



New sounds from the suburb

By John Lawrence

Four years after their debut album and following a pretty turbulent period for their band, Sound of the Suburb have released their second set of songs with a launch party at Maddens scheduled for 3 December.

The music industry cliché of the 'difficult second album' certainly held true for them; not so much writing the songs but getting them recorded. Where their first release was wrapped up in little more than two days, their new work took two years to finish.



A few problems...

Sound of the Suburb have long been audience favourites at the East Finchley Festival, summer and winter, and are still gigging regularly on the pub and private circuits across north London.

But the band has taken a few knocks lately. They parted company with their original singer, soon finding a replacement in David Maraney, and then drummer Mike Solomon was diagnosed with lung cancer, which forced them to adjust their recording and live performance schedule.

Thankfully Mike is still the backbone of the band's high-energy rock 'n' roll sound and it was fitting that 20% of the money they made from the sale of CDs and T-shirts at the Maddens launch gig was given to the Royal Marsden Hospital, where he is being treated.

...but still together

"The album's called *Still Waiting*, which could be a nod to the time it took us to produce it," noted guitarist and lead

songwriter Chris Berlingieri wryly. "The important thing is we're still together as a band and we still get a massive buzz out of recording and performing live."

The five-piece recorded at Bona Fide Studio in Muswell Hill in two sessions almost two years apart. "We're really pleased with the way it's turned out," said Chris. "We spent more time on overdubs and mixing, so it's a bigger fuller sound than our first album."

You can buy *Still Waiting* from Alan's Records, in the High Road, N2, and find it on iTunes, Amazon and Spotify.

Carol appeal

Fancy belting out some carols for a good cause this Christmas? Singers are welcome to join the carol singing at the opening of the Crisis Centre for homeless people at Westminster Kingsway College in Grays Inn Road. The group is open to all singers aged 18 and over.

Organiser Helen Tierney said: "You don't have to read music as we just sing from lyric sheets, although ad hoc harmonies are very welcome! Crisis at Christmas is a really inspiring organisation and the need for the shelters seems to be greater every year."

This year the singers will stand in the foyer and welcome the guests on 23 December from 6-7pm. Contact Helen by 7 December if you are interested. Email: tierneyhelen@hotmail.com or phone 020 8883 2851.



Growing together: left to right, Cllr Brian Salinger with Farida, Zeba and Vegan from Barnet Refugee Service.

Refugees find a haven by getting in touch with nature

A neglected plot at Pointalls Allotments, off Long Lane, has been turned into a garden full of flowers and vegetables, bringing not only colour and fresh produce but also helping refugees to improve their mental and physical wellbeing.

More than 30 people aged from 20 to 70 are taking part in the Sowing Seeds Therapy Project, set up by the Barnet Refugee Service with the aim of integrating refugees into the local community.

They have been so successful that they have just been awarded the Ted Green Award Memorial Cup at the Barnet Allotment Federation (BAF) annual prize-giving celebration. The award was presented by Councillor Brian Salinger, who praised the project and the health benefits that allotments give citizens across the borough.

One year's achievement

Donald Lyven, of Pointalls Allotments, said: "The project has already achieved so much in just one year. We've had a lot of interest from people who are amongst the most vulnerable and marginalised groups in society. This project has enabled them to connect with nature and has boosted their mood and self-esteem."

"One refugee was a farmer in his home country. He has supervised the gardening sessions and has run practical training sessions on the plot. Others help with the day-to-day running

of the project and support clients, providing translation and educational services as well as organising refreshments."

The Memorial Cup was set up in memory of Ted Green, who was a stalwart of the Barnet allotment scene for over 25 years and who sadly died a couple of years ago. He was a long-standing Secretary of The Barnet Allotment Federation, which acts as an umbrella body for all the allotment sites in Barnet, and helped create thriving and prosperous allotment gardening in the borough.

A step back in time to our fascinating past

By Kate Brown

***Pigs, Pubs and People* was the lively title of the history walk held as part of the East Finchley Arts Festival back in October. We still have a good range of pubs and people but no pigs as far as we know.**

The walk was led by John Pickering, former deputy head-teacher at Martin Primary School, and it was a great turn out.

Highwaymen first ...

The walk began along the High Road and we were taken back in time to when the whole area was part of Finchley Common. We were encouraged to imagine a gibbet near the junction of Lincoln Road and the High Road. This was where the bodies of highwaymen who had been hung at Tyburn were displayed as a deterrent to other robbers.

We proceeded down to the Phoenix Cinema and our talk was enlivened by local residents

who could remember the cinema as children. Then we stopped at the tube station and were told the story of why the Archer statue has no arrow as this was originally displayed at Morden at the end of the line (sadly no longer, as it was stolen).

We contemplated when Cherry Tree Wood was Dirt House Wood and the night soil of London was deposited there and when the workmen stopped at The Dirt House (now the Old White Lion) for a drink. On to the Bobath Centre, where readers can find the fascinating story of that building on the new display plaque recently put there by the Finchley Society.

... and pigs at last

The final section of the walk took us via the historic hog market, once one of the largest in England, where the only remaining evidence is in the street name Market Place. More recent history was captured in sections of the walk around Prospect Ring, King Street, and the Grange Estate, not forgetting East Finchley's industrial history when CAV Ltd, part of Lucas Industries, had a massive factory complex near Oak Lane.

John's very comprehensive historical picture helped us to study the local area with new eyes.

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