

Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association

Incorporating Alexandra Ward



HIDDEN MUSWELL HILL

Calling all photographers!

The Association has just released the details of an exciting new 2014 photographic competition, for members, and friends and family of members. With the theme of "Hidden Muswell Hill", the judges are looking for your images of the unusual, rarely seen, out of sight or out of the ordinary in Muswell Hill. These could be unique architectural features, special views, everyday sights seen from unusual angles, one of the cottages that predated the urban expansion – the choices are all yours!

Prizes!

First prize is £30, second prize is £20 and third prize is £10. In the Junior category, there is a £15 book voucher for the winning entry from someone under 16. The judges are Zoe Norfolk, press photographer, Matt Humphrey, professional photographer at

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Inside this issue:

Association Updates	2
Members' Forum	4
Highways & Byways	6
Round & About	7
Membership Application Form	8

theLOCALgallery and Tony Wells, Website Photographer.

Q: How to enter the Competition?

A: Upload your Images in jpg format to Anthony.wells@btinternet.com. Provide a title for your image/s. Maximum of 3 images per entrant. Provide your name, age (if under 17), email address, and a phone number.

Q: When's the deadline for entries?

A: The last date for entries is 31 March 2014 . The winners will be announced on 10 May. The winning entries will on display on the website and in a future MHFGA newsletter.



URBAN BLIGHT

According to data from Pricewaterhouse Coopers and the Local Data Company, last year on average 16 town centre shops were closing down *every day*. And the South East and East Midlands suffered the hardest. The Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association regrets that any local businesses are forced to close, and urges its members to support their neighbourhood stores as much as possible. Keep the Committee informed about the depressing "To Let" signs that sprout up, but, more importantly, let them know when new enterprises take over the vacant sites.



SOCIAL MEDIA!

In November, the Garden Room at North Bank was host to long-term member Hugh Garnsworthy showing a fascinated audience a selection of slides of his unrivalled collection of postcards, from the 1870s to the 20th Century.

Hugh is originally from South Wales and came to Muswell Hill as a young man to teach, and never left! Now retired, he devotes a great deal of his time to the Hornsey Historical Society, of which he is treasurer.

As one member pointed out: with the limited number of characters, a photographic image and very speedy delivery, the postcard is one of the first and most enduring examples of social media!

Hugh Garnsworthy at the magic lantern



WEB'S WONDER

The Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association has a new website (<http://mhfga.org>).

You will find lots of information about the Association and our area and, in particular, brand new photos of Muswell Hill today, our shop fronts, and also photos of old postcards of Muswell Hill, from over a 100 years ago, when parking wasn't a problem! There is a membership page where your friends and neighbours can join the Association for only £8 a year (or see page 8 of this Newsletter).

The MH&FGA covers Muswell Hill, Fortis Green and Alexandra Ward and if you join, you can take part in our activities and help us in keeping the three wards clean, green and a pleasant place to live and shop. Many successful local initiatives have been developed by our growing membership.

The Association welcomes contributions from members and always needs help with environmental projects. We also appreciate support in organising meetings, find speakers, deliver Newsletters, deal with the press and administration and not least to recruit new members. If you have any other thoughts about your involvement, please write to John Hajdu, Chairman, at hajdu.clarion@talk21.com, or come to our Members' Meetings – the next one is on Wednesday 19th March.

PLANNING UPDATE Nick Barr

Muswell Hill is on the developers' radar. A relatively large number of applications for significant residential projects is in the pipeline— which will have an impact on the community if they go ahead. Below is an update of some current applications.

107-143 Muswell Hill Road (the Odeon shops and flats)

Conditional consent was granted on 18 November 2013. It is anticipated that work will commence in March.

St Luke's Hospital

A new application was submitted on 15 November 2013 by Hanover Housing Developments Ltd – it has already attracted over 60 comments, the majority objecting to the scheme. The developer has reduced the total number of units and parking spaces, and increased the number of Social Rented homes.

30 Muswell Hill

The application for 12 residential units and 10 car parking spaces has received little comment and the Planning Committee Report of 9 December 2013 recommends that conditional consent is granted.

The Green Man and LCCCP School (56 Muswell Hill)

The proposal has been the subject of some debate. The reality is, however, that the existing school is no longer fit for purpose and the developer has agreed to provide a new building at little or no cost to LCCCP and, to be able to do this, needs to generate revenue from the sale of the residential elements of the scheme.

