On The Hill

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR PRIMROSE HILL PEOPLE

SEPTEMBER 2019 | ONTHEHILL.INFO

JOSÉ RIZAL

The national hero of the Philippines who lived in Primrose Hill

PRIMROSE HILL IN THE 1940s–50s

David Edwards remembers his life as a child in wartime Primrose Hill

THE PRIMROSE HILL COLLECTION

Jewellery maker Ruth Stevenson talks about her influences



BEYOND BREXIT

Local MP Sir Keir Starmer talks to *On The Hill* about Brexit, climate change and knife crime

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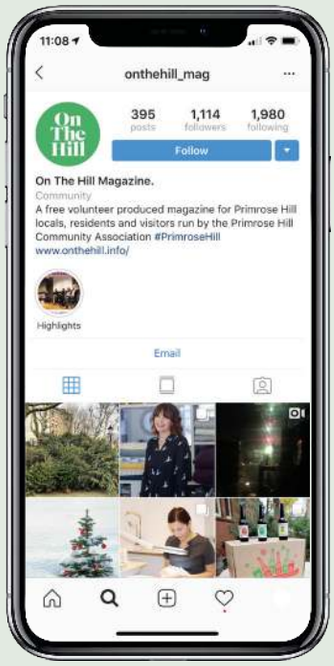
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September 2019

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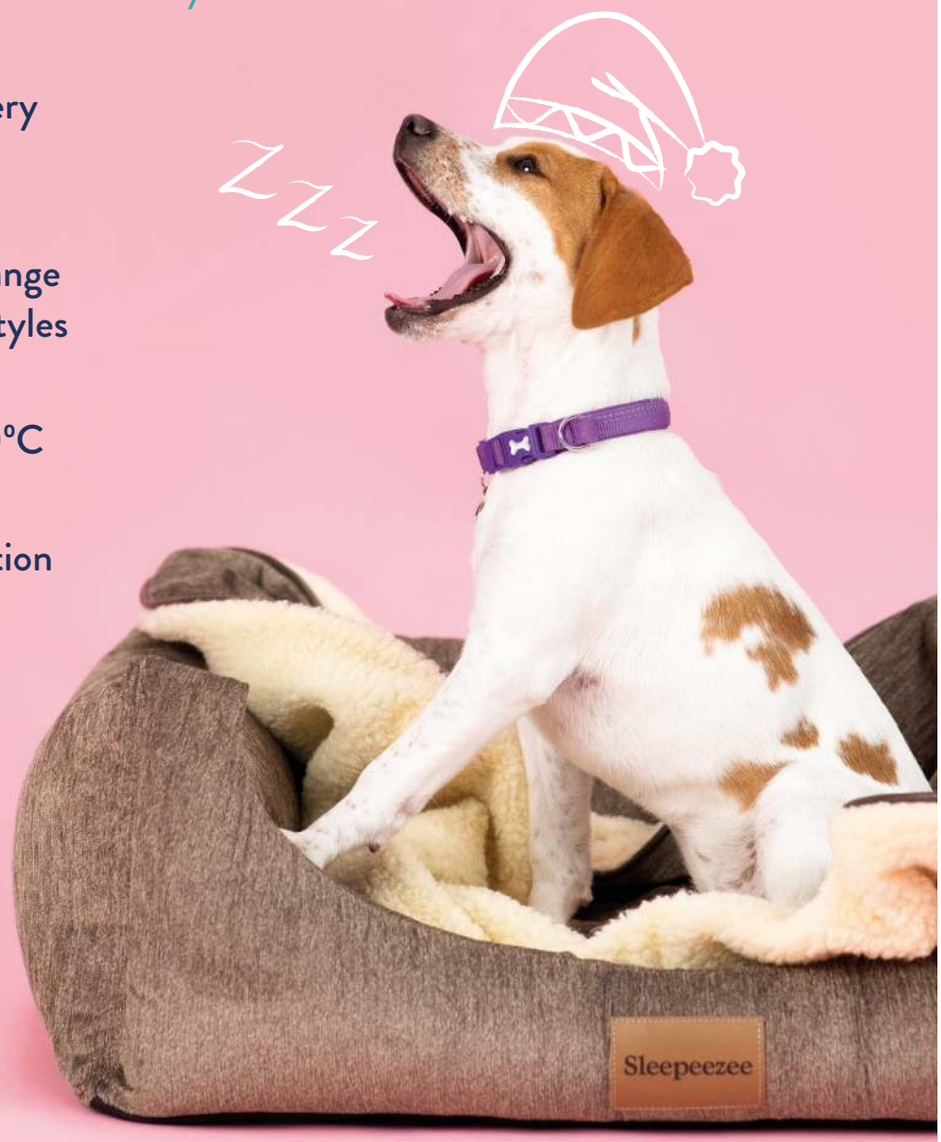
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Special thanks to all our contributors.

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.

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

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Welcome to September

In the 1940s a boy from Primrose Hill School (then known as Princess Road Primary) was given a parachute harness. He decided to test it out, so mounted a stack of tables and chairs in an empty classroom, climbed to the top and jumped. The parachute harness did nothing (obviously) and the boy broke his arm. Fast forward through the decades and the school has excelled with high-fliers who have soared rather than thudded to the ground. Our new Prime Minister is an ex-pupil! And so was Ed Miliband, recent leader of the Labour Party.

Primrose Hill has a rich political history and we have the blue plaques to prove it. Frederick Engels, the co-author with Karl Marx of *The Communist Manifesto*, completed the final volumes of Marx's *Das Kapital* when he lived on Regent's Park Road. King Henry's Road was home to Dr Ambedkar, who fought for the rights of Untouchables in his native India. And across the way in Chalcot Crescent lived José Rizal, political hero of the Philippines and active in reforming Spain's colonial rule. He was executed by firing squad at the age of 35. Read more about his extraordinary life inside.

A round-up of Primrose Hill politicos past and present wouldn't be complete without our own MP, Sir Keir Starmer. Over the summer he shared with *On The Hill* his views on the meaty topics of our times: Brexit, climate change, HS2 and knife crime. Plus football fans may like to hear his speculations for Arsenal next season.

As the holiday draws to a close, you'll be stocking up on last-minute protractors and pencil cases as our future Prime Ministers return to school. We've had an unusually wide spectrum of political heavyweights throughout the years in Primrose Hill. It may be something in the water, or quite plausibly the school meals. Tuck in, kids.

Maggie Chambers

Primrose Hill
Community Association

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Open House Programme

September 2019



Royal College Of Physicians Garden Tour

Hear stories from diverse cultures, countries and every age in history on a tour of the Medicinal Garden at the Royal College of Physicians, 11 St Andrews Place, NW1 4LE. Transport from Centre, let office know in advance.

Wednesday 4 September



The Dead Sea: Should it be Saved?

This talk by Peter Darley will transport you to a spectacular region of the world and raise demanding political, technical, environmental and economic questions.

Wednesday 11 September



Mark Shepherd Documentaries

A US-based documentary filmmaker currently living in Primrose Hill presents 'Wonderful Ed: A Santa Fe Story' featuring folk artist Ed Larson, and 'The Wild Life', winner of the Spirit Award at the 2018 Santa Fe Film Festival.

Wednesday 18 September



Argo

Ben Affleck directs, and stars, in this chronicle of the Iran hostage crisis. In 1979 the Iranian revolution reaches boilding point and militants storm the US embassy in Tehran.

Wednesday 25 September

All events are free, including afternoon tea and cake, at 2pm at Primrose Hill Community Centre unless otherwise stated. All welcome.

Open House is funded by U3A in London

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REGISTERED NUMBER 2196012
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On The Street

On our Doorstep *p 8*
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The Bed *p 13*
Positive Sleep *p 14*

AND MORE



On Our Doorstep

How a Primrose Hill greengrocer is helping to save local lives.

Continued on p 8 ▶

On Our Doorstep

By Eleanor Sturdy

If you have lived in Primrose Hill for a while, you have probably bought apples or a Christmas tree from Yeoman's, where Nigel Grundy worked for over 25 years. I caught up with Nigel recently as he had to retire from the shop due to ill health, and I was wondering what he was getting up to in his retirement. It turns out that Nigel is extremely busy, and here is his story.

Back in the 1970s, when Nigel was addicted to speed, he contracted Hepatitis C (Hep-C), a virus that attacks the liver. This silent killer was discovered in 1989 and creates devastation as it gradually eats away at the liver. It is called 'silent' since the liver has no nerve endings, leaving the patient very ill before any pain can be felt.

It is estimated by the World Health Organization that over 220,000 people in the UK have been in contact with the Hep-C virus, but this may be an under-estimate as many are undiagnosed. It may be contracted from one contact with an infected needle, a toothbrush, or from a tattoo artist, and the virus does not discriminate on grounds of class or income. Some sufferers have been infected with the virus from blood products, as testing only started in 1991. Many people are unaware that they have the virus, and its long-term symptoms can be mistaken for a variety of other conditions.

In Nigel's case, he was diagnosed in 1995 and embarked on highly unpleasant treatment that was offered at the time. Back in the 1990s these earlier treatments had extreme side-effects and many patients were unable to complete their treatments as a result. Nigel persevered, and continued to work at the greengrocer's, but struggled with some frightening side-effects.

Several years later, in 2013, Nigel was admitted to the Royal Free Hospital for more treatment to suppress his liver damage, only to be bluntly told that he now had liver cancer. This devastating news was a huge shock. At around the same time, Nigel had to find somewhere to live as his landlords were selling up. Oldfield House fortunately had a room for him, and this is where he still lives, but he was close to becoming homeless.

Nigel's Hep-C flared up again in 2015, which forced him finally to give up work at the greengrocer's and embark on more treatment. This time, the story took a better turn for Nigel and he was finally clear of the virus.

Medical treatment for Hep-C has moved on dramatically, but the awareness and outreach to patients has not caught up. The stigma associated with Hep-C also holds people back from seeking treatment.

So, in his inimitable way, Nigel won't put his feet up and relax into retirement. He is now determined to spread the word about new treatment, remove the stigma of Hep-C and help more people, working with the Hep-C Trust. Volunteers like Nigel support Hep-C patients to be tested and take the new medication, overturning the poor reputation of older treatments.

Nigel now works tirelessly, despite his ongoing mobility complications and other chronic health problems, to find those carrying the virus, explain the treatment to them, test them and support them through their treatment

According to the Hep-C Trust, Camden has one of the highest rates of Hep-C transmission, especially within the homeless population, where intravenous drug using is common. Many of these highly vulnerable people are not able to engage consistently with the public health service and need intensive support over a period of time in order to recover. In Camden, an estimated 60% of drug users are infected with Hep-C.

