

Your Residents' Association working for the local community since 1948

Muswell Hill's Photographic Past

To celebrate MHFGA's 75th birthday, local photographer and Committee member Zoë Norfolk has undertaken a photography project, photographing old post cards (from the collection of Hugh Garnsworthy, now in the care of his son Chris).



The Broadway

The collection is vast, but Zoe has been through them and picked out ones that would work well in contrasting old with current locations. The project is ongoing: you can see more on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/MHFGA) and Instagram account (@mhfga). They will also be displayed at our AGM and 75th birthday celebrations on 13th May.



The Atheneum



The Dairy

March/April 2023

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WANTED URGENTLY!

Newsletter Editor

As Newsletter Editor, you would also be a Committee member and play a role in running the Association and setting its policies. Much of the Newsletter contents come from other Committee members and correspondence from members.

What the role involves:

- collect and write stories about our local area and information about the Association's activities and achievements;
- liaise with the Committee and members to source articles and pictures;
- make sure that the Newsletter covers all relevant information and that the material is received on time for publication;
- make sure relevant permissions to use articles, photos and members' personal information have been received.

Please email **Christine Morris** at editor@mhfga.org to discuss the role if you are interested.

MHFGA Archive

We are grateful to Viv Ross for his donation of several copies of the Associations' Newsletters from the 70s and 80s. He came across them when sorting out his late mother Wendy's paperwork. These included several editions which were previously missing from our archives. We are always happy to receive donations for our archive which is currently held by our Chairman.

Members' Meetings

Meetings take place at Northbank, Pages Lane, N10 1PP at 8.00pm unless otherwise stated.

Thursday 16th March 2023 - Hidden Rivers of London, a talk by MHFGA member, Alison Watson. The Thames has more than fifty tributaries between source and sea. They are all around us and frustratingly elusive because they are largely buried under streets and buildings but they are London's arteries shaping the way we live. Alison has an extensive knowledge of London and its villages, and her talk will focus on four of London's hidden rivers.

Saturday 13th May 2023 - AGM and MHFGA's 75th birthday party. The AGM will start promptly at 6pm, followed by the celebration of our anniversary at 7.30pm. Please do try to come along to both events.

Sunday 11th June 2023 - a walk around Queen's Wood with our member Lucy Roots. **This is a change of date from that previously advertised.**

Litter-picking with Friends of the Parkland Walk

The Friends have three litter picks planned, plus one organised by Islington's nature conservation officer. On these once-a-year litter picks we get deep down to the areas by garden boundaries which don't get any attention through the rest of the year. Getting a good-sized group working together as a team is really effective and makes the session much more of an occasion.

Saturday 11th March 10.30 - 12.30 Finsbury Park/ Stroud Green

Meeting at the Oxford Road entrance working west towards Stapleton Hall Road Bridge

Sunday 12th March 10.30 - 12.30 Stroud Green

Meeting on Stapleton Hall Road Bridge going west towards Crouch End

Saturday 18th March 10.30 - 12.30 Muswell Hill

Meeting at the underpass on Muswell Hill and working to Cranley Gardens

Monday 20th March (Time to be confirmed) Islington

Please contact [Jo Corrall](mailto:Jo.Corrall@islington.gov.uk) or [Islington Council Ecology Centre](mailto:Ecology@islington.gov.uk) for all information on this event.

Please email us to let us know which event you plan on attending so we can contact you directly if there is any change to the start point.

foparklandwalk@gmail.com

MHFGA Committee

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chairman@mhfga.org

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planning@mhfga.org

Secretary/CAAC/Alexandra Palace Statutory Advisory Committee

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Graffiti

If you wish to report graffiti or flyposting, please go to the "Report It" section at www.haringey.gov.uk and enter the details there.



www.facebook.com/MHFGA



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



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

Visit our website 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. 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!