77 Muswell Hill

A recent application for change of use of the ground and basement levels of this red brick building at the top of Muswell Hill to residential use. Making use of this building which has never been fully utilised should in my view be welcomed.

10- 27 Connaught House, Connaught Gardens

A new application to refurbish and extend the above property to create 28 residential units and 9 car parking spaces. The building is in a prominent position and the application is for an unsympathetic behemoth of white render and copper.

HIGHGATE WOOD

The keepers have planted some plants in the pond which is located in the permanent conservation area next to the playground and railway line. All the plants introduced to the pond are native and are of particular benefit to insects particularly bees and butterflies, who rely upon their pollen and nectar for feeding and (in the case of bees) feeding their young. They will also keep its oxygen levels up, and provide valuable opportunities for insects and newts to lay their eggs.

A new conservation area, close to Bridge Gate, has been coppiced and will be managed to help create greater variety and regeneration and provide new glades that will attract many plants, invertebrates and birds. This area includes a section of the large earthwork structure – an important historical feature which is very susceptible to erosion. The conservation work has combined extensive holly coppicing, with some selective hornbeam cutting, and to allow for undisturbed regeneration, the area has been 'dead-hedged' with the added bonus of protecting the earthwork from trampling.

W7 BUS STOP A SUCCESS

The Association's Transport Officer, Chris Barker, writes that the new bus stop on the Muswell Hill roundabout for the W7 has now been made permanent. "It is a great boon to people who find the walk down the steep hill to the old stop impossible to manage," says Chris.

The intention was to stop the 144 there as well on a trial basis but sadly this will not now take place at least in the near future. London Buses say they might reconsider it when they have more experience of the effect on traffic of the present arrangement. "We will continue to press for the 144 to be added to the stop".

Wendy Joy Ross (née Steerwood) was born on 8 October 1924. Her parents, Charlie Steerwood and Myra Ethel Steerwood (née Hoodless), had been married in St James's Church, Muswell Hill.

The family lived above a carpentry shop (possibly now Tony Andrews the Locksmith on Muswell Hill Broadway) opposite the Post Office. Wendy's father Charlie ran a shop with a colleague at the top of Muswell Road selling watches and violins.

Access to their first floor flat was along Queens Mews, behind Barclays bank, and she watched Muswell Hill Library being built in Queens Avenue when she was about seven.

Wendy and her brother went to Muswell Hill School, half way down St James's Lane, affectionately known as "The Tin Pot School" because it was built of corrugated iron.

At weekends, Charlie took the children to the Summerland Cinema at the top of Muswell Hill, which subsequently was called the Ritz and the ABC until it was eventually pulled down to be replaced by the headquarters of the Taylor Walker Brewery Co.

At the outbreak of war in 1939, Wendy was evacuated to the country, and by Christmas was living with Col and Mrs Collins of Brakies Wood, Hatfield Peverel in Essex.

She passed her Matriculation and went to Stockwell College, which had been moved to Whatcombe Park, Torquay, for the duration of the war.

Having graduated as a teacher in 1944, Wendy started work at Cranbourne Junior School between Potters Bar and South Mimms. The other new teacher who started at the same time was the granddaughter of Capt. William Booth, and Wendy spent many happy times in the Booth family home and she used to go to dances at the Southgate dance hall called The Royalty.

In 1946 Wendy met Fred Ross at The Royalty and he asked her to marry him the very same night. He was in the King's Royal Rifle Brigade and they were officially engaged on 9 October 1946 and were married the following May at Our Lady of Muswell Catholic Church, in Colney Hatch Lane.

Wendy and Fred moved to 19 Dukes Avenue, and she gave birth to three children at the nursing home at the top of Alexandra Park Road. On New

Year's Day 1953 the Council told them that a flat was available on the ground floor of 18 Dukes Avenue and they slid all of the furniture over the road on the ice a week later. Their fourth child, Viv, was born in March 1954.

The dairy, with the Express Dairy cafe in what is now "The Hill", was situated at the top of Muswell Hill and had milk carts with the horses stabled behind the frontage. At that time, Sainsbury's was opposite the bus terminus, (where Pizza Express is now) and customers had to queue separately at each counter to buy the individual goods sold at that counter.

