

# Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association

www.mhfga.org

Your Residents' Association working for the local community since 1948

## National Garden Scheme (NGS)

### A Cornucopia of Sensual Delights in the Heart of Muswell Hill



**Assistant County Organisers for NGS North West London, Susan Bennett and Earl Hyde, look back over the past year.**

We have opened our garden three times a year for the National Garden Scheme (NGS) since 1996.

Then, in March 2020, the lockdown caused by the Coronavirus pandemic forced all 3,700 gardens to close for the first time in the 93-year history of the NGS.

The outlook for our nursing and health charities was bleak. But gardeners are resilient. All over the UK garden owners came up with novel ideas to raise much needed funds. People made videos inviting visitors on virtual tours of their garden. Our patron, Prince Charles, joined in. His video raised £250,000 for "Help Support the Nurses".

When restrictions were eased, the NGS launched "The Great British Garden Party". It was a joy for us to invite 30 guests to relax in our garden on a warm September afternoon. For some it was the first time they had left their homes since March. It was an emotional event which raised £600 of the £50,000 raised nationally. With plant sales, raffles, gifts from generous supporters included, in 2020 the NGS donated £2.88 million, providing critical support to nursing and health charities in a year of crisis.

Ignorant of what to expect in 2021, garden owners had to register in September in order to be included in the Yellow Book and website. Happily, we have a spacious garden and side entrance so we opened in May and June following government guidelines. Most of our "Dream Team" of helpers had been vaccinated, as had most of our visitors, who were delighted to share the peace and welcome our garden bestows.

Meanwhile, the garden featured on BBC 2, in "Saved by a Stranger" in which Anita Rani interviewed a man who had been traumatised in childhood but was "saved" by teachers at school in East Finchley.

## July/August 2021

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Earl valiantly mowed our lawn for an ITV News item promoting "No Mow May"; a bit ironic as he used to be a lawn nerd, but we do now have buttercups and daisies. Then Garden Club Nigeria took members from many countries on a virtual tour of our garden. We donated the fees to the NGS. Thanks to the privilege of having a garden to tend, life during this extraordinary era has been both challenging and fulfilling.

We look forward to welcoming you to our next event on July 25th. Earl's cakes are notoriously delicious, and I have grown lots of plants, many unusual, most well-suited to local conditions.

Do peruse the studio where many of our architectural features, including Pagodas, a Temple, and the bust of Beethoven were made, along with pots, pebbles and planters - perfect gifts.

I have to pay tribute to our band of volunteers. We could not function without their generous and warm-hearted help which, in turn, helps to change the lives of our beneficiaries, as will your visit.

Our garden at 5 St Regis Close, Alexandra Park Rd, N10 2DE will be open on SUNDAY JULY 25<sup>th</sup>, 2-6.30pm. Admission £4, children free. Pre booking available. See NGS website for details or pay at gate. Please bring cash. We welcome private parties of 10 or more. Contact us at [suebearlh@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:suebearlh@yahoo.co.uk)

*Please contact Susan and Earl if you have an interesting garden which you would like to open for the NGS.*

## Members' Meetings

We will continue with our programme of meetings via Zoom. Please contact [events@mhfga.org](mailto:events@mhfga.org) to book your place and receive the link to enter the meeting, and check our website [www.mhfga.org](http://www.mhfga.org) for up-to-date information.

### 14 July, 2.00pm - Music, Murder and Madness in Muswell Hill

Join Sally Stevens on a guided walk around our leafy hilltop village. We'll learn about the end of the rural idyll and the rapid development of this Edwardian suburb. Our walk will include visiting the site of Muswell Hill's very own pleasure garden, the home of rock 'n roll aristocracy, a stop outside the house rented by a six foot seven blues icon and his pet goat, discovering why the Royal Oak pub was re-named the 'famous' Royal Oak and finding out where a national treasure was straitjacketed in the 1960s.

The walk will last about 90 minutes.

*Numbers limited so please book early.*

### 23 September, 8.00pm - Peter Webb.

Following on from his February talk, *From Michelangelo to Picasso via Rembrandt: my collection of prints*, Peter will present part two, concentrating on Oriental and European prints of a later period.

### 28 October, 8.00pm - Birth of the Film Studio - in Muswell Hill

A talk by Ian Christie, a film historian whose *Robert Paul and the Origins of British Cinema* was published by Chicago University Press in 2019. When Robert and Ellen Paul moved from central London to Sydney Road in 1898, they were setting a trend that would be followed around the world. Film studios were essentially a suburban development, soon to be found on the outskirts of cities around the world. But how much do we know about the Animatograph Works on Sydney Road and its ten-year history?

