



A monumental clean-up

By Ann Bronkhorst

One of the finest classical monuments in any London cemetery is here in East Finchley, in the Islington and Camden (St Pancras) cemetery. A massive grey granite and stone structure, it was designed to be awe-inspiring but in recent years has looked shabby. Now, however, the Mond Mausoleum has received a clean-up.

A specialist firm, David Ball Restoration, tackled the job for the Mond Family Trust, employing men who had worked on the same memorial 10 years earlier. They removed an accumulation of algae, leaves, debris and, of course, bird droppings. Pigeons like to roost and nest beneath the high portico at the front of the building.

These are all ordinary problems that most London householders can relate to, but the mausoleum is a far from ordinary building. Its architect, Darcy Braddell, based it on the Temple of Memes in Rhamnus. It is imposing not only because of its height and its predominantly dark grey colour, but also because of the slope it commands, the ten steps leading up to it, the Ionic columns and the tall bronze doors. Every element of the design conveys solemnity and power.

A powerful man

German-born Sir Ludwig Mond, who died in 1909, is entombed here. He was an

industrial chemist and inventor who developed the mass production of alkali for the textile industry and, later, ammonia and nickel. He even had a gas named after him. Mond, who became a millionaire, bequeathed his collection of early Italian paintings to the National Gallery. Next door, in the Victorian section of the National Portrait Gallery, a small bronze statuette of Mond suggests his almost Churchillian presence. Also buried here is his son Alfred, Lord Melchett, who founded chemical giant ICI and was twice a Liberal MP.

The mausoleum is a Grade II listed building, one of very few in East Finchley. The cemetery over which it towers is a fascinating place to visit, with memorials and headstones dating back to 1854. Most are quite simple so, in contrast, the massive, severe Mond Mausoleum backed by autumn trees or dark against snow is an impressive sight.



Scrubbing up well: the Mond Mausoleum. Picture by M. Bronkhorst.

Broadcaster in charity trek

In February 2007, Finchley broadcaster Jeremy Jacobs will trek through East Africa in aid of Breast Cancer Campaign. The expedition, through Tanzania's 125-mile Masaai Mara game reserve, is the latest in a series of charity initiatives undertaken by Jacobs in memory of his sister Jackie, who lost her two-year battle with breast cancer in 1988. She left her husband, David, and three children.

Jacobs successfully completed the 1991 London Marathon to help the hospice at Mount Vernon Hospital, where Jackie spent her last few months. At present he is dividing his time between his professions as sports radio

reporter, presenter and public speaker, preparing for an arduous nine days of tropical land travel (which may or may not include brushing-up on his Swahili) and seeking sponsorship on behalf of one of the UK's most worthy but woefully under-resourced causes.

The Breast Cancer Campaign aims to fund research into the treatment of a disease which takes some 13,000 women each year. In the UK alone, one in nine will develop

the illness during her lifetime. Breast cancer does not afflict only women; the BCC estimates that at least 90 men yearly succumb to the condition.

The Campaign is among several local charities vigorously supported by Jacobs and one of the most important. Donations can be made to his website (www.justgiving.com/jeremyjc) Jeremy will post regular reports on his blog once his training schedule is firmly underway.

Residents face-to-face with Servite

By Betti Blatman

Residents from the Thomas More Estate in East Finchley joined others at the annual conference of estate management company Servite to address many maintenance and service issues.

In his opening speech, Matthew Fox, Chief Executive, said, "Be brutally frank with us! We want to know what the issues are and what we are doing right and wrong. If you tell us exactly how it is, then we will try to deal with it."

After being inspected by the Audit Commission, Servite was given one star for how good they were and two stars for prospects for improvement (the maximum

being three stars).

Mr Fox said he wanted to deliver an excellent service (which equates to three stars from the Audit Commission) by 2008. He elaborated on what Servite had done so far, referring to their concept of Right Plan, Right People and Right Tools, and concluded, "We are absolutely not complacent and have a long way to go."

Key improvements

Caroline McGrogan, Maintenance and Customer Services Director, explained that in April 2005, a separate subsidiary, Servite Facilities Management, had been set up to provide specialist maintenance and reinvestment services for Servite Houses.

Although SFM was already delivering a good service in south London, she said, there was need for significant improvement in their north London service. She explained that two key steps would be taken in the next few months towards improving the north London office and installing a new computer system.

Closing words came from Nigel Pacey, Housing Director, who told residents: "If we hear the same issues this time next year, then clearly we have failed! We hope you have learned from us today how keen we are to listen. Now we need to go and deliver for you."

The conference was an excellent opportunity for Servite residents to meet and "exchange notes" during the discussion groups and the lunchbreak. Servite's staff were available for consultation, showing that Servite very genuinely is striving to improve its services to residents.

Holy Trinity School celebrates successful Ofsted inspection

By Rebecca Smith

Pupils, staff and governors at Holy Trinity School in East Finchley are celebrating a highly successful Ofsted inspection that praised the "good education" the school delivers to its pupils.

Head teacher Tim Bowden said: "We are delighted to have official recognition for all the excellent work and achievements that we are so proud of at Holy Trinity. I have a staff team who are second to none and a fantastic bunch of enthusiastic and happy pupils who are keen to learn."

Sylvia Duthie, Chair of Governors until last month, said: "The whole school community is delighted. Our motto is High Standards Together, which is what we continually strive for and is what we continue to achieve."

Highlights of the report included praise for pupils, whose behaviour in assemblies was described as "excellent"; teaching assistants who were said to be "first rate"; the head teacher and senior managers, who were said to "provide good leadership

and excellent role models" and the governing body, which was described as "outstanding".

Mr Bowden said: "There are many highlights within the report, but the comment I believe says most about the school is 'There is a buzz around the school reflected in the enthusiasm of the pupils and the excellent relationships between staff'."

The two-day inspection took place on 14-15 September. All teaching staff were observed in lessons, including two newly-qualified teachers who were only in their second week of teaching.

Holy Trinity school is a one-form entry Church of England voluntary aided primary school with a nursery. The full report can be viewed online at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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