Nigel now works tirelessly, despite his ongoing mobility complications and other chronic health problems, to find those carrying the virus, explain the treatment to them, test them and support them through their treatment.

The Hep-C trust has only two outreach volunteers in Camden, who speak with their peers about treatment options, answering all their questions and allaying any fears. This type of support, over time, has a much higher



success rate in engaging patients to embark on, and complete, their treatment than just leaflets or doctors' consultations. But how will two volunteers manage to reach all those in Camden with Hep-C?

Many patients have been, or still are, intravenous drug users, living in homeless hostels or on the streets. The numbers have been increasing in recent years, and the complex reasons behind each person's homelessness are very difficult to conquer. Nigel, and his fellow volunteer Romano, talk directly to patients, and they do not give up and move on.

The dedicated support from Nigel and Romano helps patients to get to their appointments, understand their treatment, take their medication and change their lives for the better.

The Hep-C virus is seven times more infectious than HIV-Aids, but awareness of its causes and treatments are much less well understood. Over the next few years, the Hep-C Trust is hopeful that they will eliminate Hepatitis C in the UK with your help. The treatment is available but we desperately need people like Nigel and Romano to get the patients into testing and treatment.

The World Health Organization has set 2030 as the target date for the eradication of the virus worldwide. National Heath England has set the target for England at 2025. The Royal Free Hospital has treated 2,000 people and has 10,000 waiting for treatment. So 2025 is highly optimistic.

If you would like to help, the Camden Intervention Project run by the Hep-C Trust (**www.hepctrust.org.uk**) is the only dedicated outreach programme in Camden. Any gift made expressly to that project, large or small, will save lives in our borough.

Adrian Mole

Antonio from Haverstock School's young journalists interviews Michael Hawkins, who plays Adrian Mole in *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole aged 13¾: The Musical*

Sue Townsend wrote *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole aged 13¾* in the early 1980s. I was drawn into the book like a powerful magnet and read it in one day!

Despite the lack of digital technology – there was no WhatsApp or Instagram back then – there are themes that everyone can relate to; for example, Adrian's parents separating.

The production has four Adrian Mole actors, taking the role on different days, and on one of the hottest days of the year Michael Hawkins (MH) agreed to be interviewed. The Green Room at the Ambassador's Theatre has a homey feel, with a Jenga board game on a huge table and large comfy sofas. However, the boys playing Adrian Mole are on stage for most of the performance so there is little time for games.

Me: Are there any complex bits in the show for Adrian?

MH: *Well, I have to wear lots of jumpers, which is not much fun in this weather, and it gets really hot. Then when I have to put another jacket on top of that, it is very tight and difficult. I also have to make sure I don't speak when taking off my jumper, because my microphone makes a loud noise!*

Me: Each Adrian plays twice a week and covers for the other actors playing Adrian. Does it ever become stressful managing your school life and stage life?

MH: *Sometimes, because you can get home and it's really late and you suddenly realise you have French homework to do. Then you end up doing it as you're eating breakfast! But it is workable because I enjoy what I'm doing. It's such fun.*

Later that day I watched the show. Rufus Kampa was playing the lead, and he proved to be a very lively, energetic Adrian Mole. He looked as if he was really enjoying himself on stage. Rebecca Nardin played Pandora, the 'love of Adrian's life'. She arrived on stage like a ball of excitement, adding a sparkling aspect to the production as she introduced Adrian to human rights.



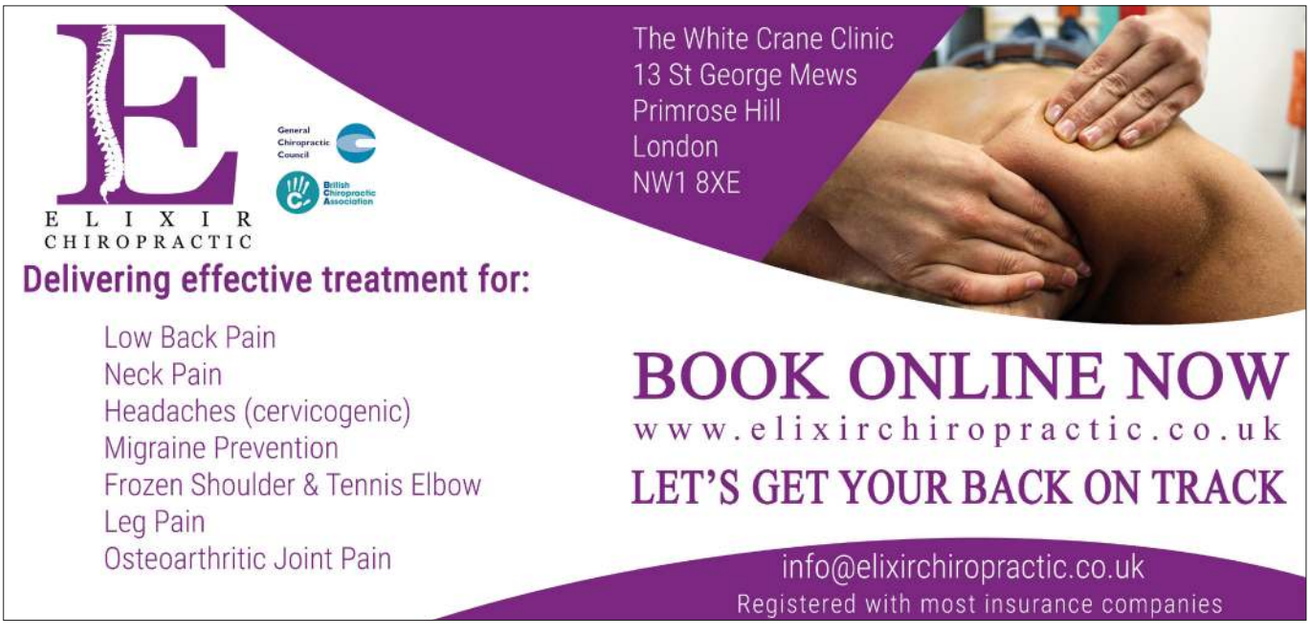
Michael Hawkins as Adrian Mole. Photography by Pamela Raith

The adult actors were very believable, also playing fellow students. The story slowly draws the audience in, and I rocked with laughter in my seat, along with the rest of the audience, when the show reached its climax in the second act, with the most hilarious Nativity play ever!

Adrian Mole – the Musical isn't a huge, spectacular production with flying carpets hovering overhead; but it is musical theatre at its best: fizzy, deliciously funny, and a musical that I predict is going to be very popular.

Book your tickets now because the show ends on 28 September.

By Antonio, aged 12¼



POSTCARDS FROM PRIMROSE HILL



How often the buildings pictured so beautifully in these postcards have sadly been demolished! So here is a welcome image of a street where all the houses are still intact today. Not much has changed on this stretch of road, where Regent's Park Road meets Albert Terrace. Even the fountain is still there. It must have been a warm day, for quite a few of the windows are open.

@old_primrosehill_postcards



Reflection

Who's that looking back at me?
A frail old lady in a chair.
When young she must have been a beauty,
With lots of suitors flocking to her.
Those large blue eyes could tell a tale,
Now sad and weary with old age.

I smiled at her and she smiled right back.
I waved at her, she did the same.
I spoke to her, she didn't answer.
She just moved her lips in silent jester.
I called the nurse, curiosity mounting.
Why Rosa dear,
That lady is you!

Veronica Towey
Oldfield Estate

News & Information

from Primrose Hill Community Association

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

We hope you all had a good summer, whether at home or abroad. Our staff and volunteers are refreshed after the break and eager to get going again, so it seems a good time to remind ourselves of our basic mission statement:

'The Primrose Hill Community Association exists to enrich the lives of residents and those who work within our area. It enables people to meet and enjoy the company of their neighbours. It advances education and recreation. It mobilises voluntary activity in response to community needs and concerns. It provides a network of support, and humanises city life, enabling residents to be of service to each other, and to do together what they cannot do alone.'

With this in mind, we are asking for your thoughts on new activities for children and adults that we can incorporate into our current programme. Our website (**www.phca.cc)** lists all our regular daytime and evening activities, and provides details of how to join them.

For adults, we have a free Yoga for Beginners class starting in September, as well as our free Seniors (chair-based) Yoga. But we lost our two children's Music and Rhyme Time sessions, as Louise moved to Cornwall after many years of sterling service. This means we have a couple of slots available for activities for the under-4s, which will be either free or at a nominal charge.

So if you have any suggestions or ideas about other activities you would like to see happening, for adults or children, please let us know (info@phca.cc, 020 75876 8327).

Open House

The Open House programme for September is very impressive (see p 6). It starts with a tour of the Medicinal Garden at the Royal College of Physicians on 4 September. Then on 11 September there is a talk by Peter Darley on 'The Dead Sea: Should it be Saved?'; Peter has long experience of evaluating large-scale water projects, so it should prove fascinating. On 18 September we have two short documentaries by US filmmaker Mark Shepherd; we've had a sneak preview of one of them, and it shows stunning wildlife footage. As usual the programme ends the month with a film, so on 25 September you can see *Argo*, which chronicles the Iran hostage crisis of 1979.

All Open House sessions are free of charge and include tea and cake after the event. They generally take place at the Community Centre at 2pm; the Royal College of Physicians event meets at 11 St Andrew's Place, NW1 4LE (transport from the Centre can be arranged for those unable to use public transport).



AGM

We are flagging this up early, as it is always a good way of catching up with your neighbours. The AGM takes place at the Community Centre on Thursday 3 October: drinks at 6.30pm and formalities starting at 7pm. Current Chair Maureen Betts will be standing down after 13 years at the helm, so do come to thank Maureen and meet her successor. We are also fortunate that local author Andrew O'Hagan has agreed to give a talk at the event.



St Mary's Primrose Hill



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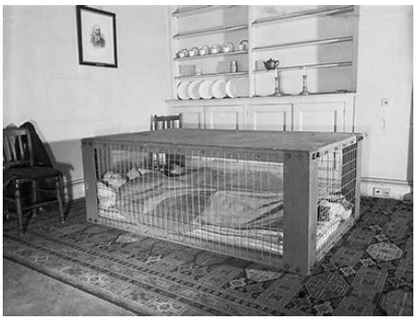
The Bed – Stories by Men from Camden Town

Unless you're a couch potato, the bed is probably the most significant piece of furniture in your house. It's there to (literally) support us through the milestones of our lives. Notably births, marriages and deaths, but for children it's the also the special place for bedtime stories.

A couple of years ago, Jim Mulligan gathered a group of men aged 65–90 from Camden Town (and one from South London) to share their bed stories. The result is a 32-track CD with spoken memories and music by the Bed Bugs.

