



Mr Reuby Hyams on parade. Photo by John Dearing

Reuby on parade

By Daphne Chamberlain

Long-time East Finchley resident Reuby Hyams was on parade in Battersea Park last month. Reuby, former president of the Jewish Ex-Servicemen's Association, was invited by the British Legion to join several hundred other veterans in an event marking the 60th anniversary of VJ Day and the end of the Second World War.

"I don't want people to think I'm being big-headed appearing in the paper," he says. "My war wasn't anything compared to some people's wars." On his chest though, along with his stars for service in Africa, Italy, Europe and War Service, was the oak leaf for 'mentioned in dispatches' (which he was told never to polish).

He served with first Wavell and then Montgomery, in the desert, at Salerno, Sicily and elsewhere in Italy. "More credit should be given to the men in those Mediterranean landings. I was standing by in the harbour at Crete, and everyone was under constant bombardment".

Recovering from injuries,

he spent a year in Bruges with a family; he has kept in close touch with them ever since. "They became like brothers and sisters to me, and their children and grandchildren still treat Rene and me like members of the family." It's a two-way thing, as he has learned a little Flemish.

He enjoyed the re-union, which included an excellent tea and entertainment, and praised Dial-a-Ride for getting him there and back very promptly.

Reuby and Rene, who run the Monday Club at Fairacres Accommodation for Jewish Blind and Disabled, have lived in Elmshurst Crescent for 50 years.

V is for volunteer

By Harriet Watson

Volunteer Reading Help (VRH) is a national charity that has been recruiting, training and placing volunteers from the local community into primary schools since 1973. There are 30 branches nationwide with 2,669 volunteers helping 7,463 children in 1,850 schools. VRH links the volunteers with children aged 6 - 11 years old whose teachers feel they would benefit from extra one-to-one help.

Each volunteer works with the same three children individually, for half an hour each, twice a week in a local primary school. Holy Trinity and Martin Schools are involved in the scheme. They might read to the child, allow the child to choose and look at books they find interesting, or play games together. The aim is to increase the children's confidence and self-esteem in a relaxed, fun environment, making reading enjoyable and achievable.

Can you help?

The London North West branch of Volunteer Reading

Help, which covers the Barnet and Brent areas, has 97 volunteers in 55 schools helping 291 children. New volunteers are always welcome from all cultures and backgrounds. No formal qualifications are needed although you must be at least 18 years old (there is no upper age limit).

If you like books and children and can commit to working one and half hours twice a week (term time only) for at least two terms, please contact: Harriet Watson, Volunteer Service Manager on 020 7372 7523 or email: harriet.watson@vrh.org.uk

Walkers or drivers?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Feel like popping out for a Strategic Walk? Your fancy could take you along the Thames, into the Lea Valley - or through Cherry Tree Wood and East Finchley Station. One of the Walks - the Capital Ring - circles London, going right through our neck of the woods - and into a bit of controversy.

Strategic Walks, run by Transport for London, are part of Mayor Livingstone's plan to get Londoners back on their feet and using parks and woodland.

The northern section of the Capital Ring, from Richmond Bridge to Woolwich in easy stages, will be launched this month at a ceremony in Highgate Wood, but Barnet Council will not be leading the cheers. Colin Saunders, Capital Ring Project Manager, told *THE ARCHER*, "It's unfortunate. Barnet was an enthusiastic supporter of both the Capital Ring and the London Loop when the walks were first mooted, in 1991, and was among the first to open its sections of

both routes." Barnet, he said, provided funding for most of the existing signing and for free publicity leaflets, but now they are refusing to co-operate further.

Only about half the recommended signing is in place, but the launch is going ahead anyway. Barnet told us, "The route is generally well signed, and people using the route do so from prior knowledge, and not from seeing a sign and taking pot luck."

Not against it, but...

It's TFL who would pay for completing the signage, so why is Barnet not co-operating? A spokesperson told us they were "concerned that other proposals which form

part of the Strategic Walks Project would have a harmful effect on traffic flow - for example, speed tables and pedestrian crossings where the route meets or runs along roads. The Council does not oppose the route, but believes there are higher priorities for transport investment."

Despite the controversy, the launch goes ahead - at 4pm on Wednesday 21 September, by the café in Highgate Wood.

Leaflets on London's Strategic Walks are available free from public libraries, from walking@tfl.gov.uk, and from TFL's information line on 0870 240 6094, or for a small price from the Ramblers' Association on 020 7339 8501.

How to be eco-friendly

By Hannah Eiseman-Renyard

As part of my gap year travels this year, I spent five weeks at an environmentally sustainable Eco-village in Tennessee. I learnt a great deal there, but much of it was aimed at rural living so I was excited about visiting the Eco Design Fair earlier this summer at Cecil Sharp House, Camden Town, to see what they had for English city-dwellers.

With a brief that the products should fit into at least one category out of 'recycled, organic, natural, non-toxic, locally-sourced, cruelty-free and fairly-traded,' the diversity of products and stalls reflected the scope of what's out there.

Nappy-happy

There were solar panel installers, organic beauty products, petitions for local bio-diesel sources, and books on every facet of sustainable living. Camden Council had its own stall with information for residents on where to recycle and how to join a 'Real Nappy, Real Happy' scheme, which rents out, collects and sterilises cotton nappies, rather than using the ton of disposable nappies a baby will get through in its infancy.

Inventive ideas

I was most interested in the recycled products, and loved Rita McDonnell's crocheted plastic bags. Recycled tyres made belts, mouse mats, and some indestructible-looking pencil cases. One stall sold brightly-coloured handbags woven out of crisp packets, from a fair trade organisation in Mexico City.

There was a slight lunatic fringe. One man sold copper spiral tubes, sealed with water inside which would 'energise' any water pipe it was attached to, while the 'Worn Again' shoes made from old shoes and what appeared to be tweed jackets were a good idea, but rather ugly.

The stalls at the Eco Design Fair were as diverse as the movement itself, and I left with a reusable cotton carrier bag full of leaflets, having spent more money than I'd meant to.



Hannah Eiseman-Renyard models a hat and bag both made from recycled, crocheted plastic carrier bags. Photo by Megan Chapman

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