

# MUM'S THE WORD



By Gigi Eligoloff of Mums Rock

**S**O PANTO season is heading our way. Oh no it isn't! (...sorry, couldn't resist.)

And hot news in H&F is the return of the panto after 30 years to our very own Lyric theatre in Hammersmith.

Having dragged my son along to previous 'children's productions' there I'm not exactly sure what to expect. The show we experienced involved two grown-ups wandering around the stage mainly saying shush and telling parents to drag their inquisitive toddlers back to their seat/bean-bags.

Surely that's just the same as being at home for the kids? Without the benefit of CBeebies.

It was also completely ruined by a seemingly sane mummy screaming at her son after what was probably his third or fourth mini-misdemeanour. Talk about killing the mood.

Which brings me neatly to the issue of discipline or lack of it in public places, something I am very aware of, having a

'boisterous' three-year-old who likes nothing better than either racing away from me at every opportunity or recreating the tantrum in a supermarket advert. Without the funny ending (I may have a sense of humour - but nobody gets me horizontal in Tesco).

Tweeting this week about a rhythm class for the under twos, one mummy-tweeter recounted a horrible moment where one mother actually smacked her child in front of everyone. And nobody said anything.

Now, we all lose our tempers with our children. It's what lets them know there are limits to their attempted rebellions. And it also gives us mums a good excuse to dump them with their dads. And spend some quality time in the Topshop changing rooms pretending to be Kate Moss.

Or is that just me?

If only we could call in the spirit of panto to defuse the odd wrangled temper.

Admittedly, shouting 'He's behind you' to anyone holding a firearm probably isn't the right way to go. But sending in a comedy cow who's yodelling a Cheeky Girls classic might be just what we need to drag many a mother-on-the-edge back to sanity.

Columnist Gigi Eligoloff is the founder of Mums Rock, a digital 'drop-in' site for all independently-minded mums and dads. She lives in West Kensington. Visit: [www.mumsrock.com](http://www.mumsrock.com)

**MUMSROCK**

## From the Archives Former Royal Masonic Hospital

► If you like 1930s design you will love this award-winning former hospital in Ravenscourt Park, writes Jane Kimber

**THE former Royal Masonic Hospital in Ravenscourt Park is one of the most handsome 1930s buildings in the borough.**

The idea for a hospital for freemasons was first put forward in 1911. It was a completely new venture as any charges made were to be based on the patients' means. By 1916 enough money had been raised to buy the former Chelsea Women's Hospital at 237 Fulham Road. The building was initially used as a hospital for wounded servicemen and was known as the Freemasons' War Hospital. After the war it was renovated and renamed the Freemasons' Hospital and Nursing Home, receiving its first 'masonic' patient in June 1920.

By 1929 demand for treatment had created the need for a larger hospital and an appeal was launched. This resulted in the building of the Royal Masonic Hospital at Ravenscourt Park, which was opened and named by King George V on July 12, 1933. The Fulham Road hospital was sold in 1937 and the proceeds contributed to the building



A REAL THIRTIES CLASSIC: The former Royal Masonic Hospital in Ravenscourt Park

of a nurses' home at Ravenscourt Park, opened by the Princess Royal in 1938.

The Royal Masonic Hospital was designed by the architectural firm of Sir John Burnet, Tait and Lorne, and won the RIBA medal in 1934. It remains one of London's pioneering and best examples of the modern international style, and is statutorily listed Grade II. Burnet, Tait and Lorne also built the Grade

II-listed Burlington School in Wood Lane in 1936.

The hospital's red brick exterior combines straight

lines with spectacular curved balconies. The large concrete relief figures at third-floor level above the entrance were sculpted by Gilbert Bayes in 1933, and represent Hebe, the goddess of youth, and Aesculapius, the god of medicine. Inside, the marble floors, windows with carved glass, light fittings, lift doors and furniture were all designed in classic 1930s style.

During the Second World War the hospital

donated a major part of its services to the war effort and more than 8,000 officers were treated there. After the war the hospital opened a training school for nurses.

In December 1958 the Queen Mother opened the new Wakefield Wing, which included physiotherapy and pathology departments, nurses' accommodation and a chapel. A new surgical wing was opened by the Duke of Kent in December 1976. In the 1980s there was much debate about the future of the Royal Masonic Hospital. Eventually it was sold in 1996 and re-opened two years later as an independent hospital called The Stamford.

It became an NHS hospital in May 2002 under the new name of Ravenscourt Park Hospital, offering a limited range of surgery (intended to reduce waiting lists) and excellent facilities, but closed in 2006 due to insufficient numbers of patients. The building was then sub-let to an organisation with plans to refurbish the building and continue its use as a hospital.

