



SINGING TEACHER NEEDED?

Thackeray's "The Rose and the Ring" was a strange choice for a children's pantomime, for it had few of the devices that one has come to expect from the traditional model. As well as providing little opportunity for audience participation, there was not a great deal of interest in the story line and not enough differentiation between the "goodies" and "baddies".

The first half consisted almost totally of a succession of swopping loves, depending on who had the ring which gave its wearer great beauty. If much of the plot eluded me, what was it like for the young audience? Perhaps some of the answers are in the words of the songs but, alas, due to the weakness of the singing and the inaudibility of the words, there was no help there. Music is always difficult in a society of actors rather than musicians, but if the HGSDS are going to do musicals they do really need to concentrate more on training their singers in basic breathing and projection. The musicians tried valiantly to cope with the

musical arrangements but had some problems with intonation, particularly in the first half. It was an ambitious band in terms of the number and variety of the instruments, but perhaps lacking in experience. What went on in the orchestra pit and on the stage was often quite painful.

The acting was good all round with an excellent performance from Terry Rogers (Countess Gruffanuff), who stood out as a real pantomime dame with the subtle nuances of gesture and timing of a real comic. One felt some sympathy for the stuttering, over-weight Prince Bulbo (Jonathon Kanerack) and the hen-pecked King Valoroso (Michael Ash). Smith

and Jones (Mario Verazza and Tony de Christopher) worked well together as a duo. Fairy Blackstick (Jocelyne Tobin) and Queen Padella (Judith Gubbay) both came across strongly, as did Miriam Clark and Jon Musker as the heroine and hero.

The costumes by Diana Darrer and Frances Musker deserve a special mention. From the imaginative clouds and luminous butterflies to Bet-sinda's antique lace wedding dress, they were stupendous. The pièce de résistance had to be the banana dress and the gorgeous banana hat worn by the dame.

The scenery by Pat Hedger and Katherine Beaumont was bright and colourful, and there were some lovely touches such as the detailed painted dishes piled high with eggs and sausages. **LS**

USING PEAT IN THE GARDEN

For many years Suburb gardeners have used peat lavishly to counteract the problems of heavy clay soil. Recent research has shown that the lowland peat mires are rapidly disappearing because of commercial peat extraction undertaken to meet our demands for peat for use in allotments, gardens, plant pots and grow-bags. Some areas of wet, undrained land grow luxurious sphagnum moss which forms layers of peat as it dies. The system is dependent on the watertable remaining close to the surface. The resulting peatlands, which take thousands of years to accumulate, can be destroyed in just a few days by the large-scale use of commercial machinery. Land drainage ruins the system, and removal of peat on a commercial basis far outstrips

the rate at which new peat can be created. Since 1949, 60 per cent of British lowland peat mires have been lost, with a devastating effect on the special summer wildlife - birds (nightjars, nightingales, whinchats, and waders), dragonflies, butterflies, reptiles and rare bog plants.

Inadvertently and innocently, gardeners, by making demands for peat, have helped in the destruction of the lowland peat mires. There are suitable alternatives to peat which we can, and should, start using. Forest bark or straw may be used for mulching. Clay soil texture will be greatly improved by using woodchips, spent hops, seaweed, spent mushroom compost, and other composts, leaf moulds and manure products, all of which are infinitely better for the garden

than peat is. Use well composted COW manure (NOT horse manure) on azaleas and rhododendrons. Old newspapers can be dug into sandy soil to improve its moisture retention in place of peat.

By far the best solution for improving both the content and the texture of soil is to make a compost heap or use a compost bin. Use garden waste and other materials to recycle into your own garden instead of buying precious bags of peat. The only real way to stop all the peat being used is to reduce the consumer demand for it. We are the consumers - WE must stop using peat! **CLAYFINGERS** with grateful acknowledgement to the RSPB magazine "BIRDS".