*We would welcome suggestions from our members for topics for future meetings or, even better, to offer a talk themselves. Please contact our Chairman, John Hajdu, who would be very happy to hear from you.*

## Bring the Roman Kiln back to Highgate Wood

A crowdfunding campaign launched by the Friends of the Highgate Roman Kiln (FOHRK)  
Patrons: Claire Skinner & Hugh Dennis

We are crowdfunding for £25,000 to pay for the first stage of our initiative to return one of the best-preserved Roman kilns ever excavated in England for exhibition in Highgate Wood where it was found.

### Invitation indoor event

**Thursday, 1st July 2021** at Lauderdale House, Highgate Hill, N6 5HG - launch of FOHRK's crowdfunding campaign and our school and community learning programme, The Great Roman Online Pottery Challenge.

**6pm** - The Great Roman Online Pottery Challenge and making pots with Highgate Wood clay with Duncan Hooson of Clayground Collective and Central St Martins.

**7pm** Launch of the Speakers: Catherine West MP, Claire Skinner, actress and FOHRK patron, Harvey Sheldon, excavator of the Highgate Wood pottery manufacturing site in 1968, Charlie Andrew, FOHRK trustee, classics author and educator. The Great Roman Online Pottery Challenge is generously supported by the Classical Association.

### A Zoom event open to all

**8pm, Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

Fire, water, wood and clay: technologies for Roman Britain, for our times and for the future. Speakers include: Duncan Hooson, Clayground Collective and Central St Martins and Nick Peacey, MBE, Secretary of FOHRK and builder of reproduction Roman kilns.

### FOHRK summer party open to all who sign up

**6pm-7.30pm Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021** at the Pavilion Café, Highgate Wood.

Further information: Nick Peacey,  
[friendsofhighgateromankiln@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofhighgateromankiln@gmail.com)  
or phone 07823 337137

## MHFGA Committee

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[www.facebook.com/MHFGA](http://www.facebook.com/MHFGA)  
(over 1,800 followers)



[@theMHFGA](https://twitter.com/theMHFGA)  
(over 800 followers)



[@mhfga](https://www.instagram.com/mhfga)  
(400 followers)

Visit our website [www.mhfga.org](http://www.mhfga.org) for lots of information about the local area including old photos, early films and John Hajdu's history of the Association. If you have a photo or news item why not share it with our members on Twitter [@theMHFGA](https://twitter.com/theMHFGA) or visit [www.twitter.com/theMHFGA](http://www.twitter.com/theMHFGA). We tweet regularly on Association and local news, so please follow and spread the word. And don't forget our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/MHFGA](http://www.facebook.com/MHFGA)!

## Members' Profile

### Gill and Brian Simpson

In August 2021, Brian and Gill Simpson will celebrate 50 years of marriage – and of living in the Coldfall area of Muswell Hill. Northerners from opposite sides of the Pennines, they met in Cambridge in 1969, where Brian was a research student in Geotechnical Engineering, and Gill was preparing for primary teaching. Their paths converged in a student group assisting in a small church in rural Cambridgeshire – a welcome contrast to academic studies! They married just before starting their first jobs in London: Brian with Arup - a major firm of consulting engineers - and Gill in a junior school in Friern Barnet. They rented a one-bedroom furnished flat in Wilton Road for the intended 'couple of years' in London, with walks in Coldfall Wood a favourite way of de-stressing after work.

They soon became involved in church-based youth work and decided to stay local – first in Barrenger Road, then a move to Coldfall Avenue in 1979. Deep roots were also forming in the local community through being active parents at Coldfall Primary School, where Gill has also been a supply teacher, a governor, taught lunchtime recorder groups and led local history walks. Coordinating connections with past pupils for Coldfall's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary was a bonus – with a prefect from 1928 returning to ring the school bell and cut the cake. Memories contributed from around the UK and beyond gave insights into the resilience and mutual support in this close-knit community through some very tough times.

Brian's enduring fascination with understanding, modelling and predicting ground movements has led to a wide-ranging career involving projects around the world, continued academic research, and the development of international codes of practice in geotechnics, for which he was awarded the OBE. A memorable challenge was designing foundations and deep basements for the British Library amid the maze of tube tunnels, and with groundwater levels rising in the chalk aquifer below.