● Have you got a local history question? Email: [handfnews@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:handfnews@lbhf.gov.uk)

● The H&F Archives and Local History Centre is open to the public and is at The Lilla Huset, 191 Talgarth Road, Hammersmith. Call 020 8741 5159.



The former hospital is one of the most handsome 1930s buildings in the borough

## Your shout

# History lesson is right up my street in idle moments



BY DIGBY WARDE-ALDAM

PERHAPS (in fact, certainly) I flatter myself by writing this, but my regular readers may have noticed that I have been unusually absent from these pages in recent weeks.

Well, I can explain. Firstly, I've been going through hell trying to sort

out some kind of arrangement for living and working in France, where I am annoyingly obliged to move next year.

Secondly, I've been down with the flu again. Third, and most disruptively, I've been overseeing a facelift on my Fulham house. As I write, builders are putting the finishing touches to my revamped apartment, and should all go to plan (it won't), I'll be able to resume life as normal soon.

I've been getting interested recently in the idea of places of memory, the idea of a body designating significance to certain areas in order to remember its history in a manner that pleases it.

I suppose it's the sort of pretentious distraction that comes hand in hand with doing a French degree (check out the names of the stations on the map of the Paris Metro: all the great and good of France's history are there, but for some reason, no mention of Pierre Laval...), but it keeps my brain from freezing in those myriad idle moments that accompany a humanities degree. In London, we don't have this

culture. Of course, there is Trafalgar Square (noticeably absent from Paris' street map - ahem) and Waterloo (oh God, when will this spontaneous expression of disdain for my future hosts end?).

But otherwise, it seems there are only three forms of appellation for a London street.

● In my quarter, at least, everything is named after the unscrupulous Victorian property developers who funded the building of the cramped workers' terraces that stretch from Parsons Green to Shepherds Bush

(the exceptions being the Clem Attlee estate and Marcus Garvey Park).

● A prosaic description of the locality of a certain road will lead to Wandsworth Bridge Road or Shepherds Bush Road.

● A thoroughfare describing some sort of historical trade. This is common further east, but as most of our locality was constructed as a suburb towards the end of the 19th century, this doesn't really happen in H&F.

Whatever the case may be here in London, I am now contemplating a future without my own historical topography. The spot where my friend John had his eyebrows shaved off in drunken delirium (not by me, I hasten to add) is now a wall, for example. Many of my favourite memories have now been subsumed by bricks and mortar and I'm still arguing with the plumber about his work.

Oh well. I suppose in order to get my bearings around this brave new flat, I'll have to host a lot more parties...



Many of my favourite memories have been subsumed by bricks and mortar

# Letters to the Editor

We want to hear from you! Send your letters to: h&f news, Hammersmith Town Hall, Room 39, London W6 9JU. Email: handfnews@lbhf.gov.uk  
The Editor reserves the right to edit letters. Anonymous letters will not be considered but names and addresses can be withheld upon request

## Recalling theatres and cinemas of yesteryear

I AM trying to trace the fate of some old cinemas/theatres that I can remember from my youth in the early 50s:

1. The 'Shilling Theatre' which stood on the block next to the Travelodge on Putney Bridge.
2. An old 'fleapit' of a cinema in Walham Green underground station.
3. A cinema in King Street somewhere between Hammersmith Broadway and the Town Hall
4. The two cinemas in Fulham Broadway, one of which was on the Waitrose site and the other is/was the other side of the church.
5. The Broadway (Regal?) which was on what is now the A4/M4 exit from the Broadway.

Any information would be gratefully received.

**John C Kent**  
Harbord Street  
Fulham

• If you can help John, contact him on [jtckent@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jtckent@yahoo.co.uk)

## Flanchford's war record reveals bombing raid

Re: David Millar's query (November 3) about any bombs being dropped on Flanchford Road, Shepherds Bush  
THE Metropolitan Borough of Hammersmith Air Raid Incident Register records that on the night of October 8, 1940, between 21.21 and 22.00 hours, 38 incendiary bombs were dropped on a number of streets, one being Flanchford Road.

The London County Council Bomb Damage Map shows No 44 Flanchford Road in the colour dark red, indicating that the property was seriously damaged and it was doubtful if it was repairable.

**Anne Wheeldon**  
H&F Archives and  
Local History Centre  
The Lilla Huset  
Talgarth Road  
Hammersmith

## For a library, it's rather short of the obvious...

I VERY much like the new Shepherds Bush Library building at Westfield, but I feel it's let down by the lack of books - especially in the children's section.

The old library had a really large selection of kids' books, shelf after shelf, and none of these books seems to have made the move to Wood Lane. What we have now is a bunch of empty shelves.

If this is due to the success of the new building and the many new library members, maybe H&F Council should be buying even more new books to make the library even more popular?