The men are Kevin Bucknall, Rick Perrins, David St George, Leslie Smith and Jim Mulligan – who tells some bed stories of his own.

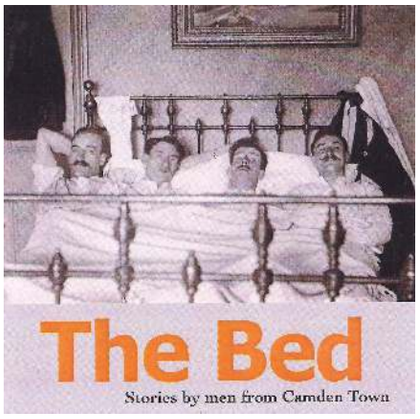
The stories are not just personal accounts of beds; they're historical portraits and show how life has changed over the decades. Take sex. Kevin Bucknall spoke about sex in the 1950s and 60s and how different social attitudes were. There was little money, and fear of pregnancy in a society where unmarried mothers were stigmatised and had nowhere to go. Contraception was basic; the withdrawal method was what most people opted for and it was "A chancy affair at best." If someone got married for love, people would say, "Getting married and not pregnant – now there's posh!" As Philip Larkin told us, "Sexual intercourse began in 1963."



Kevin also remembered the war, when he slept on a small mattress in an Anderson shelter during frequent air raids on Hull from German bombers. He later had a Morrison shelter, surrounded by chicken wire. The shelters were named after the Minister of Home Security Herbert Morrison and were the forerunners of flat-packs, coming in a kit which could be assembled at home. When the war ended and Kevin could sleep in a real bed, he felt totally exposed and afraid that monsters would get him. Kevin was the last child alive in his street as all his playmates were killed in raids.

Other stories of children include one from Jim who told of the trouble he got into looking after his baby son. The child was playing on a bed when he got a bead stuck in his windpipe. It remained there for weeks and caused a wheezing sound when he breathed. As plastic doesn't show up on X-rays, it was a while before the hospital found it.

David St George has the most harrowing story: he recounts how his son fell from a top bunk in the hospital wing of Brixton Prison. He hit his head on the hard floor and fell unconscious. Sadly the resultant lack of oxygen to his brain caused him to suffer brain damage.



Ninety-year-old Leslie Smith talked about finding romance and love as a young man whose family could not acknowledge he was gay. Sadly, Leslie died the day after telling his last story to Jim.

There are stories of death, the space in the bed and how every death causes someone desolation. We hear of the life of the living as death drags on. These are stories of people's lives, all played out against the backdrop of a bed.

The Bed Bugs are Rick Perrins on keyboard and vocal, Kevin Bucknall on clarinet, Sue Sands on vocals and Mark Stevens on guitar. Copies of the CD can be obtained by contacting jimbomulligan@outlook.com; cost £10 plus p&p. £2 from each sale goes to the Primrose Hill Community Library.

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Positive Sleep



Stacey Mutkin Photography

How many of you are reading this article having had some sort of holiday in the last couple of months? And for those who had a change of scene – or at least a rest if you stayed at home ('staycationing') – for how many of you was catching up on sleep a real highlight? So often we feel that the best of any break is the lie-in or the afternoon siesta, which most likely indicates how exhausted we were before the holiday.

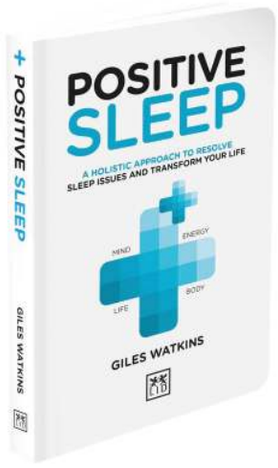
Well, long-term Primrose Hill resident Giles Watkins has written a concise guide to help us ensure that we don't get to that point again. "That was me," says Giles, who first moved to Ainger Road in 1991. "I remember in 2013 flying to Provence from Asia where I was living; essentially I slept for three days, punctuated only by meals and listening to Test Match Special via the internet! This was common for me at the time."

Giles described how his sleep troubles were triggered in 2002 by the possibility of losing his job. "I was about to get married and the thought of being made redundant by my employer of 15 years was the start of a pattern of sleeping less and less. From what I've found, this is typical of most people – some shock to our world causes us to lose sleep, and then other events pile in. And many people never recover. In my case I did not lose the job, but the death of my mum, becoming a dad, and moving every other year in Asia to take up increasingly stressful jobs compounded my problem."

By the time Giles addressed the situation, he was falling asleep by 9 pm and waking up at 3 am to start working. "I was constantly exhausted. I had a sofa in my office where I'd nap for half an hour when possible, and if we were going out to dinner I'd try to get another sleep in before dinner, when I'd literally fall asleep over the starter. Imagine being married to someone like that!"

Then came a lucky opportunity. "In 2014 I decided to study for a Masters in Change at INSEAD in Singapore. I needed to write a thesis on something that I really wanted to change in my own life, so I chose my own sleep. I quickly became both genuinely terrified about the harm I was doing to myself and highly motivated to fix the problem."

So began Giles's quest for a solution. He found this in a holistic approach rather than through sleeping pills, which he refused to take. "My strong belief, based on my research plus my own experience, is that the vast majority of those of us with sleep issues can address them through a combination of changing our habits – 'bookending your night' as I call it in the book – plus being more mindful about your diet and exercise. And as good sleep is the foundation of health and well-being, it's truly worth it. It's also absolutely free of charge and leaves you feeling and looking so much better for it. Follow this regime and you will truly be able to enjoy your next holiday, rather than merely using it to recover from your everyday routine."



Positive Sleep is published on 5 September and available at Primrose Hill Books.

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NEWS & VIEWS

Gloucester Gate Playground

Gloucester Gate playground in Regents' Park is to receive a complete refurbishment.

The area is to be turned into a landscaped space that children of all abilities can play in, built from natural materials such as rope, bark and willow. The space will almost double in size and feature water and sand play, climbing equipment, a zip line and a willow den perfect for rest and storytelling. It will also feature all the traditional favourites such as swings, a slide and a roundabout.

Works are expected to take approximately five months; in the meantime, children can use the three other playgrounds in the park, Marylebone Green, Hanover Gate and Primrose Hill playground.

Gloucester Gate playground was constructed in the 1930s, apparently to coincide with the opening of a children's ward in the nearby hospital at St Katharine's Lodge. The Lodge was obliterated by a bomb in the Second World War, and rubble was used to create the mounds that now characterise the area.

Nick Biddle, Park Manager of Regent's Park and Primrose Hill, said: "It's very important that we give children of all abilities the opportunity to play together, and this is reflected in the design. All areas of the playground are wheelchair-accessible, including the walkway bridge and water play area."



Dennis Clarke, Head of Park Services at The Royal Parks, said: "A lot has changed since the playground originally opened, but what hasn't is the importance of play in children's physical, mental and social development. The provision of high quality and free playgrounds plays a big part in this."

The work is funded by the London Marathon Charitable Trust, and a mix of private and public donations. The Trust is also co-funding a three-year play programme with The Royal Parks, in partnership with local charity London Play, to help children spend more time outdoors and ply more actively in nature.

160 Regent's Park Road

Blossom and Browne's Sycamore Launderers and Drycleaners closed down in July. The company was established in 1888 and had been in Primrose Hill since 1986. The site of 160 Regent's Park Road has been offering clothes care for almost 120 years, since it was set up as a laundry by Henry Bird in 1900.

Press, the independent boutique currently situated on Erskine Road, will be moving into the site.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Oval office, outer circle
Meets our inner circle.
Next state visit, Your Excellency,
Ambassador's House, US Embassy.
Nearby, some cake news,
True taste, a soundbite ensues,
Our Community Café, Donald T?

Yours faithfully,
Howard Richards

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What's On September

NEW THIS SEPTEMBER

TUESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER

Film Show at the Library

'Where were you in '62?' *American Graffiti,* starring Richard Dreyfuss, Ron Howard and Harrison Ford, directed by George Lucas. PHCL. 7.15pm. £8 in cash, including a glass of wine, in advance at PHCL or on the door.

WEDNESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER

Open House

Royal College of Physicians Garden Tour. 11 St Andrews Place, NW1 4LE (transport from PHCA). 2pm. Free.

THURSDAY 5 SEPTEMBER

Midnight Skyracer

This bluegrass band, nominated for IBMA Momentum Award, have been tearing up the UK bluegrass and folk scene since their inception less than two years ago. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £15, or £10 under 26s.

SATURDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

London Folk Festival

Confirmed acts include Lady Maisery, Dipper Malkin, Lucy Ward, Jim Moray, Jackie Oates and more. CSH. 11am–11pm. Advance tickets: £35, or £25 under 16s, and free for under 5s.

WEDNESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

Open House

'The Dead Sea: Should it be Saved?' a talk by Peter Darley. PHCA. 2pm. Free.

***Positive Sleep* by Giles Watkins**

Giles will be in conversation with Nikki Owen, to celebrate the launch of his book, in collaboration with Primrose Hill Books. St Mary's, NW3 3DJ. 6.30pm drinks, 7pm book launch, 7.30pm book signing. Books on sale all evening, cash or cards accepted.

The Furrow Collective

Bringing an innovative approach to the traditional song and balladry of England, Scotland and beyond, the Furrow Collective is a collaboration between four prolific folk musicians. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £16, or £10 under 26s

TUESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

The Benefits of Colour

Introduction to the benefits of colour analysis for clothes and make-up by award-winning House of Colour personal stylist Fiona Ingham. PHCL. 7pm for 7.30pm. Donations in aid of the Library.

WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

Open House

Mark Shepherd documentaries: 'Wonderful Ed: A Santa Fe Story' and 'The Wild Life'. PHCA. 2pm. Free.

WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

Magic Healing and Hypnotherapy Monthly Gong Bath

Lie down and experience deep relaxation and healing. Bring a yoga mat if you have one, and a warm layer. Arrive hydrated. St Paul's School, Elsworthy Road, NW3 3DS. 7.15pm. Tickets £18, £15 concessions and under 18s. £20 on door. Tel 0779 852 4836, www.haveyourmagic.com/events

WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

Trad Night: Jeff Warner

Experience the everyday lives of 19th-century Americans through songs from the lumber camps, fishing villages and mountain tops of America. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £10.

THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

Damien O'Kane

Damien O'Kane takes traditional Irish music and, in the words of the *Telegraph*, turns it into 'Folk-Pop that is Irish music for the 21st Century'. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £16, or £10 under 26s.

SATURDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

Duncan Chisholm

One of the most authentic interpreters of traditional highland music, Duncan's fiddle playing takes you on an emotional journey through the beautiful landscapes which inspire him. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £18, or £10 under 26s.

SUNDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

London Youth Folk Ensemble Sampler Session

The first London Youth Folk Ensemble session of the year. Meet tutors, learn some tunes and find out more about joining the ensemble. CSH. 2–5pm. Free (advance booking required).

TUESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

World Gorilla Day

Stand-up comedy benefit night by Monkey Business in aid of the Gorilla Organization. The line-up includes Alasdair Becketti-King, the Iain Duncan Smiths and special guest stars. The Pembroke, Gloucester Avenue, NW1 8JA. Tickets £12 from www.gorillas.org

WEDNESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

Open House

Argo: the 2012 American historical drama film directed by Ben Affleck chronicling the Iranian hostage crisis. PHCA. 2pm. Free.

THURSDAY 26 SEPTEMBER

Cerys Matthews: Where the Wild Cooks Go

Join BBC broadcaster Cerys Matthews as she takes us around the world, celebrating her love of food and music. CSH. 7.30–9pm. £15 standard or £35 for ticket plus book.

SUNDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

Sunday Papers Live #16 Edition

London's biannual celebration of all things Sunday returns: a day of walks, talks, roasts and performances. CSH. 12.30–10pm. £39.50, or £21.70 for evening only.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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.

THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER

PHCA Annual General Meeting

PHCC. 6.30pm for 7pm. AGM followed by talk by local author Andrew O'Hagan.

FOR KIDS

Please check with your class leader for the exact date when your class resumes.

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.

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

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 mums 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

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

What's On September

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
PHCC. 6.30–8pm. 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.

Yoga Gently
Release tension, calm the mind and gain a sense of ease in your body. A deeply restorative class for all levels; beginners welcome. PHCL. 10–11am. Suggested donation £5. Contact Emma 07808 526 265, ebaudey123@btinternet.com

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

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 October issue by Friday 6 September
onthehillwhatson@phca.cc

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PRIMROSE HILL IN THE 1940S–50S

BY DAVID EDWARDS

We sold bread: Wonderloaf and Neville's, both gone now. Some of our customers preferred Neville's, some Wonderloaf. My Mum always got our own bread fresh from the baker down the road as Dad said that the wrapped sliced bread tasted like blotting paper. Customers would peer around the shop door and ask, "Has Wonderloaf been yet?" "No, I've only got Neville's at the moment." "OK, I'll call again on my way back." Women shopped every day, sometimes twice a day. Few people had a fridge, but most had a meat-safe. This was a wooden box with a door made from perforated zinc. It kept the flies off the meat stuff.

Pretty much everything was rationed: bacon, butter, tea, etc. People presented their ration books to Grandpa and he clipped out the coupons and allotted the week's ration. The coupons were tiny squares that he kept in an Oxo tin until they were taken to the Ministry of Food office at Camden Town. Sometimes he would let me cut them out, which I did carefully and accurately so as not to cut into the next coupon. Some foods were on coupons and some on points. Points were in the same ration book, which the storekeeper marked off with an indelible pencil (to stop the customer rubbing out his cancellation). I think that biscuits were on points, and so was meat. 'Uncle Ben' at Toop's butchers a few doors down marked off squares with a red or blue pencil and astonished me by not doing it neatly. If I were a butcher, I thought, I'd pride myself on doing the cancellations neatly and become famous and rich because everybody would want their books done neatly.

Going back to the teas: we had Brooke Bond and Lyons teas, and their stacks on the counter were big as chimneys. There were red, green and orange labels, though I can't remember which was the most expensive. But with Brooke Bond Dividend there was a small stamp in the package. You tore this out and stuck it on a card. When you filled the card you gave it to Grandpa and he gave you 5 shillings for it (25p).

Primrose Hill was often a source of a few pence for sweets for the sharp-eyed boy about town. Tizer, R White's lemonade and quart beer bottles all carried a deposit. Taking them to the off-licence or sweet shop would get you the deposit back, which meant either 2d or 3d to spend on sweets. Not that there were many sweets to buy, but a farthing would get you a stick of liquorice wood. I'd only buy it as a last resort as I didn't really like it much. Kids kept nasty fly-swatches in their pockets of chewed stick and brought them out at playtime covered with pocket fluff, chalk and conker bits. Ugh!

I liked tubes of sherbet with a liquorice straw. If you sucked too hard the sherbet would go up your nose and make you choke. There were also lemonade crystals that you bought loose in a paper bag. You wetted your finger, dipped it in and licked off what stuck. By the time you had eaten an ounce you had a yellow finger. You could tell friends who shared a bag of lemonade powder; they were all members of the yellow-finger gang.

Opposite the school in Princess Road was Ben's grocery shop. Ben spent a lot of time in The Engineer public house opposite. He kept an eye on the shop from the pub window and would come across the road to serve anyone coming into the shop. Sometimes he didn't notice and you had to wait. Ben had a fridge and made his own ice lollies, or 'water ices' as we called them. These certainly pre-dated anything made by Wall's and were simply an ice cube with some dilute (very dilute) Kia-Ora orange squash mixed in. But these water ices were nectar to us kids and were a popular purchase at a halfpenny, wrapped in a page from the London phone book. Nobody minded that the ice melted into the newsprint; they were super in hot weather.

Our school was Princess Road Primary (later Primrose Hill). On dark, foggy afternoons in winter, Mr Hollis the caretaker would come round to the school lighting the gas lamps. He had two long sticks: one with a hook to pull the gas valve on, and a lighted taper on the other. It was lovely to sit for the last hour and a half of lessons in the gaslight.

My pal at school was Michael Appleby. I recall that one day someone gave a parachute harness to the school for us to play with. There was an empty classroom next to ours: we stacked



up two or three desks and chairs and Michael strapped on the harness, having been told that you could jump out of an aeroplane with it on and drift slowly to the ground. Of course the harness was all there was, no parachute, and Michael fell to the ground and broke his arm. But what a hero he became with his plaster. I was taught by the famous Mrs Gyde, who had taught my mother and practically every generation of children in the area. She carried on teaching, albeit part-time, into her 90s.

I often attribute my 'iron constitution' to the fact that I was regarded by the school doctors as underweight. I am still, but oddly enough I'm the appropriate weight for my height. The remedy then was that at break times, apart from the regulation one-third of a pint of full-cream milk, we lined up for a spoonful of cod liver oil and malt. We had to bring in our own spoon so that it could be distinguished from all the others. Mrs Bloggs, one of the dinner ladies, dipped the spoon into a tin, spun the spoon to keep the malt on and then you sucked till the spoon was clean.

Back home we also had bottles of neat cod liver oil. You got these and the really delicious orange concentrate from the Ministry of Food down the bottom end of Camden High Street. You took your empty bottles back for refilling, as most commodities were scarce in those days. The orange was diluted with water and I am convinced that there is nothing on the market today that can beat the wonderful taste of that stuff. Mum gave us the thinner cod liver oil on a spoon, and I can still swig it these days, much to the disgust of my wife. Marvellous! I loved it then and still do now.



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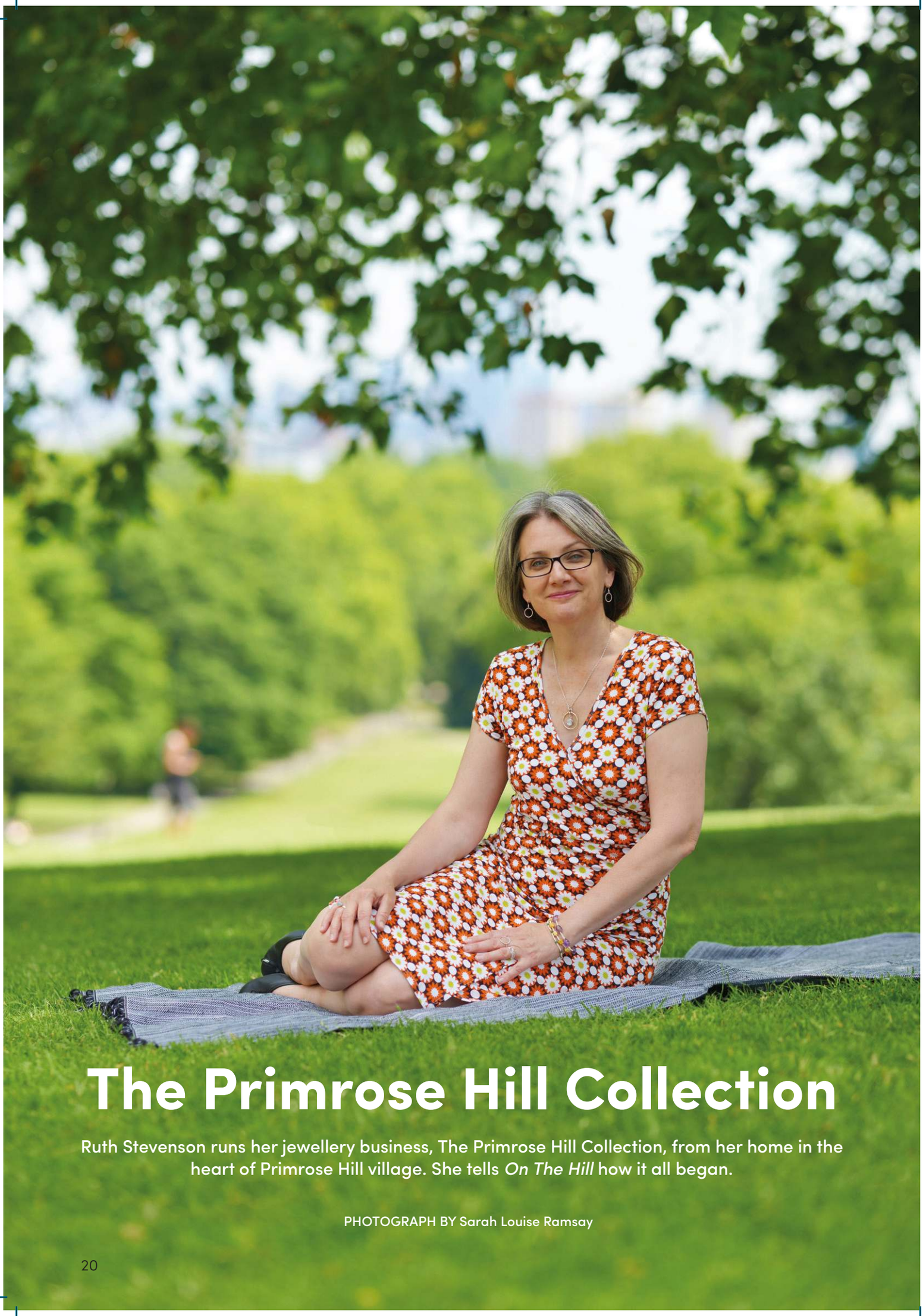
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The Primrose Hill Collection

Ruth Stevenson runs her jewellery business, The Primrose Hill Collection, from her home in the heart of Primrose Hill village. She tells *On The Hill* how it all began.

PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Louise Ramsay

As I spent years trying to find somewhere to live in London where I felt settled, it made perfect sense that Primrose Hill would eventually tick all the boxes. Five generations of my family have lived here now – my great-grandparents lived in Princess Road, and my grandmother and dad both went to Primrose Hill Primary School.

In the 1950s and 60s, my great-grandfather ran the Christmas kitty at The Albert pub. It was a way for people to put money by throughout the year so that at Christmas they had some savings to spend.

My grandparents eventually retired back to the Orkney Islands where my grandfather was born, and so the Orkneys are also very much part of who I am. The craft industry in Orkney, and in particular the jewellery that gets made there, is beautiful. The Orkney landscape, the sea and its history are so inspiring for artists and crafters.

I love *On The Hill* magazine – it connects you with the village community, which is still a place for creative people with fascinating lives and stories. We just need an outlet where all the local art and craft can be showcased, like a collective.

Primrose Hill has been home to me now for 15 years, but I spent a lot of time here as a child. It's where I learned to ride a bike, and I spent many a happy Saturday with my dad wandering around the zoo after we'd dropped my mum off to work in Selfridges.

I suppose Selfridges is really where it all began. From the age of 14 I worked with my mum on Saturdays on the gemstones counter, and I've had a fascination for lovely jewellery ever since. Working there opened up a world of possibilities to me, and gave me an insight into the finest things: the cosmopolitan – foods, jewellery, make-up, clothing, quality – and the very best of customer service, which I strive to bring into my own business. It's about making every customer feel good about themselves, and confident that the after-care for a purchase is there.

My great-grandmother had some lovely pieces she used to buy from Camden Town, and her jewellery





collection included beautiful diamonds and sapphires. When I turned 30, my mum gave me an heirloom which had been my great-grandmother's, then my nana's and finally my mum's.

It was my most prized possession for all the wrong reasons – and all the right reasons too. I could feel people admiring it every time I wore it and I loved the sentiment which had seen it worn over four generations. It was worth a fair bit in monetary terms, but to me it was priceless because of its provenance.

Sadly it was stolen along with almost everything else of any sentimental value, and although I thought about buying myself a new ring it seemed a bit extravagant. I couldn't recapture the sentiment, and I don't have a daughter to pass it on to either, so I decided not to replace my heirloom, but instead to invest in myself. I bought the tools of the jewellery trade and signed myself up for silver-smithing and jewellery-making courses at evening school.

Making jewellery is so satisfying and there's always something new to learn. I have found other people in the industry are friendly and helpful, and willing to share their knowledge. The Primrose Hill Collection has grown organically so far – I didn't really have a business plan at first; it was just the creative satisfaction – but I've now realised the importance of working out where I want to take the business.

I love the excitement of selling something that I've hand-crafted, and it's such an honour to know that a piece you've made is being given as a twenty-first birthday, bridesmaid or hostess gift. I try to keep prices reasonable because I think everyone should enjoy lovely jewellery, and I really believe that understated simplicity is key. As far as possible I like to support independent British businesses. I only source from



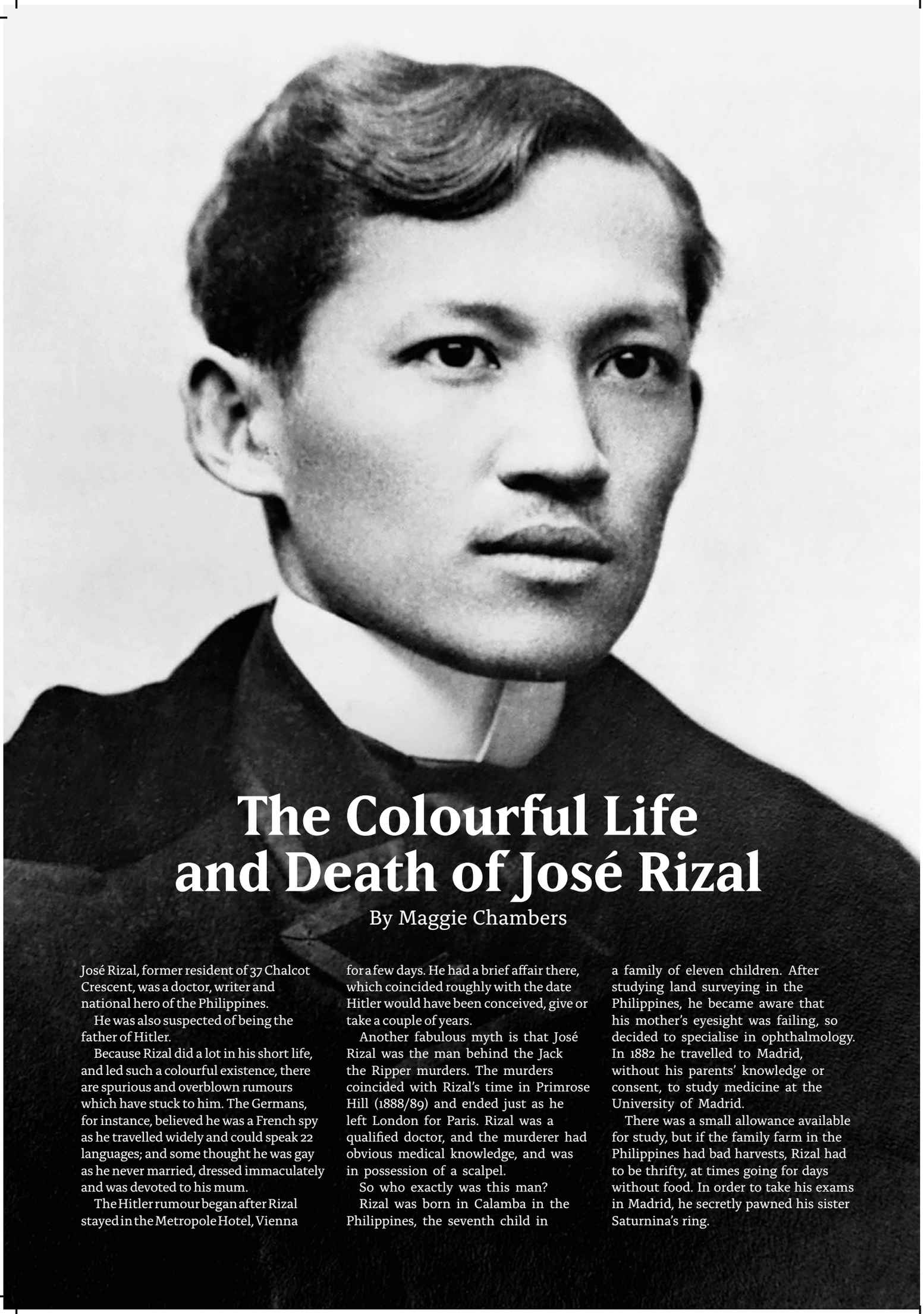
companies I know and trust for quality and ethically sourced gemstones, and sterling silver or gold.

I do sometimes wonder if the person who stole my ring was able to give their family a happy Christmas as a result, and I wonder who is wearing it now – but I love the thought that a really great piece of jewellery has enabled me to set up The Primrose Hill Collection. Without it I wouldn't have been able to afford the tools or the courses, so I'm really grateful to all those generations of my family for making it possible for me to follow my passion.

My son had reached that age where friends were coming round to play and wanted me out of the way; I had some time to myself – and I didn't want to fill that time with housework! And it was then that I recognised the passion that had always been in my life, just waiting to be discovered. I wish I'd discovered my vocation earlier in life, but I'm just happy that in my mid 40s I finally discovered 'my thing'.

The Primrose Hill Collection is an online boutique in the heart of Primrose Hill: **www.theprimrosehillcollection.co.uk**.

To enquire about a particular item of jewellery or to discuss a commission, email contact@theprimrosehillcollection.co.uk



The Colourful Life and Death of José Rizal

By Maggie Chambers

José Rizal, former resident of 37 Chalcot Crescent, was a doctor, writer and national hero of the Philippines.

He was also suspected of being the father of Hitler.

Because Rizal did a lot in his short life, and led such a colourful existence, there are spurious and overblown rumours which have stuck to him. The Germans, for instance, believed he was a French spy as he travelled widely and could speak 22 languages; and some thought he was gay as he never married, dressed immaculately and was devoted to his mum.

The Hitler rumour began after Rizal stayed in the Metropole Hotel, Vienna for a few days. He had a brief affair there, which coincided roughly with the date Hitler would have been conceived, give or take a couple of years.

Another fabulous myth is that José Rizal was the man behind the Jack the Ripper murders. The murders coincided with Rizal's time in Primrose Hill (1888/89) and ended just as he left London for Paris. Rizal was a qualified doctor, and the murderer had obvious medical knowledge, and was in possession of a scalpel.

So who exactly was this man?

Rizal was born in Calamba in the Philippines, the seventh child in a family of eleven children. After studying land surveying in the Philippines, he became aware that his mother's eyesight was failing, so decided to specialise in ophthalmology. In 1882 he travelled to Madrid, without his parents' knowledge or consent, to study medicine at the University of Madrid.

There was a small allowance available for study, but if the family farm in the Philippines had bad harvests, Rizal had to be thrifty, at times going for days without food. In order to take his exams in Madrid, he secretly pawned his sister Saturnina's ring.

As well as his academic achievements, Rizal was a polymath and mastered a great number of skills in both sciences and the arts. He was a talented sculptor, artist, writer and musician. He carved a statue of the sacred heart whilst a teenager and made works from clay, terracotta, wax and plaster. He was a cartoonist, cartographer, and farmer and excelled in pistol shooting and fencing. The exception was singing, in which he said he 'sounded like the braying of an ass'.

Rizal wrote two novels: *Noli Me Tángere* (Touch Me Not), which detailed the darker aspects of Spanish colonialism in the Philippines with particular regard to the role of the Catholic Church and its friars, and his follow-up novel *El Filibusterismo* (The Reign of Greed) 1891.

He also wrote collections of poetry, plays and essays including an article called 'The Treatment and Cure of the Bewitched' which explored treatment methods and explained that witches did not always have to be women, nor were they necessarily old or ugly.

