

Your Residents' Association - working for the local community since 1948

Celebrating 75 years of the MHFGA!



We were delighted that so many members and special guests joined us to celebrate 75 years of the MHFGA on Saturday 13th May (despite competition from the Eurovision finals!).

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Membership



It was a fantastic evening with lots of things happening - the formal AGM of the Association took place first (see page 2), followed by a farewell to our long-standing Chairman John Hajdu MBE (see

page 3), then a lovely party gathering of members old and new, and an exhibition by local artists **Zoe Norfolk**, **Agnes Gomori**, **Hilary Masetti** and **Alan Lancaster**. An auction of **Muswell Hill Photography** postcard images and other artwork also raised £295 for our local food bank!

Food provided by **Wave Café** was delicious, and the cake (pictured above) lovingly made by **My Little Cake Tin** was incredible, both to look at and to eat. The specially brewed beer from **Muswell Hillbilly Brewers** was enjoyed by many on the night (and afterwards, by those who bought extra supplies from their taproom on Ave Mews).

We also announced the winner of our competition to find the most creative idea of what Muswell Hill will look like in 75 years, open to pupils in Years 5 and 6 of all local schools. Congratulations to Siyaana Chotai who received a book token prize of £25 and to her school, Norfolk House, who received £500 (see her winning picture on the right).

Photos: Zoe Norfolk



Thank you to everyone involved in putting on such a great 75th celebration!



Members' meetings

Given the popularity of our recent guided walk in Queen's Wood (see page 8), the Association is looking at organising another tour in the autumn, possibly with a local history or architecture focus.

In the meantime, mark your diary for the next talk at 8pm on **Thursday 21st September**. The topic is currently being finalised - full details in the next issue.

Talks take place at North Bank, Pages Lane, N10 1PP. Full details can always be found on our website at mhfga.org/events

Thank you Christine!

After seven years as newsletter editor, the May / June edition was Christine Morris's last. During her time as editor, Christine did an incredible job, making many improvements to both the content and format of the newsletter. We are very grateful for Christine's hard work and ability to meet deadlines in a friendly way! Personally, I would like to thank Christine for getting me up to speed as the new editor and her willingness to ensure a smooth handover.

Duncan Neill

2023 AGM Chairman's report



This was John Hajdu's 23rd (!) and final AGM report as Chairman.

On Saturday 13th May 2023, just before our 75th birthday party celebrations got fully underway (see the front page), the Association held its AGM. John talked about our work and key achievements over the past year, covering a lot of topics efficiently yet engagingly (he's had plenty of practice!).

The full report can be read at mhfga.org/archives/4496 or you can watch a video of the reports of both the Chairman and Treasurer on our News page.

MHFGA Committee members

Chairman

[vacancy - see advert on page 8]
chairman@mhfga.org

Administrator

Laura Bugden

Environment / Green Spaces

Brian Livingston
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Secretary / CAAC / Alexandra Palace Statutory Advisory Committee

John Crompton
secretary@mhfga.org

Alexandra Palace Consultative Committee / Twitter

Duncan Neill
ap@mhfga.org



Latest local stories on our Facebook page
facebook.com/MHFGA



Local stories and links on our Twitter feed
[@theMHFGA](https://twitter.com/theMHFGA)



Great photos on our Instagram account
[@mhfga](https://www.instagram.com/mhfga)

Visit our website www.mhfga.org for lots of information about the local area including old photos and films of Muswell Hill, useful local links, MHFGA archives and John Hajdu's fascinating history of the Association

A huge thank you to John, our record-breaking Chairman!

John Hajdu MBE has held the post of MHFGA Chairman for a record-breaking 22 years. All Committee members, current and past, are hugely grateful to John for serving as a very effective Chair (he never missed a Committee meeting and they never once overran) in addition to performing a whole range of crucial roles over the years (members' meeting organiser, public relations, networker, newsletter reviewer etc. etc!). We will miss him and wish him all the best in his retirement.

John adds, *"It has been my privilege and pleasure to have led the organisation for such a long period. During that time, I have been delighted to see the Association make such a valuable contribution to the preservation of our environment. There have been many notable achievements over the years. If I had to pick one, it'd be the saving of the Langton Clock, a local landmark on Muswell Hill Broadway since 1899."*



At the 75th party, we presented John with a beautiful painting of Muswell Hill (including the Langton Clock) by Alan Lancaster, and also a bunch of flowers to his wife Maureen, who has supported (and no doubt occasionally suffered from) John's hard work for the Association over the past 25 years, 22 as Chairman.

