



Urban haven: Tracey Marshall's garden in Princes Avenue, Muswell Hill, is beautifully designed

Designer garden is ready for its debut

By Lynn Winton

An eye-catching garden at 26 Princes Avenue in Muswell Hill will be making its debut appearance this month as part of the National Garden Scheme's open gardens, and it has a wealth of ideas for those looking for transformative results.

Owner Tracey Marshall commissioned renowned garden designer Shelley Hugh-Jones and local landscapers Nordland. "When our daughters left home for uni in 2022 we decided to completely revamp the garden," said Tracey.

"Shelley prepared the detailed drawings and Nordland brought them to life. It's still very much a work in progress. However we are thrilled with every aspect and it's been a real treat watching it change throughout the year."

My sneak preview revealed a pretty woodland area at the bottom of the garden softening the new garden rooms, and plenty of large trees and shrubs, including glorious amelanchiers, around the new outdoor lounging and dining areas.

Tracey is combining her garden open day with John and

Patsy Bailey's at no.17, who we featured last year. Their more established garden will host their perennially popular homemade teas, with their daughter Imogen once again taking on the Herculean task of baking at least 16 different types of cake, including gluten free and vegan ones, and there will be live music in the afternoon from The Secret Life Sax Quartet. Patsy and John will also have a good stock of plants for sale, some of which transformed my own beds last year, especially their speciality hostas.

Opening day for both gardens at 17 and 26 Princes Avenue, N10 3LS, is Sunday 19 May from 12 to 6pm. One £6 entry fee covers both and your visit will provide critical support for nursing and health charities. Find out more at ngs.org.uk

Dominic's garden provides his inspiration for Suburb project

By Ruth Anders

Dominic Rose and his family moved to Hampstead Garden Suburb from Kentish Town four years ago, and since then his new garden has developed an inspiring life of its own.

"This garden was very different when we inherited it," explained Dominic, as he showed me the beds, terrace, raised lawn and variety of plants he has introduced. "My two young sons and I have also given a lot of attention to encouraging wildlife."

Dominic's background in e-commerce is partly why Sarah Raven Kitchen and Gardens Ltd appointed him as their chairman last year. From there, it seemed like a natural progression for Dominic to develop the Suburb's initiative to create Britain's Biggest Living Garden, as we first reported last month.

Dominic's portfolio of professional advisory roles gives him the flexibility to dedicate time to this passion for transforming areas of the Suburb, where almost 5,000 gardens are bordered strictly by hedges.

Flagship project

He told *The Archer*: "The area provides the perfect opportunity to create a flagship project that will demonstrate how a community can make a difference if its members act together." His friend Stephen Head, founder of Wildlife Gardening Forum, has commented that "A demonstration project at this scale could have real national impact."



Garden suburb: Dominic Rose in his own back yard, which he has made wildlife-friendly

Dominic added: "While our nucleus area is a somewhat privileged one, our wider catchment provides the chance to involve the broader community through local schools such as Brookland where the demographic is more diverse."

Kids' gardening

Dominic has already set up a kids' gardening club, so far signing up 40 children aged from three to 13. His ambitions for the wider initiative include developing two or three areas to create community wildlife

gardens, one of which will be at St Jude's Church, with the support of Priest in Charge Revd Emily Kolltveit.

He has also circulated a comprehensive survey to residents to baseline wildlife features across the Suburb and to attract participants and volunteers. Whilst the survey is geared towards Suburb residents, anyone can sign up via Dominic's website to help or find out more. For further details, see www.britainsbiggestlivinggarden.org

John Dacam, August 1954 – March 2024: an appreciation of an Archer original

By David Hobbs, former editor of *The Archer*

It is true to say that it is often the sub-editor, rather than the editor, who creates the style of a newspaper and that was certainly true of *The Archer's* chief sub-editor John Dacam, who has died suddenly aged 69.

Part of the team from almost the beginning in 1993, John brought an unerring eye for detail, coupled with an innate ability to bring out the important points of any story and to write sharp and witty headlines. This meant that the finished paper, although the paper was run by volunteers with little knowledge of publishing, was every bit as professional as anything the other, commercial, local newspapers could provide.

The eldest of three children of a serving naval officer, John grew up in Petersfield in Hampshire where he attended Churcher's College. After leaving school he studied business at Farnborough Technical College, then moved to London to work as a commodity broker. He subsequently worked for the London Stock Exchange as a trainer. His job was training LSE personnel on the use of a new share trading system. However, the project was eventually shelved in 1993.

It was during this time that John moved to East Finchley from Buckhurst Hill, where



Original team member: John Dacam was a long-serving sub-editor with *The Archer*

he had previously been living with his then wife, Brenda, and became good friends with *Archer* founder member Kevin Finn, whom he met in Welch's Ale House.

Recruited to *The Archer* team by Kevin, John devoted much of his time to ensuring that the paper met the highest standards. Working under the first three editors, Kevin, Paul Savill and myself he became an essential part of the team as the paper established itself. When I was editor,

I knew that he was always someone I could rely on.

John explored many new ventures during his time in East Finchley. One notable one was the restaurant business he set up in Welch's with Kevin Finn, under the name Fat and Finn. Despite praise for the quality of the food and positive reviews in *The Guardian*, John's insistence on using only the finest ingredients didn't leave much room for profit and the business closed after 10 months.

John continued as the *Archer's* sub-editor and advertising manager until 2001, when he fulfilled a long-held ambition and enrolled to do a history degree at Hull University. The academic life suited him and he stayed to complete a Masters and a doctorate, before going on to work at the university.

He did not lose touch with his friends in East Finchley, regularly coming down to visit Kevin and his family. Kevin described John as being "warm funny and highly intelligent, someone who I was proud to call a friend".

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