

HARPENDIA

PEOPLE, CULTURE & NEWS

SUMMER 09

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Welcome to HARPENDIA Summer

Exclusive fashion articles...healthy eating...a wine maker from OZ...art gallery tours ... Find out what's really happening in Harpenden.

Reader response to the first edition published in May was very positive, so I am pleased to continue the style and format with the Summer edition. The main feature concentrates on the fashion business which is thriving thanks to so many talented Harpenden people. Several articles are EXCLUSIVES, covering diverse aspects of the business, all of which I think you will find fascinating.

For those of you new to **HARPENDIA**, it is distributed quarterly via

e mail in pdf format which makes it environmentally friendly, leaving no clutter, and best of all it is completely **free of charge** so please forward it on to your friends, family and all your network connections.

HARPENDIA will be published quarterly with each issue featuring a balanced blend of articles, features and interviews on a wide range of subjects.

So if you have a story to tell or a newsworthy item with genuine appeal then contact

the Editor and if it meets the criteria of a forthcoming issue your story could be featured.

I hope you enjoy the second issue. The Autumn issue will be published in late October and our web site will now be live in mid August.

Enjoy what's left of the Summer!

Ron Taylor. Editor
info@harpendingia.com



The Uma Thurman photo shoot in New York for Harper's Bazaar. Read the inside story, exclusively in HARPENDIA.



Introducing Tom Usher

Art Director of Harper's Bazaar

Tom Usher 36 is a Harpenden born graphic designer having worked in the creative industries for over 15 years. In recent years he has been responsible for the transformation of FHM, Arena and recently Harper's Bazaar to award winning magazines. Tom's skill lies in his ability to understand the psychology of the magazine readers and translate that

into an emotionally stimulating creative design that not only sells hard copies to consumers but also provides a vehicle for the editorial team to generate exciting content every month.

Check out the Harper's Bazaar web site for all the latest fashion news.

www.harpersbazaar.com

Uma Thurman's New York Photo Shoot

I met up with Tom recently to discuss how he approached the task of a major photo shoot in New York with Uma Thurman, one of the world's top actors.

I guess this photo shoot was pretty high profile, how did it originate?

We try to shoot celebrities instead of models for the cover when we can as they usually sell more on the newsstand. As with Uma she's one of the hottest stars at the moment so we thought she was a good idea.

The planning process must be very complicated, can you explain the key elements?

Firstly we decide on who we want to be on the issue. We'll pitch our concept to her publicist, In this instance it was our july issue so we wanted it to feel hot and summery. Once it's agreed to go ahead I'll approach a photographer and talk him through the ideas. We'll meet up and go over references of old shoots to get a feel for how we want the pictures and cover to look.. The next step is to get a fashion stylist involved with the clothes choices. At this stage I hand it over to my production director to find the right location and sort out all the travel arrangements.

The choice of photographer must have been crucial?

It is. We work very hard to keep a great pool of photographers that just shoot cover stories for Bazaar. We are in great position to use the world's best photographers because they know their pictures will look amazing in the magazine.

What is your role as the Art Director?

I'll come up with concept for the story and then on the day of the shoot ensure we are getting the right look out from the pictures by directing the photographer on lighting and composition and the celebrity with their poses. I need to make sure that the cover image is the best shot and that it works as a commercial cover that will sell. Once the pictures have been shot I'll lay them out in the magazine and design the feature and cover.

How was the location selected and how long did you plan for the shoot?

I'll go through a location company and they'll send me images of different locations prior to shoot for me to select. On this occasion it was on a rooftop in New York

Who had the responsibility for choosing the clothes and accessories?

The stylist but working with me on the day to make sure they look good on.



Check out the July issue above and see the results of all the hard work by the Harper's team.

Did you meet Uma prior to the shoot for a briefing?

No we met on the morning to go through the clothes and concept.

Did Uma have any "Diva" requests?

