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Sedgemere Avenue in the 1950s

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in June prompted Gwen Nutting to drop us a line with her memories of Coronation Day. The photo she sent shows Sedgemere Avenue a year later in 1954, in the days before cars lined both sides of the road, with just a lone milkman plying his round. Gwen writes:

As it is the year of the Diamond Jubilee, I thought I would write a little story. I have lived in Sedgemere Avenue for 63 years. At 86, I believe I am the oldest person in the road and also the only tenant living here at the time of the Coronation.

I remember 2 June 1953 very well. One of our neighbours had a very small television and invited my husband and me to watch the Coronation but, having a young baby, we could not accept the invitation.

We did listen to it on our radio. We did not own a radio in those days but rented one for 2/6 a week from Derwent's in Ballards Lane.

Our next-door neighbour arranged a street party for Coronation Day but sadly it had to be cancelled as it was so cold and wet. We enjoyed the day and our neighbours came to see us when it was all over. The television coverage was wonderful, they told us.

Happy memories of 60 years ago.



North London's new walking trail

By Ann Bronkhorst

A new trail has been launched for walkers from Camden Town via Belsize Park, Hampstead, Hampstead Garden Suburb and East Finchley to Alexandra Palace.

To follow the whole 15-mile trail, passing 500 points of interest, walkers will need some stamina. The route can be tackled in stages, however, guided by five booklets, each with a detailed map and suggestions for refreshment stops. Each walk begins and ends near public transport links.

The Hampstead Heritage Trail is the result of collaboration between several north London amenity groups: the Highgate Society, the Heath & Hampstead Society, the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust and the Hornsey Historical Society.

In June 2011 Richard Webber of the Highgate Society led the way with an idea for a nine-mile circular walk around London's northern heights. The outcome was a route covered in five booklets, all now available in local bookshops.

Other local amenity groups wanted similar information for

their areas and so the Hampstead Heritage Trail was born. Now, armed with a complete set of booklets at £35 (Circular Walk and Heritage Trail) or with booklets for particular sections at £3 or £5, walkers can discover the history, architecture and even the crimes of a large part of north London. The booklets are available from local shops or via www.northernheights.eu



Ted Bagley, wearing Russian Convoy medals and white beret. Photo by Toni Morgan.

Life on the Arctic convoys

By Daphne Chamberlain

Ted Bagley, born in King Street and living in Church Lane since the age of five, has spoken to *THE ARCHER* about his experiences in the Russian Arctic convoys.

In the Second World War, Russian resistance to the invading German army was kept alive by vital supplies brought by the convoys. "We've got a nice surprise for you, lad", Ted was told as he received his draft chit for Russia. Gallows humour indeed, as Ted was dispatched on what Winston Churchill called the hardest journey of all.

Under continuous attack from aircraft and submarines, Ted's boat withstood the onslaught for four days and nights.

At Archangel, they reached a land with temperatures of minus 40 degrees C. Ice on rivers was up to 14 feet thick, and when it was dispersed by explosions, the water level could rise by 20 feet. Dangerous eddies also cracked the surface. Ted kept one door open when driving over a frozen river, as water immersion meant death within three minutes. He wore a sheepskin coat inside out, and learned that ungloved hands froze to metal.

During the 13 months when he inspected and maintained guns brought by the convoys, he learned other things too. He existed mainly on tinned and dried food, but in cities like Leningrad (now St Petersburg), there was hardly a dog, cat or pigeon left, and

people boiled their boots for soup. Ted and his comrades befriended a Husky-type dog, which was stolen and eaten. He says, "People were desperate to feed their families. How do I know I wouldn't have done the same?"

Since the war, Ted and his wife Eve have visited Russia three times with the convoy veterans, where they were welcomed warmly and loaded with presents, and the problem with the food and drink was how to do justice to it. They have seen Remembrance Day celebrations,

where each man who died on the convoys is commemorated by a red balloon, and Ted has spoken to Russian students and schoolchildren, appreciating their "very intelligent and interested response". Recognising the veterans' white berets, passers-by ask to be photographed with them. Among other decorations, Ted has the Arctic Star, presented to him in the Russian Embassy.

He describes it all as "an experience I would not have done without". Ted turned 90 last month.

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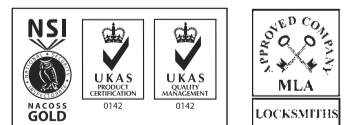
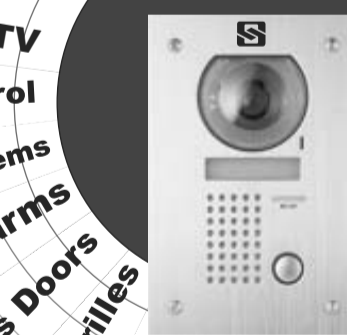
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