

Past

featuring Jacqueline Morris



Jacqueline Morris is another Suburb resident who shares Matthew's regret at the closure of the Royal Oak pub in Temple Fortune which her family ran between 1910 and 1960. Born in 1928, Jacqueline spent much of her earlier years living in Asmunds Hill and moved to Temple Fortune Lane with her husband Ronald in 1997. Here, she shares with us some fascinating memories she has of life on the Suburb and some of the quirky disciplines that were enforced in those earlier days.

NEARLY EIGHTY YEARS ON

One of the things that everyone seemed fussed about, was the height of the hedges. These were checked periodically to ensure compliance. Another rule was that we were only allowed to hang out our washing on specific days. I do recall someone who left their's out all week. Can you imagine, I overheard a neighbour saying 'those are not the sort of people we want living on the Suburb!'. One of the nicest things was that new tenants were given an apple tree to plant in their back gardens.

My family would entertain me with stories of the Suburb in its earliest days. For example, the gossip about the mode of dress and behaviour of some of the residents in the artisans' cottages, who were prone to go about in open toed sandals and dirndl skirts – the women only of course! These individuals, who were members of the Play and Pageant Union, were considered 'outré', somewhat bohemian and even 'arty farty'! However, they were gradually accepted as an integral part of the community. Indeed it was the community spirit and neighbourliness which set the Suburb apart from other housing developments in the London area and reflected the vision and ideals of Henrietta Barnett.

When the Suburb was founded you could rent an artisans' cottage for 6 bob a week (30p in today's money) and there was also the opportunity for individuals to form a partnership and pay the rent between them. This enabled low income workers to be able to afford to share a decent property.

Until the 1940's or so everyone walked or cycled but for those very few who had cars, the vehicles were all kept in garages which were then called 'motor houses'. There were three cinemas in walking distance, the best being The Orpheum where Birkbeck House is now. During the war they also held fantastic concerts there and we were allowed to take in hot water bottles when it was cold as there were heating restrictions due to the war effort. There was always plenty to do, with all the Suburb clubs, societies and organisations.

There was shopping at Temple Fortune even before the First World War but my first memories were of the 1930's and the home deliveries (shades of the on-line services we have today). The butcher would come with a wooden trough on his shoulders; the baker, whose family firm was called Gentry, would pull his cart rather like a coolie; and the milkman made his daily round with a horse and cart. There were lamplighters and coalmen and trams and trolleybuses which trundled up the Finchley Road past our Royal Oak pub.

I still have a collection of photographs to remind me of the way it was then. I've got photos of the Queen Mother visiting the Suburb in the 1980's and Princess Margaret opening Fellowship House in 1957 but my favourite is of Queen Mary opening the new building of the Henrietta Barnett Junior School in 1938. I was at the Suburb Junior School in Childs Way at the time before going on to Henrietta Barnett seniors. I seem to remember that HBS charged 6 guineas a term then but those girls who passed the 'Eleven Plus' and whose parents could not afford the fees were given a grant for their books and uniform. I was fortunate because my parents were able to pay the necessary amount but there was never any question of us looking down on those who benefited from the grant system.

Due to ridiculous property prices, much of the socio-economic character of the Suburb has changed but I can still see many unchanged facets of this marvellous neighbourhood.



(Above) Queen Mary opens the new building of the Henrietta Barnett School in 1938, looked on by my sister, circled.  
(Below) Princess Margaret opens Fellowship House in 1957. This time, it's me circled.



Recipes

featuring Brian Tudor

Brian and Elaine Tudor and their two daughters moved to the Suburb two years ago from Somerset, where Brian worked in IT. The family chose the Suburb, saying, "It was nearest to the rural upbringing we wanted for our children, yet close to the city where I have to work." This is a favourite Waitrose recipe.

ORANGE CHICKEN WITH COUSCOUS

Ingredients:

250g couscous; 50g sultanas; salt and ground black pepper; 500g chicken breast fillets; 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon; 200ml hot vegetable stock; 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar; 2 navelina oranges; 150g sugar snap peas; 50g flaked almonds, toasted; 2 tbsp finely chopped flat-leaf parsley

Method:

For the couscous, pour 400ml boiling water into a medium sized pan. Add couscous, sultanas and season to taste. Simmer over a low heat for 2 mins; remove and allow to stand. Sprinkle chicken with cinnamon and black pepper. Heat a large, non-stick frying pan until hot and dry fry chicken for about 2 mins each side until thoroughly cooked through. Transfer to a plate and keep warm. Return pan to heat, add stock, vinegar and juice of 1 orange and 2 tsp finely grated orange zest. Bring to the boil, then simmer gently for 5-6 mins or until reduced by about half. Peel remaining orange and cut into segments. Blanch sugar snap peas in boiling water for 2 mins, then drain. Add chicken, sugar snaps and orange segments to sauce. Using a fork, stir couscous and add parsley. Serve chicken on a bed of couscous sprinkled with toasted almonds and extra orange zest.

Preparation time: 10 minutes • Cooking time: 15 minutes



Deborah Warland

Suburb Style editor Deborah Warland, talks to residents about some of their favourite things

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