Photo: Zoe Norfolk

Marking 75 years of making a difference in Muswell Hill

75 years is quite a long time, even for a well-established and much-loved neighbourhood like Muswell Hill.

It won't surprise many readers that there have been many threats, campaigns and successes that the MHFGA has been involved in during its first 75 years of life. Helping to protect Muswell Hill has certainly not been easy!

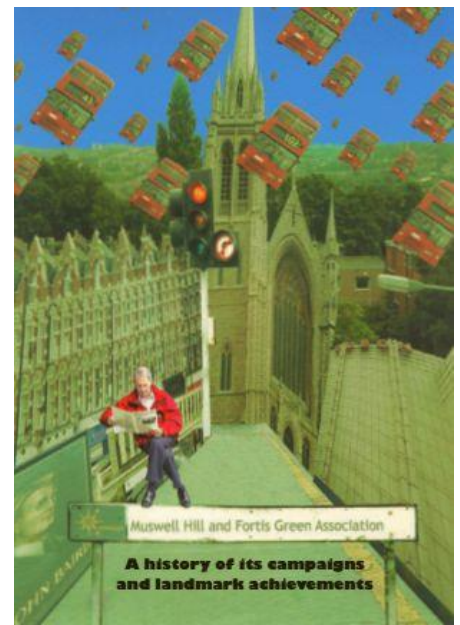
As part of our 75th anniversary year, John Hajdu recently updated his fascinating book ***"Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association: a history of its campaigns and landmark achievements"*** to bring it right up to date. Copies of the book were given to attendees of the 75th party. There are some remaining copies available if any members would like a physical copy. It is also available in electronic format on our website.



Various other projects to commemorate our 75 years are also underway. We are pleased to have worked with Haringey to fit two stylish new benches outside Cook, opposite St James Church (see photo to left). These replace some very old benches and we hope they will be useful for passers-by to pause and take in the view for many years to come.

We are also working closely with the council to make a range of improvements to the Pocket Park opposite the Village Green pub, a project we originally developed many years ago. Thank you to Committee member Brian Livingston for leading this work.

We'll keep you updated in the next edition about how this project is progressing, but please take a look, and a sit down, next time you're passing the benches.



Here's to the next 75 years!

Friends of Cherry Tree Wood

Cherry Tree Wood is a 13-acre remnant of ancient woodland which is now managed and owned by the London Borough of Barnet. It sits on the opposite side of the High Road to East Finchley tube station, stretching towards, but not quite reaching, Woodside Avenue, and is a much-loved park by those in the know. Historically, the Bishop of London owned this and most of the surrounding land including Coldfall Wood, Highgate Wood and Queens Wood until, over time, the land was sold off. Cherry Tree Wood was purchased in 1915 by the Finchley Urban District Council to provide recreation space for the rapidly growing local population.



The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, a Registered Charity, was established in the early 1990s with three key objectives:

1. To secure the preservation, protection and improvement of Cherry Tree Wood
2. To promote high standards of planning and architecture
3. To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history and architecture of the area



Over the past few years, the Friends have worked steadily to secure improvements. This has included more playground equipment, refurbished tennis and basketball courts, a water bottle filler and refurbished toilets. We have also pressed for the café to reopen, which has now been achieved and is a major asset. Additionally, our gardening group has planted an orchard, tended a number of flower beds and created some great displays. On top of this the monthly litter picking sessions have helped keep the Wood looking tidy (most of the time).

Still, there is much to do. Flooding of the central part of the grounds, to such an extent that they are barely useable for 4-5 months of the year, remains unresolved despite discussions with the Council and plans to address the issue drawn up by the Friends submitted to Barnet. This will be the subject of intensified campaigning in the coming months.

On a happier point, a new Woodland Management Plan has been drafted by the Council in collaboration with the Friends and the Forestry Commission. This will be circulated to our membership soon for further views and comments – see below for membership details. The draft plan contains many ideas for improving and increasing biodiversity, including reintroduction of coppicing, pollinator-friendly mowing, creation of permanent wetland and ponds at selected locations, hedge-laying and the creation of Forest gardens suitable for foraging. There will be an increasing opportunity for volunteers to get involved in our work so do let us know if you might be interested as we will be setting up a new conservation task group in the coming months.

One area of current weakness is our knowledge and recording of the plant, bird, mammal, butterfly and insect species that live in the wood. If you have records, or are interested in helping to monitor and record in Cherry Tree Wood, please do let us know.