Member Profile

Nigel Clark

We are delighted to welcome Nigel on to the MHFGA Committee as organiser of our Members' Meetings. Here Nigel introduces himself to our membership

A native of Billericay, Essex, I moved to Muswell Hill in the mid-1990s when an easy commute to the City was a priority for me. In those days, London Northern Buses ran a 'Red Express' limited stop version of the number 43 which whisked commuters between the Broadway and Moorgate in a little over 30 minutes. The M&S Food Stores at both ends of my journey was an added bonus!

With a hectic and long-houred working week and weekends generally spent out of town – yacht racing is my sporting passion, which isn't well catered for in North London - I had little time to pay attention to my neighbourhood. Despite living within 500 yards of the Odeon (now Everyman) and the Parkland Walk, it never occurred to me to take in a movie or take a stroll to Alexandra Palace. (Although, having spent many hours sitting accountancy exams there in the late '80s, Ally Pally didn't hold much of an appeal to me!). I knew of the John Baird (now The Village Green) and had a drink in the newly opened O'Neill's (now Millar & Carter) just to see how they had converted the church, but I didn't know The Famous Old Oak, The Clissold Arms or The Mossy Well existed!



In 1997 I had an opportunity to take a 6-month break from work and headed to Australia. My 6-month opportunity stretched to 25 years, during which time I lived and worked in Australia, Vietnam (twice), Malaysia, Japan and finally Hong Kong, which was my home from 2006.

Returning to the UK last summer, no longer in need of an X43 bus but having confirmed the continuing existence of the M&S Food Store, I moved back to Muswell Hill. My first step in (re)acquainting myself with the neighbourhood was to join the MHFGA Facebook Group. I was shocked to learn from a post less than 24 hours after signing up that planning permission had been granted on the property adjacent to mine. It became immediately clear that the MHFGA is a great source of information in respect of what's happening locally!

As I settled into a new life in an old home, I quickly began to appreciate the neighbourhood through a lens that differed significantly from my view of 25 years previously. The variety and quality of the independent shops, cafes and eateries as well access to open spaces, far exceed those of any place I've called home in the preceding quarter of a century. And it turns out that The Village Green is not the only local pub – and now Muswell Hill even has its own pico-brewery!

Whilst most MHFGA members are engaged in some aspects of the community, it occurred to me that many residents of the Muswell Hill, Fortis Green and Alexandra Palace wards have a relationship with their neighbourhood which reflects my own narrow experience of the 1990s.

As I have begun to learn a great deal more about the area's rich history and spend more time in our local restaurants, pubs, shops and green spaces, I have gained a new-found appreciation for Muswell Hill. Through my role running meetings for the MHFGA I hope to provide opportunities for residents to gain greater knowledge of their surroundings and thus appreciate what a wonderful place we live in!



John's Survival Story

Members may not be aware that our Chairman, John Hajdu MBE, is heavily involved with the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and the Holocaust Education Trust, giving talks about his life as one of the few survivors of the Holocaust and the Russian invasion of Hungary. This is the story of his journey of survival.

John was born in 1937 in Budapest into a middle-class Jewish family who lived a comfortable, peaceful and relatively safe life. At the time, around 400,000 Jews lived in Hungary out of a total population of 10 million.

In 1939, due to pressure from the popular far-right, anti-Semitic fascist party, the Hungarian government decided to prohibit Jews from running their own companies. This was the first sign that the lives and movements of the Jews were becoming much more restricted.

In 1941 Hungary entered the Second World War, allied to Nazi Germany. In a remarkably short time everything changed. Many anti-Jewish laws were passed and life for Hungarian Jews became more and more dangerous. In 1943 John's father was taken to one of the forced labour camps for Jewish men which had been set up all over the country. The men were treated very harshly, some became ill and many died.