Other than the Austrian affair which sparked the Hitler rumour, Rizal was known for his many love affairs. When he was only fourteen he met and became attached to Leonor Rivera. After he left to study in Europe, they wrote to each other in coded letters as her mother didn't approve of the relationship, fearing Rizal's reputation as a subversive. On his return, Rizal's father forbade him to visit Rivera as he didn't want her family to be put in danger with the authorities. Rivera eventually married an English railway engineer (found for her by her mother), and Rizal was left devastated.

In 1888, Rizal took lodgings at 37 Chalcot Crescent as it was close enough to the British Museum where he wished to study. His landlord was Mr Beckett, the organist of St Paul's Church in Avenue Road (St Paul's School on Elsworthy Road evolved from this church).

Beckett had a daughter, Gertrude, whom Rizal admired. But the feelings were not reciprocated, and when he finished his studies, Rizal left her with a clay medallion portrait of herself. He set off for Paris, into the arms of Nelly Boustead, the daughter of a rich British trader, over whom he almost fell into a duel to the death.

His final love was an Irish woman living in Hong Kong called Josephine Bracken. Her blind father was a patient of Rizal in his ophthalmology clinic. They fell in love, and would have married but for Rizal refusing to return to the Catholicism, which he had rejected. They had a son who died a few hours after his birth. After Rizal's death, Bracken set off for the muddy and overgrown expanses of the Philippine revolution's enemy lines, where she reloaded spent cartridges for the rebels. She died six years later of TB.

Politically, Rizal was a member of the Filipino Propaganda Movement which advocated equal rights and education for Filipinos, representation in the Spanish parliament, and limits on the powers of the friars. His desire was to achieve self-government peacefully, rather than by means of violent revolution.

In 1892 Rizal returned to the Philippines, because in order to effect change he needed to be present in the country. Although not involved in the planning or action of the revolution, he

> "He who does not know how to look back at where he came from will never get to his destination."
>
> JOSÉ RIZAL

was sympathetic to its causes, and his writings helped to inflame the movement.

Although supporting non-violence, Rizal's novels were enough to get him declared an enemy of the state and he was exiled for four years to Dapitan on the island of Mindanao. There he built a hospital and a school, installed a water supply and taught farming methods. There are three animals named after him that he collected during his time in Dapitan: *Apogonia Rizali*, a small beetle; *Draco Rizali*, a species of flying dragon; and *Rachophorous Rizali*, a toad.

After his release, he was given permission to travel to Cuba to treat yellow fever. He and Josephine left on the ship bound for Cuba, but he was arrested en route. A nationalist Filipino society, the Katipunan, had started a rebellion, and Rizal was suspected, incorrectly, of being allied to them.

After a show trial, Rizal was convicted of rebellion, conspiracy and sedition and sentenced to death. He was executed by firing squad in Manilla on 30 December 1896 at the age of 35.

On the evening before he was to be executed, Rizal placed documents in his pockets and shoes, presuming his body would be handed to his family. His final poem, *Mi último adios*, was hidden in an oil lamp which was passed to his family along with his remaining few possessions and his burial requests.

The firing squad consisted of eight Filipinos armed with Remington rifles. Stationed behind them were eight Spanish soldiers armed with Mausers, with orders to shoot any executioner who failed to carry out his duty.

Only one live bullet was put into the rifles; the rest contained blanks. They knew of his innocence, and meant to assuage any guilt. His last words echoed those of Christ: "*Consummatum est*". "It is finished."

His execution photo includes the dog which was the firing squad's mascot. After he was shot, the dog is said to have run whining around the corpse as a soldier fired a final shot into Rizal's head to ensure he was dead.

The Spanish authorities buried him in an unmarked grave and the papers Rizal had hidden about his person disintegrated. His sister Narcisi found a guarded graveyard with a freshly dug grave which she knew must be his, and marked the grave RPJ, her brother's initials in reverse.

A section of vertebrae which was damaged by a bullet was retained by Rizal's family and is now on display in the Rizal Shrine in Fort Santiago, Manilla.

Rizal was less a revolutionary than a writer who challenged the colonial status quo. Although his death was ultimately attributed to his writing, his dissenting works did have the effect of destroying Spain's hold over the Philippines. Two years after his death Spain lost control of the Philippines, but it wasn't until 1946 that independence was granted.

An English Heritage blue plaque was erected to him in 1983, and there has long been a plaque of him in Primrose Hill Community Library's garden.



The Rizal Monument in Manilla, Phillipines

Beyond



Brexit

Our local MP Sir Keir Starmer has had a busy couple of years, with much of his focus on Brexit. In an exclusive interview for *On The Hill,* he talks to Micael Johnstone about some of the key issues that impact on our area – and how his beloved Arsenal will get on this season.

WORDS MICAEL JOHNSTONE
PHOTOGRAPHY SARAH LOUISE RAMSAY



A lot has happened in UK politics since Sir Keir and I last met two summers ago. As Shadow Brexit Secretary, Starmer has been at the heart of one the most divisive and challenging issues to have faced the UK in recent history. Having left a successful career as a lawyer to serve in politics, you can sense his frustration that Brexit has got in the way of his desire to make Britain a better place. Brexit has been such a fraught and frustrating process that I had expected Starmer to be exhausted; but he breezed into the room for our interview with a beaming smile and full of positive energy. Starmer is remarkably down-to-earth, considering he's one of the most high-profile political figures in the UK (and tipped by some to be a future Prime Minister). With Parliament in recess, he's about to head off on a family holiday to Devon and he asks *On The Hill* photographer Sarah Louise Ramsay for some tips on the best route by car. In an era when many politicians seem more motivated by power than the national interest, he stands out as someone who's genuinely passionate about the major challenges of our time: from inequality to climate change.

I ask Starmer what his personal priorities are for the coming months. "Nationally, we must do what we can to sort out the crisis of Brexit; and to do that, we need to rebuild Britain," he says. "I am convinced that, over the last ten years in particular, on any measure, inequality has got deeper and deeper across the United Kingdom. So let's deal with the immediate crisis of Brexit, but actually move on to do the much more important stuff of rebuilding Britain, which is what I thought I was coming into politics for. I thought we might get the chance to talk about public services and health and rebuilding the economy and regional investment, but we haven't really done enough of that yet."

At a local level, environmental issues and HS2 continue to be a major focus. He's been encouraged by the recent rise in public awareness of climate change, and credits Extinction Rebellion and the youth protests with playing a big part (he therefore believes that the voting age should be lowered to 16). "In the constituency, the priorities are very driven by the challenges that are out there. If you just take the major issues where I'm trying to focus energy at the moment, they are air pollution and climate change, which are very real in Camden. They are a major cause of concern throughout the constituency," he says. "Air quality is a massive issue across the whole of the borough," he adds. "Obviously the Euston Road is a problem, but if you go to any of the major junctions, pretty well across Camden, you're going to have an air quality problem. I've been a supporter of the council's plan to try to tackle that; it has a number of aspects to it, including doing something about school drop-offs. So many families drive individual children to schools, when they could walk. There's no issue with public transport in Camden. There's an initiative by Camden to close parts of Camden High Street for a while the idea of making it an environment where the car is not king is really important. I think there is quite a strong sense of an intergenerational problem; Brexit is one example of that, and climate change is another. Younger people are going to have to live with the outcome of both of these for longer than the rest of us."

End of the line for HS2?

"HS2 is linked to the issue air quality, and also it's bringing devastation to everybody who lives in and around Euston, and anywhere that's going to be affected by all the construction work," says Starmer. "It's already begun. There are the known problems, of the lorries, the destruction of buildings, the moving of people; and then there are the unknown problems, like the displacement of quite a lot of anti-social behaviour from around the station into other parts of the nearby streets, which has caused major concern."

Starmer is involved in a number of forums for local people to discuss HS2, to challenge the government on their behalf and to ensure that they receive adequate compensation. I ask him whether he thinks the project might ultimately be cancelled. "Well, every now and again there's talk of the money running out or that the priorities will change. But at the moment I think we have to operate on the basis that it's going ahead and therefore keep up the challenge on things like compensation and the disturbance. I think Boris Johnson said something yesterday about it still going ahead, although what he says one day doesn't necessarily carry into the next!" Starmer believes that the vast amount of money being spent on HS2 would be better spent on improving existing rail networks; but he recognises that there

"I am convinced that, over the last ten years in particular, on any measure, inequality has got deeper and deeper across the United Kingdom. So let's deal with the immediate crisis of Brexit, but actually move on to do the much more important stuff of rebuilding Britain, which is what I thought I was coming into politics for"

are differing views in the Labour Party. "There are some, like me, who don't think the project is sound, and that it shouldn't go ahead. For that reason, I voted against it. On the other hand, if you look at the voting record of Labour MPs when the HS2 bill was going through, the vast majority voted in favour of it. It seems to me that that's unlikely to shift."

Knife Crime

Knife crime has risen across London, and Starmer says he's spending much of his time on this issue. While some politicians might reach for easy platitudes about tougher sentences and better parenting, Starmer takes a more nuanced view. "We've had the tragedy of two young men stabbed to death a year ago in February; and then Calvin Bungisa, another young man, was stabbed to death in Kentish Town just a few months ago. We've been running a Youth Safety Taskforce, the point of which was to draw the different responsible people together and come up with some recommendations; which we did – practical recommendations for Camden. Now we meet every other month to action those points and to put money into really quite interesting projects, such as dealing with vulnerable children at school. We're concentrating on how to make the environment safe for young people, which is a massive challenge. The rise in knife crime has been a real problem for us."

He has a "very good" relationship with London Mayor Sadiq Khan, and also works closely with Georgia Gould, the Leader of Camden Council. "What we try to be really conscious of is the fact that it's very easy when you're dealing with things like knife crime and youth safety to apportion the blame on everybody else. People are slower to say, 'What action can we take collectively?' It's that angle that we're trying to work on at the moment. It's really tough. It was a huge blow to all of us when, having worked on this for 18 months, we had another fatal stabbing. In other words, whatever we're doing, we've got to hold it up to the light to check that we're doing the right thing. We have to remind people constantly that, actually, Camden is safe. It's a diverse, vibrant, fantastic community, and that's how almost everyone experiences it. But there are these pockets of violence that, in the end, have to be tackled. The more you scratch away, the more obvious it is that it's inequality of every sort that lies behind it."

Funding for youth services and educational support has fallen significantly since the 2008 financial



crisis. I ask Starmer if he thinks austerity has played a role in the increasing violence. "I wouldn't attribute any one cause to this; but it doesn't therefore follow that funding is irrelevant, because it's not," he says. "It operates at a number of levels. Although the police will always say that they've got enough resource, because they will manage with what they've got, it is obvious that too much money has come out of the police service, and that they don't have the resource that they need to do everything that they should be doing. I wouldn't say that's the sole cause – put the money back into policing and the problem will go away – not at all, but we can't pretend that there's not a link between cutting resource out of police funding and the challenges we have with youth violence.