We have achieved a lot but as always there is so much more to be done. Why not join us? We do not charge a membership fee but wish to build a large active supporters list through our mailing list, meetings and activities. Do ask to be included on our mailing lists to get up to date information about us. You can also check out our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts – search for Friends of Cherry Tree Wood.

We need your support for this brilliant piece of North London Woodland. If you can offer help, or just want to hear about our activities and what we are getting up to, please drop us an email to:
friendsofcherrytreewood@gmail.com



New retail use for the Barclays Bank building



Our town centre must surely be amongst the last in the country to undergo what is an increasingly common scenario elsewhere - disused purpose-built bank premises in prominent locations, and of some architectural interest, being converted to new uses. In our case, it is the former Barclays at the very centre of the Broadway. Oliver Bonas propose to use it for retail purposes and have made a planning application to make changes to the appearance of all three of the ground floor frontages of this wedge shaped building. As might be expected, the main change is that the windows will become full height and will have aluminium frames. The entrance will be in the same place as it was with Barclays. The blocked in area at the thin edge of the wedge will be opened up but as a window rather than a door, which was how the premises were apparently originally set out.

Purpose built bank premises are notoriously difficult to re-purpose, especially for retail and particularly when there are additional conservation area restraints. This new use does not appear to cause any concern and indeed can be seen as a vote of confidence in Muswell Hill as a location for retail. Further details can be seen on the Haringey planning website with the reference HGY/2023/1177.

John Crompton

Enjoy new content on the MHFGA website

A new page showcases the special pictures commissioned from professional photographer and MHFGA committee member Zoe Norfolk to commemorate the Association's 75th anniversary. Visit mhfga.org/muswell-hill-fortis-green-now-then to see the collection of photos contrasting current locations with old postcards from the Hugh Garnsworthy collection.



The News, Newsletters and Catch Up pages have also been redesigned for easier reading and three new videos have been added for those who may have missed the Association's AGM and Alison Watson's presentation on London's Hidden River (click on "Our Events - Catch Up").

Finally, if you do not have a copy of the recently updated and reprinted "Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association: a history of its campaigns and landmark achievements", by John Hajdu, the book is freely available in electronic format at www.mhfga.org/history



Many thanks to Committee member Alex Vincenti for these improvements to our website.

Member profile - Verónica and Jérôme (V&J)

Verónica Chacón and Jérôme Royet - aka V&J - are a versatile mezzo-soprano and a pianist specialising in the French Melodies (Faure, Satie, Poulenc and more). They have been based in Muswell Hill for more than 20 years. For over a year now, they have curated (and sometimes performed at) the Lunchtime Concerts at St Andrew's Church (Alexandra Park Road, N10 2DD). These usually take place on the 2nd Saturday of the month at 1pm. The audience is welcomed at 12.45pm with prosecco, juices and Veronica's now famous cakes. The concert lasts about 45 minutes with no interval. The entrance is free and donations at the end go to the Parish.

Véronica and Jérôme have also been running their own singing group now called V&J Ensemble. They rehearse every Wednesday of the term at St Andrew's Church, 6.50-8.30pm; performing a classical repertoire of music in French, English & Latin, sacred and non-sacred. Any singer interested should contact them to enjoy two free trials via veronicaandjerome@gmail.com. Verónica is currently working on her new production, "Who does she think she is?" - not just a recital, a real show. She is currently running a crowdfunding campaign to produce the whole project. The presentation video will allow you to learn more about it and get involved. For more information visit their website www.veronicaandjerome.com



Muswell Hill Library closed until spring 2024 for refurbishment

90 year old Muswell Hill library on Queens Avenue is closed from June 26th for up to a year as improvements, including a new lift, accessible toilets, redecoration and changing the layout, take place.

During the closure, the nearest Haringey libraries are the Alexandra Park (Alexandra Park Road, N22 7UJ and on the 102 bus route) and Hornsey (central Crouch End) branches. Highgate Library is currently closed until later this year, whilst similar refurbishments take place.



Original plan for Queen's Wood flood protection scheme scrapped

Haringey Council has confirmed that it is no longer proceeding with the flood protection scheme for Queen's Wood it originally proposed. This follows a campaign by the Friends of Queen's Wood who believed the plan would be invasive, and cause problems for trees and biodiversity, without guaranteed benefits. Fresh work includes investigating the option of making better use of the existing retaining wall at the Wood Vale entrance. A structural inspection and topographic survey of the wall has been carried out and a feasibility design report is currently being

produced. Full consultation on any new plans is promised by Haringey. The Council has also confirmed that work is expected to take place on improving the path network together with further work on reducing soil erosion and encouraging the woodland floor regeneration.