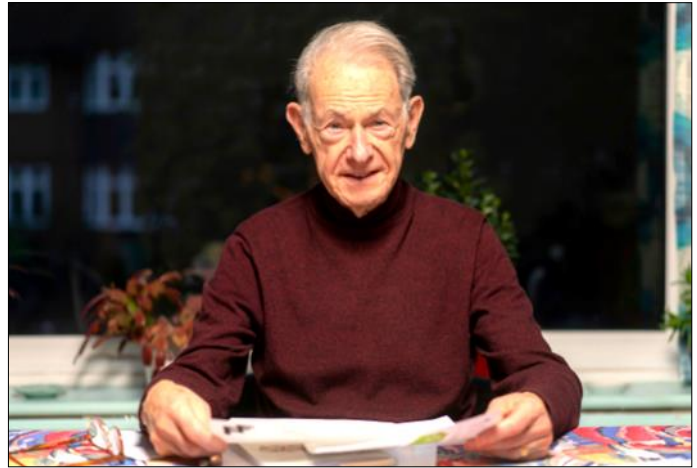
In March 1944 the Germans occupied Hungary with the collaboration of the Hungarian government. The "yellow star order" was given: all Jews had to wear a six-pointed yellow star on their clothing. This resulted in constant abuse and beatings by members of the Hungarian Nazi Party. In June, John, his mother and aunt had to leave their home and move into a designated yellow-star block of flats. They were only allowed out for two hours each day, which was mainly spent queuing for basic items of food. There was no medical care available. Jewish bank accounts were also frozen. Jews were no longer allowed to visit parks, cinemas, hotels or restaurants.



Shortly afterwards, the deportation of all Jews began. In October 1944, after the roundup of Jewish men had been accomplished, it was the turn of the women. The far-right Hungarian Arrow Cross Party went from block to block, searching every flat, herding together all the Jewish women and children in the courtyard, and taking them away. John's aunt persuaded a non-Jewish neighbour to hide them in his cupboard, while John's mother was taken away to Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. She was forced to march around 30 kilometres a day, sleeping on the ground in the snow and given hardly anything to eat. Miraculously, she survived in unheated barracks, with hardly any food or water, in a camp infested by lice. She sustained several beatings, her ribs were broken, her teeth were smashed, she suffered from dehydration and never fully recovered physically or mentally.

Meanwhile, John and his aunt were forced to go and live in the Ghetto in the most inhumane conditions. The Ghetto was a designated closed area, set aside for Jews only. It was surrounded by a wall and the gates were guarded by the army. Those Jews who were not taken to concentration camps were forced into about 290 buildings, where at least 20 people lived in each overcrowded flat and had to survive on very little food. Water had to be brought up in buckets, there was no medicine, no cleaning materials, and no rubbish was collected. Dead bodies lay piled up on the pavements, many of whom had died of starvation or diseases. At the same time the buildings were under constant bombardment by the advancing Soviet air force.

In January 1945 the Soviet troops freed the occupants just minutes before the Ghetto was due to be blown up by the retreating Germans. They found around 3,000 bodies. The siege of Budapest lasted 100 days and the town was in ruins.



John and his aunt entered a world they hardly recognised: all the bridges had been blown up, most of the houses were damaged or on fire, or simply demolished. They found out that John's father and uncle had escaped to neighbouring Romania, so they decided to follow them there.

John's mother was freed from Mauthausen by the American army on 4th May 1945, being one of only 5,000 survivors out of a total of 16,000. She eventually returned to Budapest, where she discovered that her husband and son were in Romania, so she followed them there.

Her incredible "return from the dead" was a huge surprise and a source of great happiness to the family. However, John's father, believing that his wife had perished, had started a new relationship. When John's mother found out what had happened, she felt that she had no choice but to take John away, return to Budapest and divorce her husband. In August 1945 she managed to find a small one-bedroom flat, found work, and John went back to school.

By this time the People's Democratic regime had been established in Hungary, a communist dictatorship controlled by the Soviets. Everything, including the newspapers and the radio, was controlled by the Party. There were spies everywhere watching and listening, and people disappeared at night. Life was hard. In October 1956 the Hungarian students presented a 16-point manifesto asking for the formation of an independent Hungary. This was the main reason for the subsequent uprising. The initial victory of the people on 23rd October 1956, was followed by the brutal revenge of the Soviet army a few days later.