No she was very sweet. She did offer to buy the location as she fell in love with it.

On the day who looked after make up and fittings etc?

We have a make up artist and hair stylist on the set.

How easy/difficult was it to work with Uma---did she have an entourage to look after her?

She came on her own after she had dropped her kid off at school. It's all very low key.

How many people were on the set and what duties did they perform?

Photographer and a couple of assistants, hair, make-up, stylist, and me oh and her publicist who's there to make sure she was happy with it all.

Did you socialise with Uma after the shoot?

No. Back to the hotel and then home the next day.

How were the images selected for magazine feature?

The photographer will email me a choice of about 5 for each shot and then I'll sit with my editor and pick the ones we want for the magazine

How about any gossip Tom?

I couldn't possibly tell you. I'm far too professional!



Making my career in fashion journalism

By Elizabeth Lucy Richardson

My penchant for exquisite fashion design began long before my first foray into fashion week. It began even before watching stylists tweak the silky drapes swathing a model. Peering through the glass at the Victoria and Albert Museum at the timeless elegance of Christian Dior's early couture could make even the most sceptical of fashion's critics admit to the power of beautiful clothing envisioned by the greatest designers.

Pouring dreamily over the glossy pages of Vogue and admiring the extensive knowledge of fashion of writer Suzy Menkes only served to convince me further that I should pursue a career in fashion journalism.

After gaining my BA in History, I secured place on the MA Fashion at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design. A college which occupies an austere building on Charing Cross Road, the grey exterior belying the wealth of creativity it houses and the inimitable roll-call of internationally successful alumni it boasts.

In a small room tucked away from the design studios I found seven other students, from as far as Singapore and India, with the same aspirations. Together we explored the library's Vogue archives, from the iconic American Vogues of Diana Vreeland's editorship in the 60s to the hypnotic styling of Carine Roitfeld's Vogue Paris. We experimented with street style photography, endeavoured to improve our writing and tried to make our names heard above the hubbub of the industry. Last February, the chance to be the London Contributor for an alumni's journal, Dossier, run out of

New York, presented itself to me. This opportunity gave me the chance to attend my first London fashion week. Known within the industry as the most creative and iconoclastic of all four fashion capitals, London Fashion Week celebrates its 25th birthday this year. The careers of world renowned fashion designers such as Alexander McQueen and John Galiano, to name two of Central Saint Martins' most celebrated alumni, have been launched from this platform. Running between shows and peering from my lowly fourth row seat at the directional fashion editors of the British press was endlessly exciting.

For the months running up to fashion week I had been charting the progress of one of the latest young designers to present his collection to the world press. With sculpted pieces, built in cobalt blue duchess satin and silk, he presented a unique vision of modern elegance. I watched as the reviews rolled in, knowing the true inspiration and level of dedication that had produced that collection.

Being a fashion journalist means having a constant curiosity for the zeitgeist, a love of mesmerizing images of everything from street style to luxury fashion, and a desire to translate the language of fashion design into savvy and relevant copy. I have yet to decide upon my niche within the industry, but for now I look for further opportunities to paint arresting vignettes of a world which I have admired for so long.

Photo captions: *Top left: MA Journalists lent a hand at the MA show during London fashion week. Top right: The Sinha-Stanic A/W 2009/10 show. Bottom left: My view of the MA show during fashion week. Bottom right: Oden Wilson's line up of his graduate collection.*



AT LAST..... DESIGNER GEAR FOR MEN IN HARPENDEN

Until now Harpenden men have been starved by the lack of a fashion boutique with main line designer brands. Now thanks to the owners of Purple there is a superb new store just off the High Street at 1 The Forresters only a few yards from Oui Set and Ladbrokes.

It carries a wide range of clothes from Armani, Hugo Boss, Gant, Lacoste, Nicole Farhi, Ralph Lauren and Stone Island. Plus Mulberry leather accessories, Welder fashion watches, and a small selection of shoes from Puma Black Label and Hugo Boss. There is also a large choice of Hugo Boss Super 100 all wool suits, matched with formal shirts, ties and blouses.