For the last 20 years, Muswell Hill Methodist Church on Pages Lane has been a second home and family. Brian's involvement with the church's property began in 2006-7 when the beautiful mid-Victorian villa North Bank (used by the church from 1924) was being refurbished to transform it into a robust, accessible centre for church and community. Responsibilities for property have continued, alongside many other interests in the life of the church, including the Child Contact Centre and Toddlers (Dads and Grandads welcome!). Gill particularly enjoys offering opportunities for families with babies or toddlers to have fun together, sing songs, and make local connections. A group for first-time parents with new babies has started recently, with encouragement from Health Visitors.

A massive area of concern to them now is Climate Change. Their involvement in Muswell Hill Sustainability Group, in development agencies overseas, and Brian's online learning all help in trying to understand the complex issues and possible responses – globally and locally.

Fifty years on, their sons and families have settled in Bristol and Liverpool (great cities to visit) – but Brian is still with Arup (mainly retired), Coldfall Wood has been a haven in lockdown, and there is much to enjoy in the church and Muswell Hill community - so the 'couple of years' in 1971 don't seem to be over just yet!



## Eccentric Contraptions

The objects in Maurice Collins's collection of unusual gadgets, illustrated in our previous issue, are identified below.



Object 1 - knot scissors



Object 2 - boiled egg rack



Object 3 - blackhead remover



Object 4 - bread crust scraper

## Muswell Hill Ward Panel update

### Helicopters and keeping yourself safe at the Cash Machine

The Ward Panel is the non political independent panel of community members which meets with the Police and sets the priorities for the Safer Neighbourhoods Team (SNT) The team is led by Sgt Leon Christodoulou and has now been joined by PC Shannon Upton who will be using a bike to get around locally alongside our biking PC Jonathan Elderer. You can contact the local SNT by email [SN TYR-Muswellhill@met.police.uk](mailto:SN TYR-Muswellhill@met.police.uk) or by phone 07760170127. They are also on Twitter [Muswell Hill Police](https://twitter.com/Muswell Hill Police) or [@MPSmuswellhill](https://twitter.com/MPSmuswellhill). The SNT will resume face to face contact points locally as Covid Restrictions are lifted Residents should of course call 999 if they observe a crime in progress. Please contact Haringey enforcement teams if you have concerns about parking or traffic.

At our last ward panel meeting we heard from the Sergeant who is responsible for the Metropolitan Police Helicopter Unit. Residents have been kept awake at night from time to time by helicopters working in the area. They operate at between 1500 and 2000 feet and can sound alarmingly close. When you hear them they are on a local job – possibly helping ground based officers chasing suspects, or maybe looking for a missing person.

Thefts of catalytic convertors continue locally and nationwide despite the Met Police having some success apprehending suspects and stolen convertors. It is a crime that the SNT are virtually powerless to prevent or apprehend as the culprits are part of organised gangs and steal the convertors in a matter of minutes. We understand that the Met are pursuing intelligence led investigations and are working with vehicle manufacturers to deal with this crime. Garages can fit some vehicles with locks to make the theft of the convertor more difficult.

The SNT continue to work with our local Neighbourhood Watch groups and help with advice on personal safety and crime prevention. We have been informed that Muswell Hill will soon be part of the OWL system – which is an online resource for community groups and individuals to receive information and advice and upload concerns about local issues. The cost of the system is funded by Haringey.

Now the shops are open residents are getting out and about which includes vulnerable and older people who have avoided being out for over a year. Some are naturally nervous of being amongst people after such a long gap and may be concerned if they have heard that occasionally people are robbed when they have just visited a cash machine. SNT advise that safety is always the priority and suggest that people should use the machines inside banks if they feel concerned, or to take someone with them to help them be aware of their surroundings if they are using a machine by the pavement

*Patricia Pearl*  
Chair Muswell Hill Ward Panel

## Muswell Hill Roundabout

I have recently done a 'then and now' photo of the roundabout. The old photo is from the front of Ken Gay's excellent book *Images of London Muswell Hill revisited*. I noticed that the picture was taken at 2.30pm so I went up to the roundabout in the afternoon to take it. The result is that the shadows match the original which proves that the clock above Sainsburys was working. I had to manoeuvre to stand exactly where the original photographer had stood and I wondered how he would have felt had he known that maybe 110 years later someone would be standing in the exact same spot trying to recreate his picture. He



must have been obvious standing there with a huge old camera on a tripod and it seems that the people in the picture deliberately stayed still so the photo was not blurred. I took my photo unnoticed by those passing me by. It's sad to see that much of the ornamental top of the buildings including the clock have disappeared.