"The same is true for youth services provision more generally. Camden has struggled really hard, because of massive budget cuts, to maintain youth services across the borough. If you look at schools, the per-pupil funding has gone down. Schools are struggling. That means that support isn't there for the individual child," he continues. "This is a generalisation, but it's true that if you want to trace which children and young adults are probably going to end up in the criminal justice system, and ultimately in prison, you can usually trace that back to whether they were having difficulty at primary school, and whether they were being excluded at secondary school."

Down Time

As Starmer is about to take some well-earned time off from tackling society's major challenges, I turn the conversation to less serious matters. Where does he like to spend time when he's not working? "The Heath, the Heath, the Heath," he says with great enthusiasm. "It's just fantastic. We go there with our kids all the time. Waterlow Park is also fantastic. Regent's Park is very beautiful. So we're really lucky, in Camden, to have those open spaces; and you need them. We've got The Pineapple near us, which is the greatest pub in the country. Also, although I suppose I shouldn't be advertising one place over another, the Vietnamese restaurant, Pho Ta on Willes Road is brilliant."

Starmer is an Arsenal season ticket-holder and takes his two children to the games. I ask him how he thinks his team will get on this season. "I saw that the *Guardian* predicted that Arsenal are going to get sixth. We've got to get top four. This past season was particularly frustrating, because the pattern for the last eight or nine years was that we'd start well, get a bit optimistic around Christmas, and then start losing heavily soon after Christmas into January and a bit of February, to a point where we can't really win anything; then we rally at the end of the season and have a final flurry, normally nipping past Tottenham. This year we did quite well until about February or March, and then we just started to lose games. The last few games were started by handing out three-goal leads to the opposition and seeing if we could catch up, and of course we couldn't. So we've got to improve on that. Would I put money on top four? I want top four, but would I put money on it? Yes, I would."

Autism Provision at Primrose Hill School

The London Borough of Camden have appointed Rooff Ltd to carry out works at Primrose Hill Primary School to create an Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP). Work started on 12 August and is being carried out in phases, completing by February 2020.

The ARP will be for children with a diagnosis of autism, providing a much needed additional resource for Camden families. The provision at Primrose Hill will include dedicated teaching spaces, a soft play room, sensory space and a mini gym on the top floor, small group rooms, new toilet facilities across the school building and an extension to the playground garden as a sanctuary and quiet space for playtimes and learning. It will be a great feature for the school and for children across Camden.

The Victorian board school is a four-storey listed building with mezzanine levels, which has had recent alterations to provide additional space at lower ground floor level. This has enabled the Foundation Stage to be reorganised together, near to the Nursery and 2-year-old provision. This has freed up space at upper levels for the new ARP.

What changes are being made?

The works are mostly internal, but there will be some external works including:

- Ventilation equipment being installed on the roof to provide circulation to the new sensory room.
- The improvement works to the playground garden will involve installing additional features such as a water feature, a canopy over the seating area and relocation of two pieces of outdoor gym equipment.

How will the building works be managed to minimise disruption to residents?

The project team will:

- Carry out spot checks to ensure that the contractors (and any sub-contractors) adhere to the Considerate Contractors guidance.
- Provide a telephone number for residents to contact the contractors (see below).
- Keep in close contact with the school and ask them to report if contractors are not adhering to the agreed working hours.
- Communicate with residents regarding any planned works which are out of the ordinary.

Contractor working hours, as agreed under planning rules

- Working hours are 8am–6pm Monday to Friday (but works will generally finish before 6pm)



- If required, work will take place on Saturday 8am–1pm. Those residents who have given us their email addresses will be notified in advance of such weekend work.

Contact details for the contractor, Rooff Ltd

In case of any problems please contact:

- From 12 August 2019 to 20 September 2019, the Site Engineer, Abi Sangowawa, on 07769 727179.
- From 23 September 2019 until completion of the project, the Site Manager, Ryan Leary, on 07979 701633.
- If the above two contacts are not available, then the contact is the Contracts Manager, John Mower, on 07887 910793.
- The out-of-hours contact number is 01708 223823.

If you would like to be kept informed of the building works, please email your name and email address to fiona.dixon@camden.gov.uk. Your details will only be kept for the duration of the improvements, and will then be deleted.

Primrose Hill LAUGHS



August . . . and the astonishing result of an early September frenzy.

PRIMROSE HILL ENTREPRENEURS

Local entrepreneur Petar Savic talks to some of the start-ups and small businesses in Primrose Hill. This month he meets Stephanie Brooks.

HOW DID YOU DECIDE TO GO INTO WORKING AS A SUPERFOOD ENTREPRENEUR?

It was curiosity and an evaluation of my own diet which led me to venture to the Amazon rainforest to investigate açai. I was particularly sceptical about açai because everything I'd tasted of it was sweetened or processed. As it turns out, the pure ingredient was far better than what I'd experienced back home. So only one week into my first trip to the north of Brazil, I'd fallen in love with the forest and with açai. I was so charmed by the Brazilian culture that I felt compelled to share the real story and bring the authentic product back to the UK.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE ETHICS AND SUSTAINABILITY FOR YOUR TRIBE OF CONSUMERS?

Boa Vida's main objective is to connect consumers to the source of the foods we love to eat. Transparency in the supply chain allows us to understand the impact that our consumption has on the environment and local communities. We have an incredibly loyal customer base who value our unique approach to sourcing directly from the Amazon, and this in turn has social and environmental significance for the rainforest.

From a sourcing perspective, we have a unique 'tree-to-table' approach, which involves batch-producing wild-harvested açai. This has enabled us to build a direct relationship with our suppliers and support locally funded initiatives. These can then help combat deforestation and sustain the local açai communities. The model of wild-harvesting açai has been a great example of how consumption can benefit everyone. It utilises local labour and raw materials, without causing any harm to the environment. Over time, it's been shown that our sales of wild-harvested and organically certified products genuinely pass on economic and environmental value to the sustainable development of the rainforest.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE ANCIENT AMAZONIAN PLANT AÇAI?

In addition to its socio-environmental value, I had discovered the amazing health properties of pure açai. What fruit do you know that contains a superior level of anti-oxidants, as well as a zero degree of naturally occurring sugar? The skin and the berry are also packed with omega fatty acids (like an avocado), dietary fibre and essential vitamins and minerals unique to the rich, bio-diverse Amazon soil. The taste is neither sweet nor savoury, but earthy like dark chocolate with an undertone of cherry. I saw the potential in this versatile ingredient and wanted to explore all the possible ways of eating it in different types of cuisine.

HOW DID THE BRAZILIAN VIBES AND MUSIC ADD TO YOUR SUPERFOOD EXPERIENCE?

You have to go to Brazil to understand the infectious joy that takes hold of you when you spend time with the people. They have a deep sincerity of wanting to connect with each other and enjoy every minute of the day, no matter what challenges may loom. It is this great quality of optimism and embracing the moment which led us to the name of Boa Vida, meaning 'good life' in Portuguese.

HOW HARD IS TO BE A YOUNG WOMAN WORKING WITH INTERNATIONAL BUSINESSES FROM THE AMAZON JUNGLE?

At the beginning I never considered how being a woman would pose a challenge to my mission: I was simply fulfilling a passion project and wanting to tell an authentic story. It was only when the gear changed from pursuing a passion project to running a real business that I became aware of how few women are represented at the top of the chain and how business between men can be very different from that between men and women.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE MENTALLY AND EMOTIONALLY TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS, AND HOW DO YOU CREATE THE BALANCE BETWEEN A BUSY JOB AND PERSONAL LIFE?

Having a clear view of the bigger picture is key to dealing with the emotional stresses that inevitably arise. It's easy to get frustrated when things are not going to plan, but as the founder of a small start-up you are uniquely able to pivot back to the core of the mission whenever *you* choose. I've found that



often the best strategy for making steady progress is to let go of an idea, or park it for now.

WHAT HAS HELPED YOU THE MOST TO GET TO WHERE YOU ARE NOW?

People. Connection has been the currency of my success so far. I have really appreciated people passing on advice, sharing knowledge about things I could not have known, or simply being the inspiration to work hard and dream big.

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR MAGICAL VILLAGE OF PRIMROSE HILL?

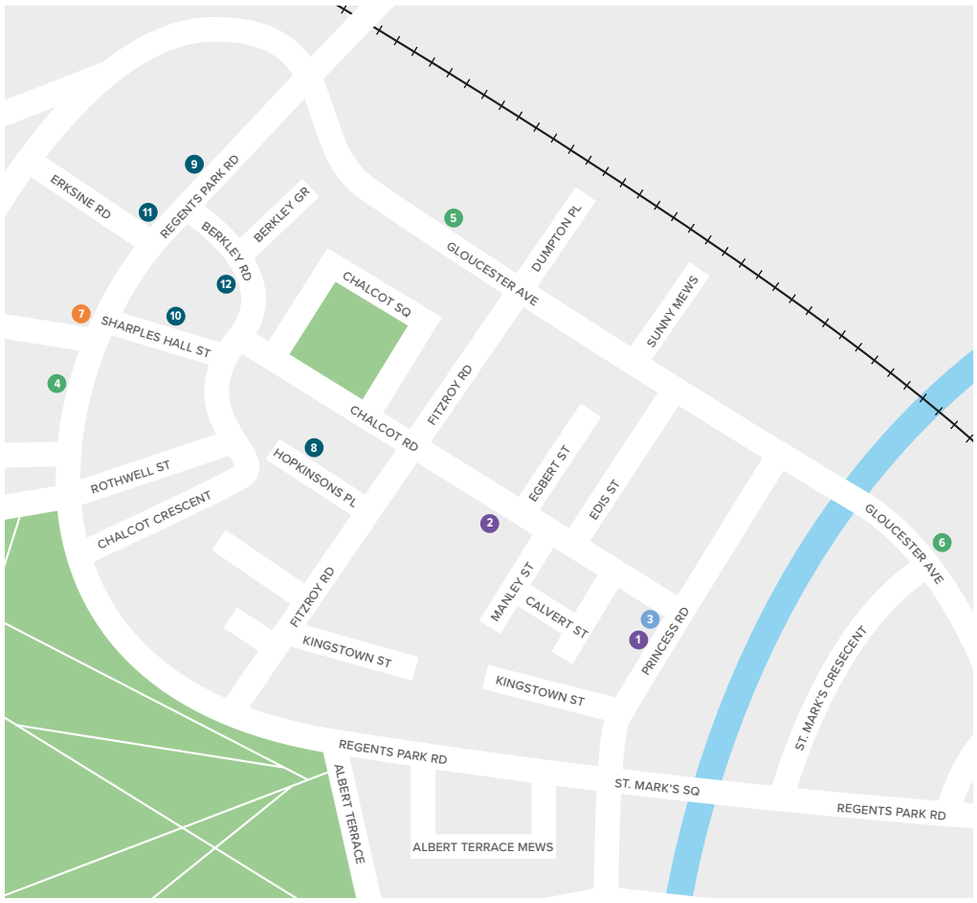
Another superfood founder / hero offered me a spare room, which gave me the gift of tranquillity in London. Primrose Hill is still the little green paradise it has always been, offering its community an oasis of calm in the middle of a chaotic city. The parks, the views and quiet streets with twittering birds give you all you need to remember that the world is bigger than you and your fears just trust and flow.