Opening night celebration above with Purple Directors:

Duncan Michie (left), Andy Michie and Paul Monks (right)

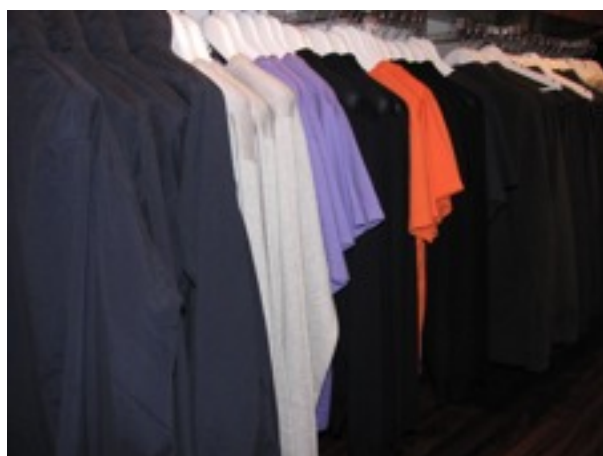
The owners of Purple are experienced fashion operators having stores in Hemel Hempstead and Slough for 25 years, so they know a thing or two about the business and pride themselves on offering exceptional service with good value for money. Take a look round their store and you may have difficulty choosing the style and colour that suits you.

No need to worry as Paul and his staff will recommend what's best for you. And as a bonus there is no charge for shortening jeans or suit trousers.

The store itself is a haven of quality with air conditioning, chilled out music and easy to see racks and shelves of clothes. If you plan to stay a while to buy your clothes then indulge in a cup of freshly brewed coffee. Open Mon - Fri. 9.30 - 5.30 & 9.30 - 6.00 Saturday.

New stock is constantly being introduced into the store as lines sell out and the seasons change. Have a chat at any time with Paul Monks the Store Manager and Business Director to find out what's new.

Purple, 1 The Forresters, High Street, Harpenden. AL5 2FB. 01582 763791. "www.purplefashion.co.uk"
(on line from early September)



The talent behind the glamour- Pattern cutters

Have you ever wondered how a fashion designer's dreams are turned into the reality of a finished garment?

It's all down to the skills of the pattern cutter who translate the original concept via several stages into workable fabric modules that are stitched together to create the finished masterpiece.

Harpenden's **Maureen Yvonne** is one of the best in the business having studied at the prestigious London Arts University and Central St. Martins where she gained a BA Honours in Fashion, a Post Graduate Certificate in Innovative Pattern Cutting and an HND in Clothing Technology from the University of Creative Arts in Rochester, Kent.

Maureen has previously trained, partnered and worked alongside some of Europe's best tailors, designers and fashion show co-coordinators.

As a design room assistant for the infamous Mr. ANT who operated as a private label in Shubette of London, plus the hands on training obtained and knowledge gained from the mentorship with the "British Bespoke Royal Tailor, with a Royal Warrant for H.R.H the Queen" G.D. Golding.

However it doesn't stop there, Maureen has always enjoyed the highlights of dressing models backstage at numerous fashion shows for the likes of Custo Barcelona, Swimwear designer Melissa Odabash, International designer Giles Deacon, Stylist Katie Burnett and more recently up and coming designer Jade Kang of Kangst for his Autumn/Winter 2009 to 2010 collection shown at the Vauxhall Scout Fashion Week and Maureen



was called upon for her expertise in the contribution to Kangst collection as their in house innovative pattern cutter.

Not one to be restricted to just fashion, Maureen is also a qualified make-up artist which provides for an excellent ability to complete the perfect look from head to toe, textile to cosmetics, when designing her collections and consulting the image of her clients.