*Patricia Pearl*

If you need help with a specific local issue, please check at <https://mhfga.org/useful-links/> where you will find contacts for reporting your concerns.

## Corporate Profile

### The Freeman Family and Dunn's Bakery

*Two hundred years of bakery production and service*

When Robert Freeman hitched a ride on a hay wagon to North London in 1820 he would have had no idea that six generations later his great-great-great-grandson would be running a bakery just a couple of miles from where he got off the hay wagon to start work as a baker in Highgate.

In 1820 it would have taken a degree of confidence and bravery for Robert to leave his home in Brackley, Northamptonshire to restart his life in a strange place. The same sort of confidence and bravery that led his great-great-great-grandson Lewis Freeman to open a new shop in Muswell Hill in the middle of a world-wide pandemic.

Robert's son Josiah embraced bakery and having his father's sense of adventure he went to New Zealand with his family. Some stayed but fortunately he returned to England where he resumed his career in bakery.



*Dunn's Crouch End, c.1900*



*Lewis outside Muswell Hill shop*

The link between the Freeman family and Dunn's bakery started in 1906 when it is known that Josiah's son Charles worked at the bakery in Crouch End. Dunn's bakery was a well established and respected bakery and in 1937 we know that they had the main bakery in The Broadway Crouch End and two other shops in Weston Park, Crouch End and on Royal Parade, Muswell Hill so it feels especially appropriate that Lewis has completed that circle by returning to Muswell Hill.

The next link between Dunn's Bakery and the Freeman family happened when Lewis's grandfather David left the RAF having fought in World War Two. David thought he was joining the family bakery in Enfield but his brother was less than enthusiastic about working with him and so David looked for an alternative. His father Charles had had associations with Dunn's bakery and it was available to buy and so David bought it and ran the bakery. David's son Christopher joined the business in 1973.

Christopher and his wife Christina raised their children Roxy and Lewis in Crouch End and when they were growing up they were frequent visitors and helpers in the bakery, so it was not surprising that Lewis grew up wanting to be a baker just like his dad. Whilst Christopher was pleased that Lewis wanted to be a baker, he thought it essential that there should be no sense of obligation, and so Lewis was encouraged to do other things as well as his bakery training in UK and Switzerland. His degree at Reading University was in Investment Banking Finance and not baking (note there is only one letter difference between banking and baking!).

Maybe it's the genetics of six generations over two hundred years but Lewis Freeman is a proud baker first and foremost and for him quality and service are the key components to running a thriving and highly respected bakery business. Muswell Hill has welcomed him and his staff and Lewis (and his ancestors) are thrilled to be there.

## Our Trees Need You!

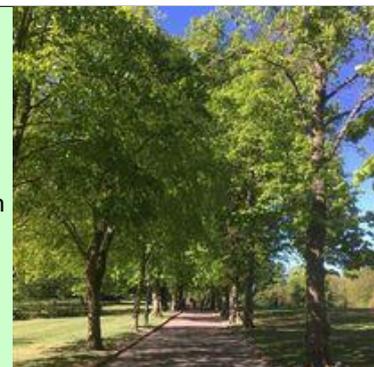
Trees are such a familiar part of our lives that it is easy to take them for granted, or even to forget that they are living things which have their own life cycle and can be prone to disease and decay. The Association is looking for someone with some knowledge of trees (for example species and life cycle) to be our Tree Officer. Ideally you should also have an appreciation of the important contribution made by trees to the quality of life in a built-up urban environment as well as the wider environmental significance they have.

You would be the point of contact on tree matters with other Association members and the Council. You would be advised of applications for consent to carry out works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on a weekly basis and would have the opportunity to see the details of what is proposed and to submit a comment if necessary. For example, you would intervene if it was felt that an insufficient case had been made to fell a tree.

Other aspects of the work might include occasionally proposing to the Council that a tree under threat be made the subject of a TPO and liaising with the Council on its street tree programme (planting and pollarding etc). The work would be carried out at a pace to suit, and it would not involve attending Committee meetings.

If you are interested in this very important role, please get in touch with our Chairman, John Hajdu.

