrose Hill Community Association treasurer, Nadia Crandall: "We print 7,750 copies an issue, 10 times a year, at a cost of about £4,000 per issue. Advertising revenue is our sole means at present of recouping this cost."

As a charity, the Community Association has to ask itself if there are other ways to increase this revenue. Some think we could follow the *Guardian* model and ask your support to keep delivering quality local reporting and to protect our print edition. Every reader's contribution, big or small, would be valuable, supporting *On The Hill* for as little as £1 an issue.

Another possibility would be to create a Patrons' Club with each patron donating £1,000 a year and upwards.

What do you think? All ideas welcome. Please send them to editor@onthehill.info

# Primose Hill Community Association



## Community Centre

Run and host over 40 activities and classes each week

Run lunch club for older people

Run community events like Summer Fair

Respond to community needs

Hall hire

## Community Library

Open to public 4 days a week

Free computer and internet access

Community activites and events

Monthly film club

Hall hire

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# On The Hill Birthday Cake

*Thirteen-year old Caia Collis makes On The Hill a birthday cake!*




**Ingredients**

*For the cake:*
150 ml milk
300 g dark chocolate
600 g butter
600 g caster sugar
300 g cocoa powder
4 large eggs
4 tsp baking powder
100 ml vegetable oil
2 tsp vanilla extract
300 ml Greek yoghurt
2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
500 g plain flour
200 g light soft brown sugar
5 tbsp black treacle
Chocolate chips

*For the icing*:
300 g white chocolate
600 g butter
1 kg icing sugar
Green food dye
1 tsp vanilla extract
5 blocks of white fondant
Plastic gloves

You will need 1 rectangular tin and 3 round tins, one being half the size of the rectangular tin and the others progressively smaller. Line them all with parchment paper and set the oven to 180˚C.

1. In a non-stick pan mix together the milk, black treacle and chocolate over a low heat until smooth. Leave to cool.
2. Cream the butter and sugar in a bowl.
3. In a separate bowl mix together the plain flour, cocoa powder, bicarbonate of soda, baking powder and soft brown sugar.
4. In a third bowl mix together the oil, yoghurt and vanilla extract, then and add it to the chocolate mixture.
5. Evenly spread out the mix and add a good sprinkle of chocolate chips on top of the cakes.
6. Bake in the oven for 40 minutes or until moist and bouncy and a skewer comes out clean. Leave to cool.
7. To make the icing, gradually combine the butter and icing sugar in a mixer.
8. Place the white chocolate in a bowl over a pan of water to melt, then add to the icing mix along with the vanilla extract.
9. Slowly add the green food dye until it has a pale grass-like colour.
10. Now you can start layering. First put down the rectangular cake and cover it with a layer of icing, then add the largest circular cake on one side and add buttercream to the top. Continue doing this until they are firmly stacked, then shave the edges of the cake so it looks like a hill.
11. Add one more layer of icing on top, allowing crumbs, as this is called the 'crumb coat'.
12. Leave to chill and solidify in the fridge overnight. The next day do one last coat of icing without crumbs.
13. Put on your gloves, then dust your table and a rolling pin with icing sugar and start rolling out the fondant, adding green dye until you have a grass-like colour. Roll it to half a centimetre thickness. Pick it up with the rolling pin, cover the cake and press in the wrinkles down the side of the hill cake until smooth.
14. Cover it with your choice of sweets and other fondant cut-outs, and enjoy!

RECIPE BY Caia Collis
PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Louise Ramsay

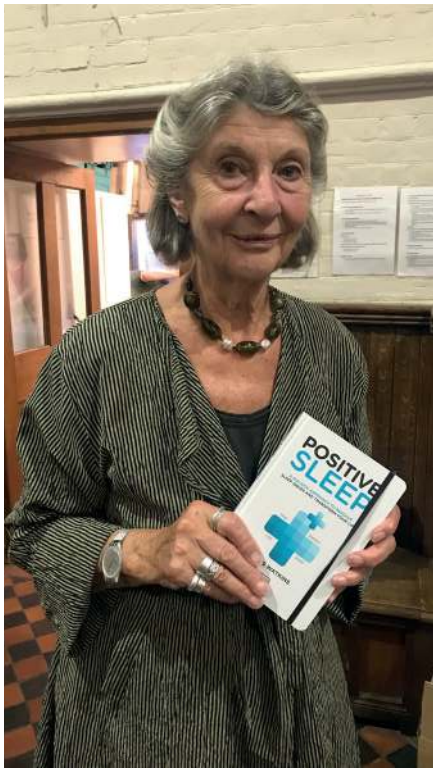
# Hello, Primrose Hill!

Happily no-one was caught dozing at the book launch of *Positive Sleep* by Giles Watkins!

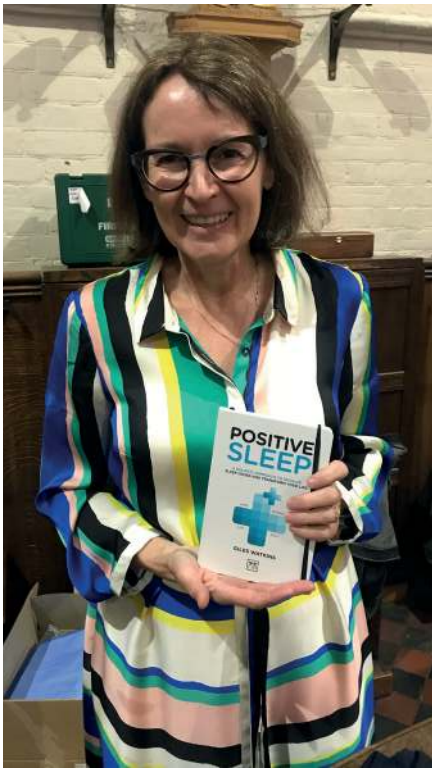












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