The three eldest went to Tetherdown Primary School, just off Fortis Green, and in the summer of 1958, just before Viv started at Tetherdown, the school moved to its present site in Grand Avenue, a building formerly occupied by Tollington

Girls Grammar School.

After taking the children to school in Grand Avenue, Wendy would sit and drink coffee and gossip in Lyons Tea House, situated between the Congregational Church on the corner of Princes Avenue and St James's Church.

The older members of the family used to frequent the Athenaeum, a meeting hall opposite the Odeon, with its wonderful dance floor; it couldn't compete with the changing face of entertainment in the 1960s and was pulled down and replaced by Sainsbury's in the 1970s.

In 1965, with two sons in the 3rd Muswell Hill cub pack at Our Lady of Muswell, Wendy became the treasurer of the pack and stayed in the role for many years even after the boys had grown up. In 1977, Wendy joined the Royal British Legion in Muswell Hill soon after Fred died, and was a stalwart member of the Women's Section, selling poppies outside Sainsbury's for over thirty years.

Wendy still owns the house in Dukes Avenue, despite her poverty in childhood, and is now living with one of her sons near St Neots in Cambridgeshire.

Wendy Joy Steerwood

A Muswell Hill Life

*A contribution from Association
member Viv Ross*

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

The Association is pleased to announce the appointment of a new membership secretary – Alex Vincenti, a Muswell Hill resident for more than 30 years. He can be contacted at a brand new and dedicated email address: membership@mhfga.org. His role is to act as focal point for all matters regarding membership of the Association – maintaining and updating our mailing lists, encouraging the recruitment of new members, and supporting Newsletter distributions and communication from the Chairman and the Treasurer.

Says Alex, “I am delighted that my first duty is to welcome the latest members to join the Association: **Samantha Habgood**, Headteacher, Norfolk House School, Muswell Avenue; **Diana Allbeury**, of Eastern Road; **Elizabeth James**, of Eastern Road; **Mark Whittam**, of Woodberry Crescent; **Marcia Saunders**, of Springfield Avenue; and **Peter Campbell** and **Susie Harrison**, of Clyde Road – and I’m very glad to have joined the Association myself!”.

ARTISTIC HUSBAND AND WIFE TEAM

Stephen Gottlieb and Jane Dorner have lived in Muswell Hill for 33 years and are (amazingly) only the fourth owners of the Victorian house they live in.

Stephen is a lutemaker, building all types of renaissance and baroque instruments from highly decorated to classically simple. Stephen’s lutes, theorboes and chittarone are lightly constructed and are made typically with yew or maple backs and well-seasoned spruce soundboards. Decoration is in materials such as ebony, snakewood, boxwood, bone and gold leaf. www.lutemaker.com

Stephen’s wife Jane is a glass artist and makes free-standing sculptural pieces and wall-mounted structures for modern interior settings. She has adapted the ancient art of *pâte de verre* to a modern idiom. She ‘paints’ with finely crushed glass which is heat-treated to create various colourful effects. www.janedornerglass.com

PRIME THINKERS

Everyone Wins

A local initiative brings together collective brain power to help new, small or growing businesses, and benefits a local charity at the same time. You can make a presentation to a group of eight to ten “thinkers”, comprising managers, senior government officials and experienced business owners. They will brainstorm your problems with you – and you can then pursue any ideas that might benefit your organisation. The cost is modest – £100 which goes directly to the Haringey charity “Kith & Kids”, and the “thinkers” volunteer their time and expertise. And sponsor Grunberg & Co double the contribution. Winners all round. Anyone interested can visit the website www.primethinkers.com, or email mauricecollins@msn.com for more information.



*Crime prevention tips
from the Safer
Neighbourhood Team*

Doors

Doors are the primary route of entry and exit for most burglars, so it's vital you secure them effectively. You can improve home security by making simple adjustments to your front door, for example, ensure you have adequate locks and security fittings. This section contains advice and tips to help you improve security within your home.

Tips

- The door should be fitted with a 5 lever mortice deadlock.
- Ensure that the frame is strong and will support the door, hinges and lock.
- Make sure the door is suitable for external use and is a minimum of 45mm thick.
- Consider fitting a London Bar or Birmingham bar to provide additional support to the door frame.
- Letterboxes should have an internal cover plate.
- For additional safety and security fit a spy hole and door chain.
- Do not leave house keys in or near the door as they can get removed through the letterbox.