Fighting graffiti in Muswell Hill

After many years service patrolling our shopping centre, and undertaking their fantastic work of removing or reporting graffiti and fly posting, Bill Jago and Jack Whitehead have now decided to hang up their boots and equipment and retire. We had the opportunity to say thank you to them at our recent 75th celebration party.

We can all play a role to fill their boots. If you see any graffiti or flyposting, please go to the "Report It" section at www.haringey.gov.uk and enter the details there. There is also a mobile phone app called "Love Clean Streets" which allows you to send a photo of the problem directly to the Haringey team responsible for fixing it who then send you progress updates and let you know when it's fixed. It's available on the Apple and Google app stores.

Local organisations

ALEXANDRA PALACE AND PARK

The Alexandra Park Visitor Centre near the Grove car park is open **every Sunday between 2 and 4pm**. Events and visitor information always available at www.alexandrapalace.com/

EAST FINCHLEY OPEN ARTISTS

Open House 2023 runs from Saturday 24th June to Sunday 2nd July
www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk

FRIENDS OF COLD FALL WOOD AND MUSWELL HILL PLAYING FIELDS

Free art exhibition - Wednesday 5th July 7.30 to 9pm in the log circles in south east corner of the woods
www.coldfallwoods.co.uk for more information

FREEHOLD COMMUNITY CENTRE

9 Alexandra Road, N10 2EY
Please email freehold2003@gmail.com or ring 07935 324578

FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD

Summer party - Sunday 16th July 1 to 3pm

See fqw.org.uk for details of this and other events
Friends of Queen's Wood working parties on last Sunday of the month
Tools provided but bring suitable gloves
For all events meet outside The Lodge off Muswell Hill Road

HARINGTON SCHEME

Providing unique opportunities for young adults with learning disabilities and/or difficulties. More details at www.harington.org.uk

HORNSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Lots of resources and interesting books to buy (including new "100 Stories from the Archives", plus details of regular events at www.hornseyhistorical.org.uk

HORNSEY PENSIONERS ACTION GROUP

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

LONDON EPILEPSY ACTION

Contact Barbara Penney on 020 8883 0010 or email barbarapenney@yahoo.co.uk

MUSWELL HILL & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Now in its 110th year, a great network for anyone interested in gardening. Full information at www.bloomingn10.co.uk/
Contact: Jenny Kruss on 020 8442 0031 or bloomingn10@outlook.com

MUSWELL HILL BOWLING CLUB

King's Avenue N10 1PB (next to No. 36)
Founded in 1901 and one of the oldest clubs in north London. Full information at www.muswellhillbowlingclub.co.uk – or call Richard Johnstone on 07986 873312 or email richardjohnstone@gmail.com

MUSWELL HILL CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

The Contact Centre, 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 www.mhmc-contactcentre.org.uk or by email at contact.centre@mhmc.org.uk

MUSWELL HILL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Meet on **Wednesday evenings** at Jackson's Lane Community Centre, and warmly welcome new members. Information at 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.facebook.com/muswellhillwelcomes/

NORTH LONDON CHORUS

A Night at the Opera - favourite arias and choruses from opera and operetta on **Saturday 22nd July** at St James Church, N10 3DB
5pm relaxed performance and **7.30pm full performance**
Soprano Sarah-Jane Lewis, Tenor David Webb, Bass baritone/comper John Savournin, Piano Catherine Borer, Conductor Chris Hopkins
Tickets: www.northlondonchorus.org or St James Church bookshop
We are currently recruiting in all voice parts, especially tenors and basses

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

Lunchtime concert **Saturday 8th July 1pm** - Purcell, Franck, Fauré and more - V&J Ensemble (see page 6)
Fortismere Community Symphony Orchestra **Saturday 15th July 7.30pm** - summer's evening of sweeping melodies and dance
Details at www.alexandrapark.org

ST. JAMES CHURCH

Details at www.st-james.org.uk/

Please send detail of any events for our September or October newsletter by 1st August via editor@mhfga.org

Changes on the local high street



We benefit from a lively local retail area - here are some recent and forthcoming changes (see our [Facebook page](#) for the latest news):

- Cornucopia, a fashion accessories shop, opened on Fortis Green Road
- La Rotonda, an Italian restaurant, opened on the Broadway
- Muswell Hill Kitchenware opened next to M&S
- The Hedgehog Café has closed after seven years and fashion shop Husen Moda is closing in early July
- New Happy Swan has closed and there is a planning application for a new shopfront as a private sector medical centre



Photos: Zoe Norfolk

June members' meeting

In mid-June, a capacity group of 20 Association members retreated from the heat into the cool shade of Queen's Wood for a guided tour led by member Lucy Roots – ably assisted by fellow Friends of Queen's Wood members Laura Dekker and Sarah Graham-Brown. The tour commenced at the newly re-opened (and highly recommended!) Lodge Café and over the course of an hour and a half, meandered down to the flood wall at the Wood Vale entrance.