The fighting continued, but by the morning of 4th November the Soviet troops were in control: over 2,500 Hungarians were killed and thousands fled the country. Many Hungarians escaped to Austria, including John and his mother. In the middle of a very cold winter, they crawled through mud, over canals, avoiding tanks, searchlights, minefields and border guards. After walking 25 miles they crossed the border into Austria at 2.30am next to a miraculously unmanned watch tower. Some people did not make it and were either captured or shot.

John was taken by train to a refugee camp near Innsbruck where he was given shelter, clothing and food. A few weeks later he managed to be transferred to Vienna where, after queuing at the British Embassy for some time, he secured one of the last permits to emigrate to England via Ostend. From Dover he was taken to Cannock Chase in the north of England and housed in barracks in a disused army camp. From there he was moved to an empty stately home near East Grinstead.

He took the train to London several times and eventually managed to find somewhere to live. He had no possessions, knew nobody, spoke very little English, but was accepted and helped to start a new life by various refugee organisations. He enrolled in Middlesex University, where he completed a two year hotel and catering course. At the same time he worked in hotels in various jobs.

After many years, he became Director of International Sales for one of the largest hotel companies in this country and undertook 160 overseas sales trips to arrange for many thousands of overseas visitors to come to this country.

At various times he was Chair of the London Tourist Board and Chair of the Hotel Managers Association.

He worked with the Metropolitan Police for many years and received an award as outstanding volunteer within the criminal justice system in Haringey, as well as a police commendation for commitment and professionalism presented by the Borough Commander.

He has been Chair of our Association for the last 22 years.

In 2020, John was awarded an MBE for services to Holocaust Education and Commemoration.

If you would like to read John's full story, it is available at

https://www.hmd.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/old-images/life_in_two_countries_-_john_hajdu.pdf



John's teddy which has travelled with him since he was a small boy

Information from the Ward Panel about reporting crime

One of the biggest takeaway messages from our Ward Panel meetings working with local police is that community members must report crimes. This is necessary even if you think there is no point because the perpetrators will not be caught or if you know the perpetrator and don't want them to know you have reported them. If crimes are not reported

- The police cannot add the information to their data base and this may reduce the resources they have available to fight crime.
- The police cannot use data provided to spot trends and patterns locally and take steps to protect other community members.
- You are deprived of the opportunity to get advice and support from the police to prevent it happening again.
- You are depriving the police of the opportunity to catch the criminals.



It's especially tricky if a child or young person knows who has robbed them and fears repercussions if that person is identified. The police assure us that they are very aware of this as an issue and will take every possible step to protect the victim and advise and support them and keep them safe. Please explain any concerns when you report such a crime, and they will tell you what steps they will take to help and support you and the young person concerned.

Also don't forget Crimestoppers which remains a 100% secure way of reporting a crime without giving your details.

Police don't catch people who steal catalytic convertors unless they are there at the time. However, unless they are aware of the extent of the crime, they cannot justify the expense of intelligence-based operations to catch the perpetrators of these organised crimes.

People often cite long delays in answering 101 calls as a reason not to report. That should not be a barrier to reporting a crime. Don't call – but go to the met police website and report online – it's really quick and easy to use and much less time consuming than waiting for a call handler to speak to you. By reporting online you are putting your crime information into exactly the same system as calling 101.

Finally, and it's amazing we have not had this before, but the Met have now introduced a number you can call if you have complaints or concerns about police behaviour. This includes inappropriate behaviour of any kind – from asking for sexual favours to bribes and bullying. This number can also be used by partners of Police officers to report domestic abuse.

All the information is set out below.