Roads and Safety

Potholes – Haringey Council is currently trialling a reduction in our intervention levels for pothole repairs. This sees the threshold reduce from 60mm and 50mm to 30mm and 25mm respectively. This will enable reactive action to be delivered earlier and therefore reduce the impact on the highway. A budget of £600k has been provided for this work, which is an increase of £350k on last year's expenditure.

Planned Carriageway/Footway Maintenance – The Council is investing £6m to improve the condition of its roads and footways. Around £3m will be used to deliver carriageway resurfacing with £1.8m used to improve footways. A further £940k will be used to provide extensive patching to localised areas and £250k will be used to address surface water ponding. The investment will focus on locations identified through priorities through condition surveys, NAT inspections, engineer's assessment and usage.

Ward by Ward details of all highway work the Council intends to deliver this year (2013/14) can be found in the 2013/14 Sustainable Transport Work Plan. The report is available to download from the Council's website.

WalkSafe N10

A group of parents, teachers and governors from Coldfall and Coppetts Wood primary schools is concerned about the safety of pedestrians on local streets, especially children when they are walking to and from school. The group is working closely with councillors from Haringey and Barnet and has won support from both Councils' Area Committees. Among the requested measures are:

A 20 mph speed limit in north Muswell Hill

The group believes that 20 mph can largely be achieved by signage but that some streets will need additional traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps. A proper survey done by both Councils would establish what needs to be done.

More pedestrian crossings on Colney Hatch Lane

This is a fast road with only one crossing (a zebra) on the long stretch between St Peter le Poer and Alexandra Park Road. Many people support two new pedestrian crossings – one next to Greenham Road (Haringey) and one next to St Peter le Poer Church (in Barnet).

If you think you can help, please contact Sarah Perman on sarahcperman@gmail.com. You can also follow the campaign on twitter [@WalkSafeN10](https://twitter.com/WalkSafeN10) and on facebook www.facebook.com/WalkSafeN10

Another group of residents shares some of the same concerns and has started a campaign – Cross Safe N10 – to improve the dangerous junctions of Alexandra Park Road and Pages Lane where they meet Colney Hatch Lane. For more information, please email crosssafen10@gmail.com. Please lend your support by signing the petition <http://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/crosssafe-n10-campaign>.

Looking forward...

The flower boxes on the roundabout have been well received.



A combined effort by the MHFGA, the N10 Sustainability Group and the team at Sunshine Garden Centre leaves us in a strong position for another colourful display in 2014.

Band Substance

The Muswell Hill Brass Band has room for a few more players in 2014, so why not make it your New Year's resolution to get involved? If you play a brass instrument, do get in touch with them. The Band rehearses Monday and Wednesday evenings in the centre of Muswell Hill N10. The organisers are working hard to develop community music-making in the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green area. For younger players and adult learners, the Foundation Band provides top quality coaching and playing opportunities. www.muswellhillbrassband.co.uk

Palace Peek

On the weekend of 24/25 January, take a sneak peek into the past, present and future of Alexandra Palace. Discover the hidden gems of Ally Pally, with a guided tour of the secret derelict spaces of the 140 year old "People's Palace". £5.00 plus booking fee. Details from www.alexandrapalace.com.

Well Met

The Fortis Green Safer Neighbourhoods team will be holding a drop-in session Tuesday 18 February 2014, at 6.00 PM, in Muswell Hill Library, Queens Avenue.

This delightful view of Midhurst Green was taken during the summer of 2013.



The beautiful scene demonstrates just what can be done to enhance our everyday environment. Brian Livingston, our committee member responsible for environmental issues, works closely with the Parks Department of the Council to make sure that our green spaces are kept to a high standard. If anybody wishes to help, do get in touch with him at cblivingston@btinternet.com

Festival Focus

The Muswell Hill Festival is due to take place in September – more details in a future Newsletter. If you'd like to help on the MHFGA stand, just let John Crompton know. A steady-handed photographer could be useful!



The Association stand last year

If you have an event or activity that might be of interest to the Association's members, for inclusion in the Newsletter, the deadline for the next issue is 5 March 2014...