Whilst the tour primarily focused on the ecology and the impact of changes in climate on the woods, our guides also took the time to share insights relating to the history, flora and fauna of the woods arising along the way, and responded knowledgeably to questions raised by the enthusiastic group (some of whom were making their first visit to Queen's Wood after being Muswell Hill residents for over 40 years!).

It was fascinating to learn about the long-term benefits that coppicing and the fencing-off of sections brings to the health of the ancient woodland, the number and variety of trees and birds within the park and the challenges that the woods have to overcome – ranging from fungal diseases to floods. It was also interesting to learn of the great work that the Friends of Queen's Wood undertakes to protect the woods for the enjoyment of the public—through monitoring the health of the flora and fauna via surveys, physical volunteer labour and engagement with authorities such as Haringey Council.

Thanks again to Lucy, Laura and Sarah!



Nigel Clark

New Chair wanted!

Our Chair of the last 22 years has recently retired (see page 3).

Are you interested in being our new Chair? To find out more about the role, please get in touch with our Hon Secretary, John Crompton, by emailing secretary@mhfga.org

Membership

If you live, work, or just enjoy spending time in Muswell Hill, why not join over 700 other members of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association. For just £10 annual membership for households, or £25 for businesses and organisations, you can support our actions and campaigns; receive six bi-monthly Newsletters with local news and events; receive email updates with community news and developments; attend members' meetings; and come to our annual guided local walk. Join at www.mhfga.org/membership

We encourage existing members not already set up on Direct Debit to do so at www.membermojo.co.uk/mhfga/renew where you can also renew using PayPal. For any membership queries, please get in touch via membership@mhfga.org

We are delighted to welcome our **new members**: Sunny and Kaajal Chotai, Sara Vandenberghe, Martin Heaton Cooper, Michael Lewin, Daniel and Amy Goldman, John Hinshelwood, Gill Pengelly.

And we also welcome our **new business member** Broadway Beauty.

Our business and organisation members are key parts of our community. You can find links to their websites at www.mhfga.org/directory

225 The Jewellery Exchange
Ambitious About Autism
Angela Rose
Baby Sensory
Broadway Beauty
Broadway Pet Stores
Broadway Pharmacy

Capital Gardens
Children's Bookshop
Claire Avant Yoga
Clissold Arms
Cosi Homewares
CPotential
Dunn's Artisan Bakers
East Finchley Open Artists
Fanshaw Books
Fornaro Pizza
Freehold Community Association
Gallalock
Gibfit30
Green & Blossoms
Greens of Highgate
Hollickwood Primary School
House of Books

JHK Estate Agents
Lambert Welch Kitchens
Men @ 107
Misk Boutique
Muswell Flyer
Muswell Hill Bowling Club
Muswell Hill Club
Muswell Hill Creatives
Muswell Hill Karate Academy
Muswell Hill Methodist Church
Muswell Hill Methodist Tennis Club
Muswell Hill Pharmacy
Muswell Hill Pilates
Muswell Hill United Reformed Church

Muswell Hill & District Horticultural Society
Muswell Hillbilly Brewers
Norfolk House School
North London Chorus
North London Symphony Orchestra
Panoptica - MH Optical Ltd
Picture Framing Muswell Hill
Planet Organic
Robert Linsky Optometrist
Roni's Bagel Bakery
Sally Bourne Interiors
Snappy Snaps Muswell Hill
Sounds & Shapes (V&J)
St Andrew's Church, Alexandra Park

St James's Muswell Hill
Studio Moe Ltd
Tatlers Estate Agents
The Cut Barbershop
The Good Rooms
The Harington Scheme
The Mossy Well
The People's Pantry
The Real Greek
The Robin Kiashek Osteopathic Clinics
Total Boxer
W Martyn
Walter Purkis & Sons
WAVE Café
Woodland Tree Surgery
Yogamatters