



Glorious greenery: Patsy Bailey and John Rance's garden in Muswell Hill will be open for charity again this month

## Open garden season is ready for visitors

By Lynn Winton

Keen gardeners Patsy Bailey and John Rance are once again inviting you into their beautiful Muswell Hill home as part of the National Garden Scheme, to spend an afternoon with at least 16 varieties of homemade cake, a saxophone quartet, an opportunity to stock up on gorgeous plants and a chance to see not one but two lovely gardens. All to raise funds for the caring charities, such as Macmillan Nurses.

"Yes, this year you can visit two gardens for the price of one!" explained Patsy. "I have joined forces with my new neighbour Lucinda Oppenheimer who wanted to take part too."

Patsy and John have invited visitors into their garden for more than ten years. Last year they had 200 visitors and raised an incredible £5,000. As well as potting up plants for the plant sale, Patsy is busy knitting baby clothes and artist daughter

Imogen is making greetings cards.

The two gardens at 17 and 28 Princes Avenue, N10 3LS, will be open on Sunday 18 May from 12pm to 6pm. Combined entry is £6, children free.

### Pottery and cakes

Earlier in the month on Sunday 4 May, another Muswell Hill garden at 5 St Regis Close, Alexandra Park Road, N10, will be open from 2pm to 6.30pm.

Lovingly tended by Susan Bennett and Earl Hyde, visi-

tors will also be able to see their open pottery studio, buy plants and sample home made cakes and teas. Admission is £5, children free and cash preferred. Dogs are welcome on leads. And in East Finchley, Joan Arnold and Tom Heinersdorff's garden at 7 Deansway, N2, will be open on Sunday 11 May from 12.30pm to 5.30pm. Admission is £5, children free.

Find out more about all open gardens at [ngs.org.uk](http://ngs.org.uk)

## Activities for everyone at the Green Man Centre

By Diana Cormack

Have you heard of Capoeira or Krav Magna? Neither had I until I was looking at the timetable of weekly activities at the Green Man Community Centre in Strawberry Vale, N2. Both could be classed as self-defence, the former being a fast-moving Afro-Brazilian martial art and the latter a form of self-defence developed for the Israeli military. Evening classes in both are available.

Possibly almost as active are the table tennis sessions

for the over 50s with daytime sessions twice a week. On a slower scale are the Monday morning yoga sessions and evening community Bingo.

There is also provision for children, with a book club for the home-schooled and Hope youth clubs for the younger and older age groups. On three days a week, Warm Welcomes with free beverages and biscuits are provided.

Saturday afternoons offer a Debt Clinic and meetings on the Windrush Project.

More groups are coming

soon and there is a large meeting room with an office available for sole-use long-term booking. For the full timetable and more information about the centre, visit <https://greenmancentre.org> The local team who run the community centre have many future events planned, some in partnership with estate managers Peabody and with church group Hope North London, starting with VE Day celebrations on Monday 5 May. Strawberry Vale residents are invited to the AGM on Wednesday 28 May from 6.30-7.30pm.

## A new way for children to get close to nature



Story space: The first Children's Nature Circle in Cherry Tree Wood was a big hit with parents and their little ones

By Diana Cormack

The first event in a newly created children's nature circle took place in Cherry Tree Wood beside the playground, where the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have created an area for natural play, with logs and stumps to balance and sit on.

This was the Sunday morning setting on 23 March for a storytelling session for under-eights where they could learn about five birds of the Wood with pictures, songs and stories. Led by Kate Brown, the youngsters learned about the parakeet, magpie, crow, blackbird and nuthatch, even hearing their songs on cue!

Pitched at just the right level and length for the children, it was thoroughly enjoyed by them and the accompanying adults. Keep your eyes open for details of future presentations. The Friends are keen that children and parents feel free to

make use of the space whenever they wish to.

On Saturday 3 May from 11am to 1pm there is a Bioblitz in the park which people of all ages can take part in. Bioblitzes are surveys of a specific area to identify and record as many species of plants, animals, fungi and other wildlife as possible. From wildflowers to mammals, moths and mushrooms, all wildlife counts.

A briefing will be given to parents and children at 11am in the nature circle and then the idea is to go out and seek. Not hide and seek, more like seek and find!

## Forgotten composer

A new East Finchley-based arts group is staging a concert dedicated to the music of Louise Farrenc, an overlooked French composer and virtuoso pianist who died in 1875. Her works include three symphonies and numerous chamber pieces and piano compositions.

The concert takes place at Pond Square Chapel, Highgate Village, on Saturday 31 May at 7pm and features the Marcel Chamber Ensemble, with Sarabande Foundation artist Darcey Fleming, pianist Andrew Campling, soprano Elinor Chapman and readers. Tickets are priced £20 and proceeds will go to the homeless charity Refuge.

Tekla Arts is a collective

comprising professional artists, musicians, actors and teachers, and is the fruit of a collaboration between co-directors Theia Charles and Caroline Soresby on arts projects going back years, including *The Tempest* for Phoenix Theatre in Camden.



Concert artist: Tekla Darcey