*John Crompton*



*Photo by Zoe Norfolk*

## AGM 2021

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021 was the date designated for our Annual General Meeting but sadly this was the second time that we weren't able to get together over a glass of wine and some food to tell you what we achieved last year.

Our Association was formed in 1948, 73 years ago and we have come a long way since then, but we have never had to face the challenges of the last 12 months.

Our six Committee meetings were conducted on Zoom. Your Committee continued to work throughout the year under difficult conditions and I urge you to go to our website to read their reports at <https://mhfga.org/agm-2021>.

Once again, I wish to thank every member of the Committee for their support and for ensuring the continued smooth running and success of your Association.

**An additional piece of good news!** I am delighted to report that, in response to the plea in our previous Newsletter, we now have a new Committee member and minute taker, Laura Bugden. Welcome Laura!

*John Hajdu MBE  
Chair, MHFGA*

## Membership

### Membership renewals

Most members have automatic renewals set up, if not we'll have emailed you with a link to make a payment. Signing up to Direct Debit is quick and easy and means your renewals will be managed automatically every year. You can also pay by credit/debit card via PayPal if you prefer. If you have any questions or need any help with your membership renewal please email [membership@mhfga.org](mailto:membership@mhfga.org)

### New Members

Welcome to our new household members including Nick Franks and Ange de Vena, Jan Melichar, Imogen and James Taylor, and Amber White.

Welcome also to new business & organisation members White Tusk Studios, Socials For My Business, and Dunn's Artisan Bakers Ltd.



*Photo by Zoe Norfolk*

One of our followers on Facebook commented on Zoe's photo above:

*"Thank you for making my morning cycle commute a little brighter when I'm waiting in traffic opposite the library".*

The following local businesses and organisations support the Association. You can find the links to their websites on our Corporate page at [www.mhfga.org](http://www.mhfga.org) and click **Useful Links**.

Ambitious About Autism  
Angela Rose  
Baby Sensory  
Barnet Furniture Centre  
Barron Salon  
Bob's Café  
Broadway Pet Stores  
Broadway Pharmacy  
Bund Chinese Restaurant  
Capital Gardens  
Children's Bookshop  
Clissold Arms  
Cosi Homewares  
Dunn's Artisan Bakers Ltd  
East Finchley Open Artists  
Evelina's Patisserie  
Everyman Muswell Hill  
Fierce Grace Hot Yoga  
Firkins Chimney Sweeps  
Freehold Community Association

Friends of St. James's Square  
Gibfit 30  
Green's of Highgate  
Harington Scheme  
Hollickwood Primary School  
Hopper & Bean  
House of Books  
JHK Estate Agents  
Lambert Welch Kitchens  
La'De Kitchen  
Laytons (Jeraboams)  
Le Pot de Terre  
London Institute of Dance  
Men at 107  
Misk Boutique  
Muswell Flyer  
Muswell Hill Bowling Club  
Muswell Hill Creatives  
Muswell Hill Methodist Church  
Muswell Hill Methodist Lawn Tennis Club

Muswell Hill Pharmacy  
Muswell Hill United Reformed Church  
Muswell Hillbilly Brewers  
Natural Beauty Urban Retreat  
North London Chorus  
North London Symphony Orchestra  
Panoptica - MH Optical Ltd  
Perform Media Ltd  
Picture Framing Muswell Hill  
Planet Organic  
Point 5 Kitchens  
Rhodes Avenue Primary School  
Robert Linsky Optometrist  
Roni's Bagel Bakery  
Rowan Antiques  
S&D Express  
Sable d'Or Patisserie  
Sally Bourne Interiors

Snappy Snaps  
Socials For My Business  
James's Muswell Hill  
Studio Moe Ltd  
Tatlers Estate Agents  
The Hampstead Butcher & Providore  
The Mossy Well  
The People's Pantry  
The Real Greek  
The Robin Kiashek  
Osteopathic Clinics  
Toffs  
Victory Auto Services  
W Martyn  
Walter Purkis & Sons  
WAVE Café  
White Tusk Studios  
Woodland Tree Surgery  
Yogamatters  
Zebra Ceramics

## Local Organisations

### ST JAMES'S CHURCH

St James's Church Legal Advice Centre and its sister organisation Coppetts and Colney Legal Advice Centre (in Wilton Community Church) provide free legal advice on all issues, including immigration and the legal requirements of the Coronavirus Act 2020. Their drop-in sessions [**Monday and Saturday mornings at St James and Tuesday morning at Wilton**] are suspended for the duration but they continue to provide a free legal advice service by email 24/7 at [pt.anythinglegal@gmail.com](mailto:pt.anythinglegal@gmail.com) and [coppettslegal@gmail.com](mailto:coppettslegal@gmail.com).

### FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD

Friends of Queen's Wood are volunteers who support and care for the wood. Do join the Friends! All information on [fqw.org.uk](http://fqw.org.uk).

### NORTH LONDON EPILEPSY ACTION

Contact Barbara Penney 020 8883 0010 or e-mail [barbarapenney@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:barbarapenney@yahoo.co.uk)

### HORNSEY PENSIONERS ACTION GROUP

Contact Ann Anderson (020 8340 8335) or [www.hornseypensionersactiongroup.org.uk](http://www.hornseypensionersactiongroup.org.uk).

### HIGHGATE CHORAL SOCIETY

[www.hcschoir.com](http://www.hcschoir.com).

### MUSWELL HILL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

[www.muswellhillphoto.org.uk](http://www.muswellhillphoto.org.uk) or email [contact@muswellhillphoto.org.uk](mailto:contact@muswellhillphoto.org.uk).

### MUSWELL HILL & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Contact: Jenny Kruss on 020 8442 0031 or [bloomngn10@outlook.com](mailto:bloomngn10@outlook.com).

### MUSWELL HILL BOWLING CLUB

King's Avenue N10 1PB (next to No. 36). [www.muswellhillbowlingclub.co.uk](http://www.muswellhillbowlingclub.co.uk) – or call Richard Johnstone on 07986 873312 or e-mail [richardjohnstone@gmail.com](mailto:richardjohnstone@gmail.com).

### HORNSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[www.hornseyhistorical.org.uk](http://www.hornseyhistorical.org.uk)  
Local History Surgery. Phone 020 8348 8429 or email [hornseyhistoricalsurgery@gmail.com](mailto:hornseyhistoricalsurgery@gmail.com) with a brief outline of the problem.

### THE FREEHOLD COMMUNITY CENTRE

9 Alexandra Road, N10 2EY. Please check at [www.familiesonline.co.uk/local/barnet/listing/freehold-community-centre-195857](http://www.familiesonline.co.uk/local/barnet/listing/freehold-community-centre-195857) or [freehold2003@gmail.com](mailto:freehold2003@gmail.com) or ring 07935 324578.

## MHFGA Website

*Following on from his article in our previous Newsletter, Alex Vincenti, our Webmaster, gives further interesting information about the development and purpose of our website.*

Websites live and die by their contents. The law of the web is like the law of evolution: if you don't adapt to the changes in the environment or competition, you become extinct. When the first Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association website went live in 2003, there were fewer than 40 million websites, no Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or any other significant social media. It was quite a success, with a large proportion of active visitors from all over the world and a peak of almost 70,000 hits during 2009.

Today, [www.mhfga.org](http://www.mhfga.org) is a small fish in a much larger ocean of just about two billion websites (yes, fifty times more than 2009, and still growing), and social media have largely taken over the internet. During this time, the website has had many small and some large changes and continues to have a meaningful presence, though the numbers are much smaller. Over the last 12 months, the website has welcomed about 3,500 visitors to view more than 7,000 pages, a fraction of 2009, but still good in today's terms, especially considering that its aim is to serve our local residents and business community.

So why do we still have almost one in five visitors from so many other countries, and who are they? As mentioned in the last issue, some are not human at all, they are spiders, crawlers and bots, little automated programs that search the internet to collect data, list changes and make them available for searches. Typically, these are for Google and Bing search engines, but they may also serve the many analytical companies that have sprung up worldwide to mine the two billion websites for saleable information, and we have been receiving such data-mining robotic visitors mainly from the US, China and South Korea. Some of these bots, instead, are malicious: besides carrying viruses and worms, they steal personal details online, copy pages or the whole website, enslave computers and networks for illegal purposes, redirect visitors to malicious sites, and continuously attack websites to test them for vulnerabilities.

The MHFGA website has no members' data to steal. That is kept in MemberMojo, the separate, dedicated and specially protected membership system. Nonetheless, [www.mhfga.org](http://www.mhfga.org) has been targeted by and has successfully blocked more than 18,000 such attacks over the last year.