Crime in progress for use only when urgent attendance is required	Dial 999; this number also works from a locked phone	
Reporting a crime not in progress	Go onto the Metropolitan Police website and follow the links https://www.met.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/	Or you can call 101
Silent solution	If you have dialled 999 and it is too dangerous to talk, the operator will ask you to tap the phone or cough or make some other noise to let them know that it is not just an accidental call. If you cannot do any of these things you can dial 55 and your call will be responded to as an emergency	55
Crimestoppers	Totally confidential way to report a crime	0800 555 111 or go to the Crimestoppers website
Traffic offences and traffic incidents	Go onto the met police website and report on line https://www.met.police.uk/ro/report/rti/rti-a/report-a-road-traffic-incident/	
Parking including parking violations	All dealt with through Haringey. Go onto the Haringey website and follow the links	
Muswell Hill Ward Safer Neighbourhood Team email	Use this email address if your report does not fit into any other category	sntyr-muswellhill@met.police.uk
Police hotline	Met police Anti- Corruption and Abuse Hotline in partnership with Crimestoppers	0800 085000 or go to the Crimestoppers website

Please remember that if you are a victim of a crime it is not your fault. You may feel that you have exposed yourself to crime e.g by leaving a valuable item on display in an unattended vehicle. Everyone lets their guard down sometimes and you must never feel embarrassed that your lack of care may have made the crime easier to commit. The police are here to protect us all!

Patricia Pearl
Chair Muswell Hill Ward Panel
Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods

Local Organisations

LONDON EPILEPSY ACTION

Contact Barbara Penney 020 8883 0010 or e-mail barbarapenney@yahoo.co.uk

HORNSEY PENSIONERS ACTION GROUP

Contact Ann Anderson (020 8340 8335) or www.hornseypensionersactiongroup.org.uk

HORNSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

www.hornseyhistorical.org.uk

Local History Surgery. Phone 020 8348 8429 or email hornseyhistoricalsurgery@gmail.com with a brief outline of the problem.

MUSWELL HILL & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Contact: Jenny Kruss on 020 8442 0031 or bloomingn10@outlook.com.

MUSWELL HILL BOWLING CLUB

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

THE FREEHOLD COMMUNITY CENTRE

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

MUSWELL HILL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

We meet on **Wednesday evenings** at Jackson's Lane Community Centre, and would warmly welcome new members www.muswellhillphoto.org.uk or email contact@muswellhillphoto.org.uk.

MUSWELL HILL WELCOMES

An inter-faith project supporting refugees and asylum seekers, bringing together volunteers offering skills such as cooking, English speaking and more. Details at www.muswellhillwelcomes.org

HARINGTON SCHEME

www.harington.org.uk

MUSWELL HILL CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

The Contact Centre which is attached to the Methodist Church in Pages Lane, provides a friendly and supportive place where the children of separated parents can meet their non resident parent in a neutral and safe space on Saturday mornings. Further information can be obtained from our website <https://mhmc-contactcentre.org.uk> or by email at contact_centre@mhmc.org.uk. Apart from a £20 referral fee the service is free.

FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD

Sunday 19th March, 2.00pm: Geology walk led by Diana Clements.

Sunday 16th April, 2.00pm: Spring flower walk, led by Caroline Beattie.

Friends of Queen's Wood working parties on last Sunday of the month. Tools provided but bring suitable gloves and hot drink as cafe is closed.

For all events meet outside The Lodge off Muswell Hill Road. fqw.org.uk

NORTH LONDON CHORUS

Sat April 22nd, 7.30pm, St James Church N10 3DB
Ralph Vaughan Williams *A Sea Symphony* and other works.
Murray Hipkin conductor
Verity Wingate soprano
James Cleverton baritone
Tickets: <https://www.northlondonchorus.org/concerts-and-tickets/>

We are currently recruiting in all voice parts, especially tenors and basses. www.northlondonchorus.org

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

Forthcoming concerts:
020 8444 6898 or office@alexandrapark.org

ALEXANDRA PALACE AND PARK

The Alexandra Park Visitor Centre near the Grove car park is open **every Sunday** between **2 and 4pm**.

FRIENDS OF MUSWELL HILL LIBRARY

For event details and other updates contact Iain Smith on friends.muswell@gmail.com.