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Boa Vida is also available via the Organic Delivery Company:
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10 PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY LIBRARY
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Sa 10.00–16.00

11 POST OFFICE
91 Regent's Park Rd, NW1 8UT
M–Su 06:00–22:00

12 CHALK FARM FOODBANK
Revelation Church
c/o Chalk Farm Baptist Church, Berkley Road, NW1 8YS
0207 483 3763
Th 10.30–12.00
www.chalkfarm.foodbank.org.uk

Pistachio & White Chocolate Cake

Thirteen-year-old Caia Collis provides cake recipes to try at home with your family.

1. Preheat the oven to 180˚C.
2. Mix together the caster sugar and butter until smooth.
3. Mix in the eggs, plain flour and baking powder.
4. Put the pistachios in a plastic bag and use a rolling pin to crush them into smaller pieces, then add them to the mix along with the vanilla extract.
5. Grease two small cake tins and fill them with the mix and bake for 30 minutes or until it is golden brown on top and cooked inside. Take out the cakes and leave them to cool for an hour.
6. Mix together the butter and icing sugar until smooth.
7. Melt the white chocolate in a bowl over a pan of boiling water and add it to the icing along with the vanilla extract and milk.
8. Use the icing to sandwich the cakes together then spread around the exterior. Use the pistachios (whole and crushed) to decorate, along with milk chocolate shavings.

Enjoy !

Ingredients

For the cake:
325 g plain flour
325 g caster sugar
300 g unsalted butter
50 g unshelled pistachios
2 tsp vanilla extract
3 large eggs
1 tsp of baking powder

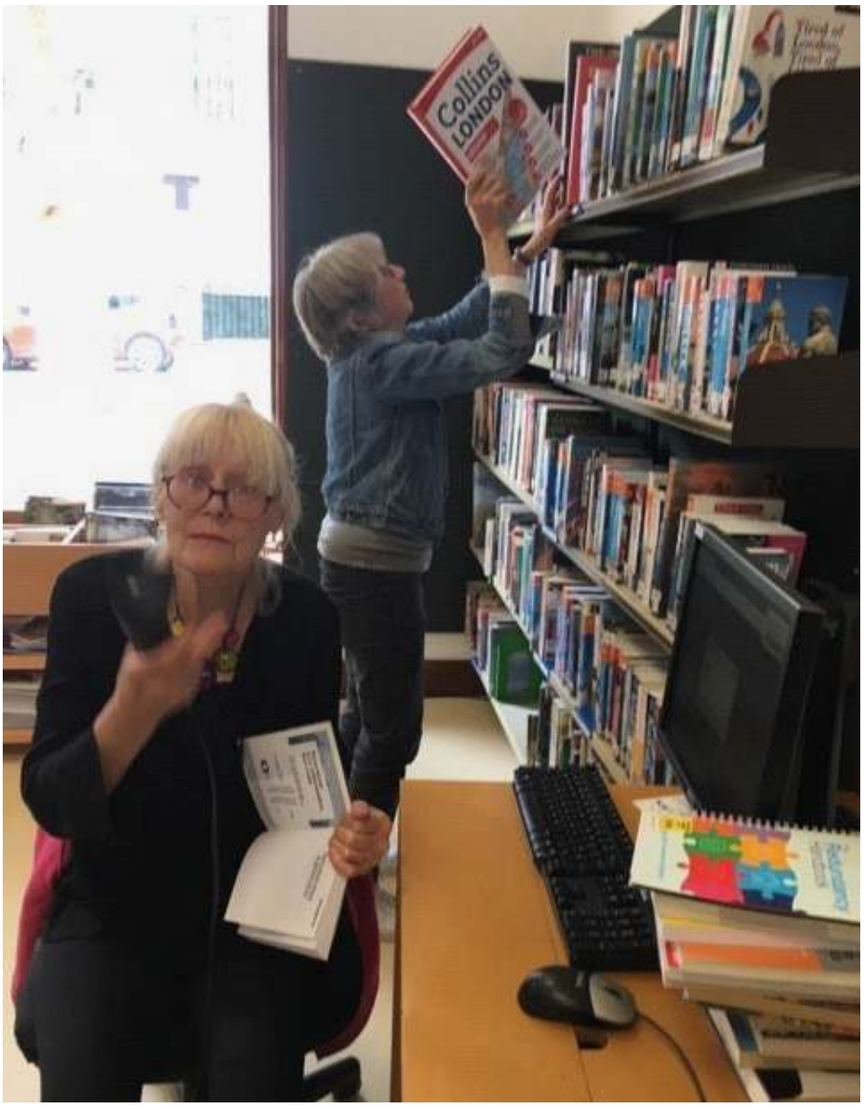
For the icing:
400 g icing sugar
550 g unsalted butter
2 tsp vanilla extract
100 g white chocolate
Dash of semi-skimmed milk



RECIPE BY Caia Collis
PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Louise Ramsay

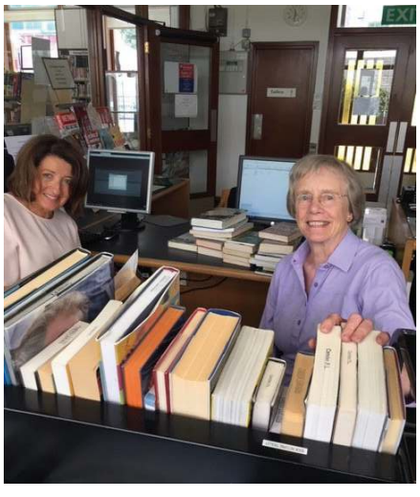
Hello, Primrose Hill!

These are a few photos of the valiant helpers from the Primrose Hill Community Library book committee, plus volunteers, who spent two days stock-taking in the adult library. As a charity we are dependent entirely on the goodwill of the local community to return the books that they borrow so that they are available for other readers. This stocktake shows relatively few lost books so our adult members are doing well!



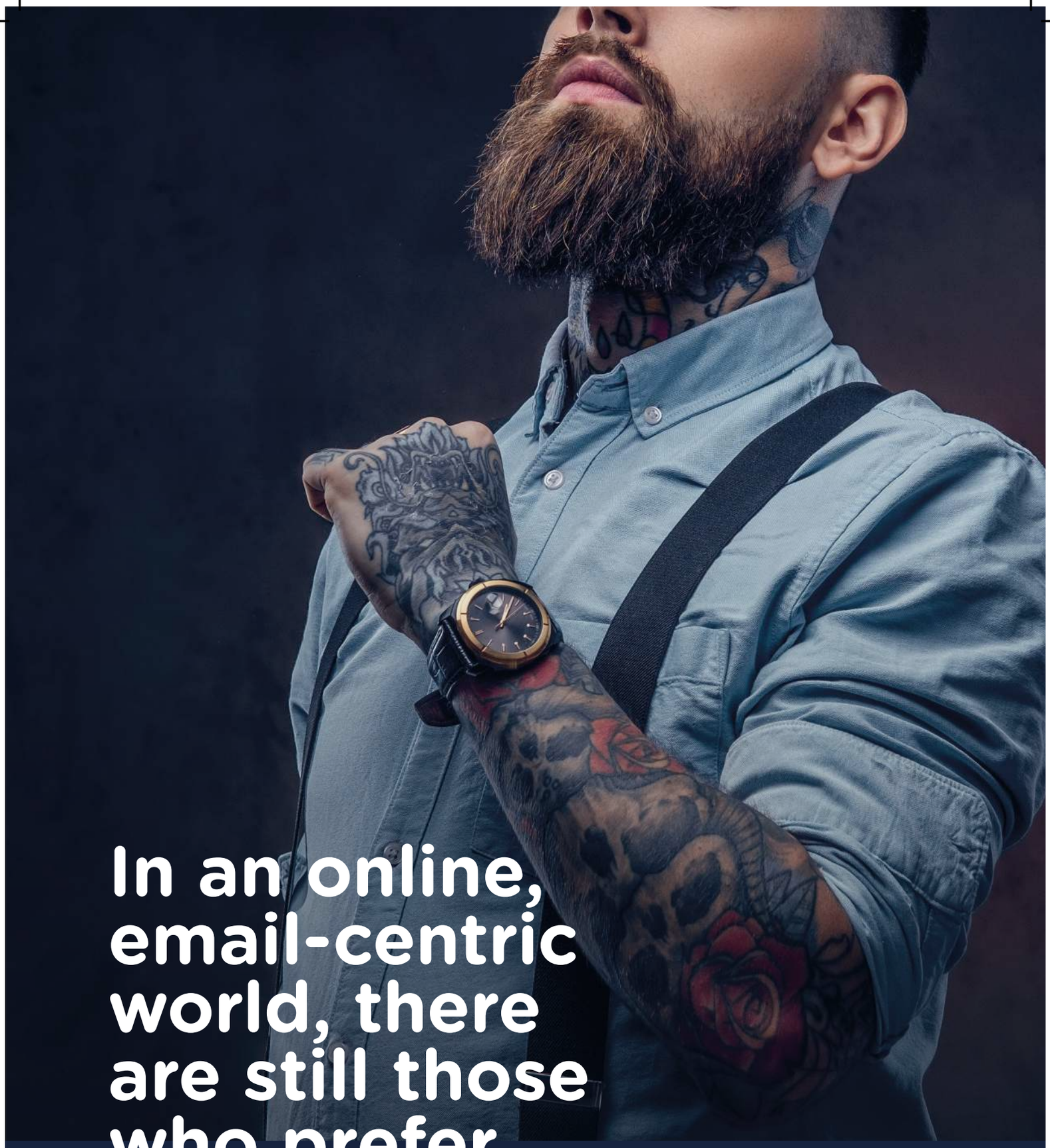












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