Human visitors, on the other hand, are very welcome. Many are members who have joined or renewed their membership through MemberMojo; others come from Wikipedia, where a Muswell Hill page links to ours, or from our Facebook and Twitter accounts. Most visitors have looked for us from Google and Bing, to see our local news or browse through our photo and video archives. However, a few must have happened on our website by accident – unless we have Muswell Hill, Fortis Green and Alexandra expatriates in Kazakhstan, Moldova and two in Peru.

## From Our Archive

### The Langton Clock

Since 1899, a handsome and decorative clock has been part of the Muswell Hill Broadway street furniture and a famous local landmark. It was put up by E.W. Langton, the jeweller, shortly after they established a branch of their watch and clock-making shop at 3 Princes Parade (itself laid out and built in 1899 by the well-known Edmondson family). The mechanism was wound regularly by hand once a week until 1995, when the clock stopped and stayed stopped. After Mr Langton died in 1980, his wife continued to run the shop for two more years. J.J. Barrett & Sons Ltd, the jewellers owned the shop and the house from 1982 to 1997. The shop closed in that year and Kate Kuba, the shoe chain, began renting the premises.

Having walked under the clock for many years, our Chairman, John Hajdu, often wondered about the story behind it and why it was not working. He felt that it should be restored and set about finding out what could be done. Thus was started another saga typifying the role that our Association plays in the life of Muswell Hill. The crusade of a new life for the Langton's clock was to be the official 60th Anniversary Jubilee project of the MHFGA.

When John approached the owner of the building in spring 2007, he discovered that the clock was about to be taken down and scrapped. The owner agreed to co-operate in a restoration project spearheaded by the MHFGA. The search was now on for a local clock maker who could do the job. John Kendall, who has a workshop in Fortis Green, already knew all about the clock and immediately agreed to take on the work. The next step was to talk to Haringey Council and get funding. This was achieved by applying through the Making the Difference Fund. After months of administrative work and many meetings everything was agreed and the funds were in place. The clock was removed and taken to the clock maker on Sunday morning, 17th February 2008. It was clear that the cast iron movement could not be used again nor repaired due to advanced rust. A quote was obtained for a new electronic movement consisting of two motors and a radio-controlled master box. This was agreed and the parts that were needed ordered.

The two faces, made of cast iron, were in good condition. They had to be stripped back, cleaned, gilded and painted. The hands were in reasonable condition and were reused, after small restoration work. The biggest problem was the actual drum, made of sheet iron, which was completely rusted on one side and in bad condition on the other. A possible solution was to use a lighter, aluminium sheeting, moulded to fit and painted. It was decided, however, to use sheet iron, similar to the original. Due to large Council overspend at the time, it was agreed to go ahead with the repair work but to try to get outside funds to make up the difference. John Barrett, the owner of the building where the clock is, pledged £500 towards the funds. This was not taken up, but he agreed to absorb the cost of electricity which has to be supplied from the flat. A structural engineer's report showed that the clock's right-hand bracket was sound but the left-hand bracket had to be taken down and repaired. The Heritage Trust awarded £2,000 towards the project in June 2008, but due to various manufacturing problems the clock was not finished until October. During the winter of 2008, due to further problems, Haringey Council had to bring in an architect and a structural engineer. Finally the clock was put in position on 1st May 2009. A memorial plaque was put up recording the event and a party held at the patisserie immediately under the clock on 3rd July 2009.

However, the electrical connections were reconnected to an area inside the flat next to the clock instead of by a lamppost in the street. If the clock needs adjusting, access to the flat is problematical. If anyone has advice about how to solve this problem, please contact John. This clock has been a well-known and much-loved feature of Muswell Hill for a long time and it is the wish and hope of the Association that it will continue in full working order to the benefit and enjoyment of all local shoppers and residents for many years to come as well as being a lasting reminder of our Jubilee celebrations.



### Minutes Secretary

We are delighted that Laura Bugden will be our new minute-taker at our Committee meetings. Thank you and welcome, Laura! We hope to include a profile of Laura in the next issue.

### Graffiti

If you wish to report graffiti or flyposting, please go to the "Report It" section at [www.haringey.gov.uk](http://www.haringey.gov.uk) and enter the details there.

### Copy date for September/October 2021 edition of this Newsletter

If you would like to submit an article, letter, picture or diary date for our next edition, please send your copy to [editor@mhfga.org](mailto:editor@mhfga.org) by 1st August 2021.