INSTITUTE NEWS

The Institute is to participate in a nation-wide scheme designed to safeguard and improve the quality of the teaching of English as a Foreign Language. Organised by the British Council on behalf of BASCELT (the British Association of State Colleges in English Language Teaching), the Courses Validation Scheme will monitor teaching standards, premises and welfare provision. The Institute's Head of EFL, Jean Barraclough, who retires this year as Honorary Secretary of BASCELT after a three-year term of office, has been deeply involved in the development of the scheme.

Membership of BASCELT is important to the Institute,

because it ensures widespread publicity here and overseas in embassies, universities, hostels and British Council and British Tourist Board offices. It also helps to keep the Institute abreast of the latest national and international developments in teaching EFL. Current thoughts are very much geared towards the implications for EFL of the 1992 European Market, and staff from the Institute have been attending courses and seminars on that theme. The issue is being taken seriously by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which has responded by setting up an English Language Steering Group.

The Institute hopes to be well equipped to adapt to the climate of change. It has, over

many years, built an international reputation for the quality of its EFL teaching. Each term, some 1,000 students from more than 50 countries world-wide enrol in its courses, which cater for all levels from absolute beginners to those who wish to polish an already high standard of English for use in business. The presence of so many nationalities considerably enriches the life of the Institute, as well as, through the fees they pay, providing income which makes a vital contribution towards its continued viability as a centre of education and community activities. **RB**

BISHOP MEETS QUEEN

On 17th February the Chess committee welcomed thirty enthusiastic players of mixed ability to the second Open Day. About eighteen children and twelve adults thoroughly enjoyed a stimulating and friendly afternoon.

On Saturday 12th May a third Open Day is to take place at Fellowship House, Willfield Green, from 2.30 to 5 p.m. Please bring your own chess set.

This event will be different from the previous Open Days. Judy Hoile, our new committee member, has offered to teach up to eight children and adults, who are absolute beginners, the rudiments of chess in a private room between 3 and 4 p.m. The charge will be £1.50 for children and £3 for adults, payable on arrival. Applications will be accepted on a first come, first served basis by registering with the Secretary, Rosemary Goldstein (458 1123), to be fair, only one member of a household will

be permitted to attend.

Also, a chess ladder for both children and adults will be established. Players will be expected to play at least one game on the ladder that afternoon. Games on the ladder will take place at every subsequent Open Day alongside other games, until December, when winners of various categories will be announced and prizes awarded.

Membership of the HGS Chess Club is open only to members of the Residents Association, but you may join at the same time as you join the club. The charge for the Chess Club is £3 for adults and £1.50 for children up to 15 years. Further details may be obtained from Rosemary Goldstein, Secretary (458 1123).

Players of any age or ability are most welcome. Refreshments will be served. Please do not forget to bring a chess set.

AGM cont.

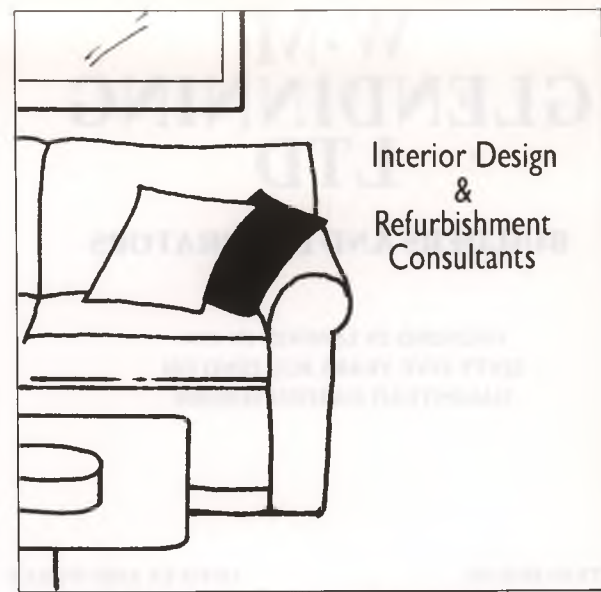
Mandelson Memorial Fund committee announced that the fund stood at £1,500+ which somewhat limited objectives. One of the suggestions had been for a fund to provide transport for residents to make hospital visits. Having discussed this idea with Fellowship and others it had been decided that it was probably too complicated and the need for such a service had not been clearly established. Another idea had been the establishment of some more permanent way of making Tony's memory visible on the Suburb. This could take the form of a piece of sculpture. This had been costed and an appropriate memorial is feasible. The problem is where to put it where it will not be vandalised and at the same time be visible. The Committee would welcome suggestions which could include possible environmental improvements on the Suburb.