Muswell Hill Playing Fields

Following the article on page 5 in the last issue of this Newsletter, we have been informed by the Parks Project Office, that an Amber Breedon gravel path will be installed into Muswell Hill Playing Fields.

The work has been out to tender, and a supplier now approved to deliver the works. The work is anticipated to commence in April this year. We will be updated with more exact timescales when available and any impact on access to the fields whilst the work is taking place.

This image gives an idea of the type of path material, the installation will be with pin kerbs to ensure longevity.



Copy date for May/June 2023 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 by 1st April 2023.

February Members' Meeting

At February's Members' Meeting, conservation Architect Zaira Iacopelli provided a fascinating and absorbing insight into the values of conservation, the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green's Conservation Areas and best practices in the maintenance and repair of heritage properties.

By way of scene setting, Zaira outlined the differing levels of designation of heritage assets - from World Heritage Sites through to locally listed buildings. Zaira also explained Historic England's principles for the protection of the historic environment.

Following a brief history of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Conservation Areas, the talk covered some examples of specific listed and positive contributor sites, within the designated zones. Buildings covered included Grade II listed St James' Church, Everyman cinema, the Baptist Church and Muswell Hill library. Positive Contributors mentioned by Zaira included North Bank, which was the venue for the talk.

Turning to the approach to conserving properties, Zaira outlined how new construction can complement historic buildings, which can be improved so long as their appearance and character is not altered. The use of appropriate materials is critical in maintaining the performance of heritage properties, natural products such as sheep's wool and hempcrete included!

Following her presentation Zaira addressed many of the audience's questions, which ranged from the designation of Conservation Areas through to the use of cork for insulation.

Thank you again Zaira for a fabulous insight!

Nigel Clark



Membership

To renew your membership please visit <https://membermojo.co.uk/mhfga/renew> where we encourage you to set up a direct debit, or alternatively to pay via PayPal. The cost to renew as a Household is £10, and as a Business or Organisation, £25.

If you're having trouble renewing, please don't hesitate to get in touch via membership@mhfga.org.

MHFGA annual membership runs from 1st May to 30th April of the following year. **New members joining in the period January to April will get up to 4 months free as their membership will run to the end of April 2024.**

New Members

Welcome to our new members: Jane Dederick, Martin Stevens, Michael Bowles & Ayse Serinturk.

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 and click **Useful Links**.

Ambitious About Autism	Hollickwood Primary School	Muswell Hillbilly Brewers	The Harington Scheme
Angela Rose	House of Books	North London Chorus	The Mossy Well
Baby Sensory	JHK Estate Agents	North London Symphony	The People's Pantry
Barron Salon	Lambert Welch Kitchens	Orchestra	The Real Greek
Broadway Pet Stores	Men at 107	Panoptica - MH Optical Ltd	The Robin Kiashek
Broadway Pharmacy	Misk Boutique	Picture Framing Muswell Hill	Osteopathic Clinics
Capital Gardens	Muswell Flyer	Planet Organic	Total Boxer
Children's Bookshop	Muswell Hill Club	Robert Linsky Optometrist	W Martyn
Claire Avant Yoga	Muswell Hill Bowling Club	Roni's Bagel Bakery	Walter Purkis & Sons
Clissold Arms	Muswell Hill Creatives	Rowan Antiques	WAVE Café
Cosi Homewares	Muswell Hill Karate Academy	Sally Bourne Interiors	Woodland Tree Surgery
Dunn's Artisan Bakers Ltd	Muswell Hill Methodist Church	Snappy Snaps	Yogamatters
East Finchley Open Artists	Muswell Hill Methodist Tennis Club	St Andrew's Church, Alexandra	
Fornaro Ltd	Muswell Hill Pharmacy	Park	
Freehold Community	Muswell Hill Pilates	St James's Muswell Hill	
Association	Muswell Hill United Reformed	Studio Moe Ltd	
Gallalock	Church	Tatlers Estate Agents	
Gibfit 30	Muswell Hill & District Horticultural	The Good Rooms	
Green & Blossoms	Society		