**Blair Halliday**  
Via email

• News story with the council's reply, p11

## Reduction in council tax deserves congratulation

I WOULD just like to congratulate H&F Council on (hopefully) managing yet another reduction in our council tax bills (Council tax bills ready to be cut again by three per cent, November 3)

It is a significant achievement and much



HANGING OUT:  
A squirrel investigates Shepherds Bush Green from the safety of a tree

PICTURE BY LEIGH QUINNELL

appreciated at a time when every other form of taxation is going in the opposite direction.

**Robin Wrench**  
Via email

## Further cut 'irresponsible' and services will suffer

H&F Council is being completely irresponsible in cutting council tax yet again (Council tax bills ready to be cut again by three per cent). Public services are already suffering.

They will now suffer again. Your Children's Services department? There soon won't be any.

The council should be ashamed of itself.

**Julie James**  
Via email

## Good for the public to ask tough questions of council

FOLLOWING last week's Borough Summit at Hammersmith Town Hall (Leader in hot set as council policy is top topic of debate, See page 6) I would like to thank everyone involved in this debate for making our local democracy open to questioning.

There are some interesting future developments, especially around our health services locally.

I would, however, like to ask how we recruit more individuals on our local panels, especially from businesses, as we have plenty of support from the public and third sector, it is difficult to encourage our private sector to send representatives, unless it is

on issues requiring a response generated through matters like notices or planning permission that may have an impact.

We as always have a lot of interest in issues of crime and associated antisocial behaviour, we need to attract some of our local business entrepreneurs to add to the wealth of knowledge we have already.

**John Ryan**  
Via email

## Beautiful sculptures could make parks best in London

I AM interested to know about the purchasing policy for sculpture for public places in the borough and would be very pleased if you could advise me about it.

While I think its wonderful that we may get a beach in Bishop's Park (see page 10) and all the effort that is made to make beautiful play spaces in Hammersmith & Fulham, I wonder if we could also invest in some sculpture for our parks.

For some residents beauty is more important than function and if you look at the greatest parks in London or in the world they all have beautiful sculptures in them.

I think it would be a great addition to making this borough the smartest in London.

**Sarah Hyde**  
Via email

**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**  
Email: [handfnews@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:handfnews@lbhf.gov.uk)

## CONTACT THE COUNCIL

**H&F DIRECT CENTRE**  
Call 0845 803 1020 (local rate)

**COUNCIL TAX & BENEFITS** (call Monday-Friday, 8am-6.30pm)  
Addresses beginning with: Email contact:  
A or B.....AtoB@lbhf.gov.uk  
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(call Monday-Friday, 8am-8pm)  
Email: [cleaner.greener@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:cleaner.greener@lbhf.gov.uk)  
Refuse collections, street cleaning, noise, dog fouling, flytipping, recycling, bulky waste collections, graffiti, abandoned cars

**ENVIRONMENT**.....020 8753 1081  
(call Monday-Friday, 9am-8pm)  
Email: [environment@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:environment@lbhf.gov.uk)  
Trading standards, environmental protection, pest control, building control, licensing, highways, planning applications

**ELECTORAL SERVICES**.....020 8753 4466  
(call Monday-Friday, 9am-8pm)  
Email: [electoral.services@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.services@lbhf.gov.uk)

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**HOUSING MANAGEMENT SERVICES (H&F HOMES) AREA OFFICES:**  
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.....[h&fHome-Buy@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:h&fHome-Buy@lbhf.gov.uk)  
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Direct Lettings.....020 8753 4166  
Threshold housing advice (voluntary agency).....020 8749 2925  
Private housing services .....020 8753 1221

**ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES**  
Drugs & alcohol team.....020 7381 7757

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES**  
Sawley Road.....020 8753 5269  
Barclay House .....020 8753 5842

**RESIDENTS' SERVICES**  
24hr libraries phone line.....020 8753 2400  
Registrars (births, deaths and marriages).....020 8753 2438  
Hall hire and the events team.....0845 337 0314  
.....[events@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:events@lbhf.gov.uk)  
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**OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS**  
Emergency out of hours (24 hours) .....020 8748 8588  
Parking services (fines etc).....020 7371 5678  
Corporate anti-fraud service.....020 8753 1273  
Out of hours noise nuisance.....020 8748 8588  
Shepherds Bush advice centre.....020 8753 5913  
H&F Citizens Advice Bureau.....0845 4582515

A black and white photograph of a woman with her hair in a bun, looking down at a large teddy bear she is holding. The background is a solid yellow color.

# Do you receive child benefit?

**From 2 November 2009, we will disregard the full amount of child benefit when calculating your entitlement to housing benefit and council tax benefit.**

Therefore if you applied for housing benefit/council tax benefit in the past but were not entitled, as your income was too high, we would advise you to apply now.

**H&F Direct Benefits Service  
Town Hall Extension  
King Street, London W6 9JU  
Phone 0845 8031020**