In introducing Peter Loyd to talk about Neighbourhood Watch and the Litter Zones Eileen Whelan said that the Secretary of State for the Environment had been coming to the Suburb on 29th May to view our Litter Free Zones but that a three line whip had prevented Mr Patten from attending.

Peter Loyd reported that for Neighbourhood Watch it had been a year of consolidation. He told members that the most effective burglar deterrent appeared to be property marking, only 5 properties out of 203 Suburb burglaries had marked property and some of those had not put stickers on the back of the house.

David Meyler reported on allotments, thanked Eileen Whelan for fifteen years as chairman of that committee. He reported that of 110 plots on the Suburb only one is vacant.

Continued on page 10



atmosphere

01-455 0794

TUES-SAT

9.30-6.00

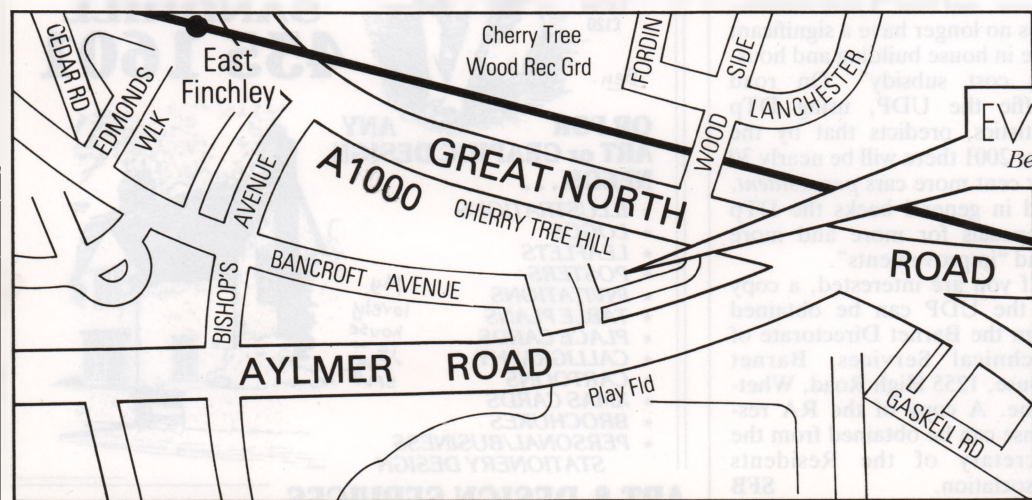
THURS

9.30-7.00

EVELYN HARRIS

Beauty & Top Drawer

A NEW CONCEPT FOR THE DISCERNING WOMAN



31 AYLMEER PARADE,

AYLMEER ROAD,

LONDON N2

TELEPHONE:

01-348 9101/01-348 9125

FINE LINGERIE
&
BEAUTY THERAPY

DRUCE

RESIDENTIAL

AN URGENT REQUEST

Mr & Mrs N. are non-dependent cash buyers who are urgently seeking a four bed detached/semi-detached house, preferably with a garage in Hampstead Garden Suburb. They are looking between £300,000 and £375,000 and can offer an immediate exchange of contracts

Please contact Simon Marks or Ian Godfrey

Whether you are looking to Buy or Sell in the Suburb - contact the Agents with over 150 years experience

16/17 Hallswelle Parade, Hampstead Garden Suburb
London NW11 0DL. Tel: 01-209 0011. Fax: 01-209 0297

A Hanover Druce plc Company