Whilst working alongside GMTV's Mark Heyes (stylist to Lorraine Kelly), the event called "Ethical Fashion and Conscious Style Event at the Victoria and Albert Museum". Her role was to deconstruct to reconstruct an old denim outfit as new, in stages to inspire and teach the general public.

3rd Dimension (3rd 4 Records), have also requested Maureen Yvonne, as the chief fashion designer, pattern cutter and tailor for their Signed Artists Debut release in 2009.

Maureen Yvonne currently works as a freelance fashion designer and an elitist innovative pattern cutter in her own fashion business **MYR**.



MyR

ASKMYR.CO.UK

Maureen Yvonne
Fashion Designer &
Stylist

0709 229 2098

FROM CONCEPT TO THE CATWALK

Now geared up with her collection called **“Dynamisme”**, **Maureen Yvonne** is focused with excitement about creating and completing another of her collections, which she is hoping to launch her range early 2010. I asked Maureen to describe how her skills are used in the creation of a new collection.

Primary Stages of a Fashion Cycle!

The catwalk for many spectators and on lookers can be perceived as an illustrious and grandiose exposé displaying the ultimate finale of a great artist's handiwork. However if you are curious enough to look beyond the glitz and glamour, you can see what was once a fresh canvas, with nothing but the few strokes of a paintbrush or in my case a power point tool.

To an end there is always a beginning. Where there is a catwalk, you can be sure there is a wow factor concept, which is broken down and dissected into stages for a complete cycle.



Design Research

For all of your initial designs, you will need to collate research. I began my research by visiting fabric fairs; my choice was Paris Premiere Vision. The best research indeed for the types of fibre, fabric and trimmings can be completed at a fabric fare.



Choice of Inspiration

Primarily with any collection or basic design you should have a source for your inspiration, with a relative historical reference. So now you have your inspiration for creativity, you can start by selecting the season for your collection. I chose to use the autumn and winter season and researched several current international designers' collections in combination with visits to the Victoria and Albert Museum as historical reference.

Pattern Development

Both the sample pattern cutter and machinist will work closely with the designer to create toiles. I however also used the samples of my drawings and used them as flat patterns to be draped on to my dressmaker's dummy. Several of these toiles were made then corrected and final fabrics selected. The quilt was then machine stitched with parallel lines before applying the dye, after which this process was completed by attaching the pattern pieces onto the fabric, to be cut with fabric shears and then stitched into a coat.



Equipment

So you have come this far but it is very important for a great design studio to have a pattern cutting table, that is grafted to a reasonable height so you can work standing up. The Pattern Cutting Table must be wide enough for the widths of fabrics that you are using. The Pattern Cutting Table is used for drafting patterns and cutting out the sample in your chosen fabrics. With my collection, I wanted to use the best machinery available to me. This included the industry standard over locking machine, buttonhole machine, the flat bed straight stitch machine and of course a good old steam iron.

What makes a great garment successful?

I would say all of the above, and most of all how it fits on the real body. Seams, darts and facing are pressed with a jet steam while the outfit is sewn. My labels & swing tags are added for a professional look, and finally I acquired a professional photographer to take shots of my models in all the outfits I created, then my clothes were ready for the catwalk.

oui

THE FASHION FRIENDLY STORE

Fiona Grant interview with the Editor

What is the ethos of the brand

Oui embodies the 'language of women's fashion', in a symbiosis of French styling, Italian aesthetics and German expertise whilst still being unique. This is where art, design and expression fuse together and gives the WOW factor that fashion needs. Oui has a contemporary design which underlines every personality of a modern woman no matter what her age. Quality is the top premise and a harmony of contrasts and colours contribute to give our ladies an individual style.

How would you define the Oui image

Oui offers contemporary ladies fashion collection from sizes 8 to 20. The collection has many different facets which enables our customer to buy into an individual capsule wardrobe or just the one off WOW pieces. To complete the look we are stockists of Dyrberg/Kern jewellery and Osprey fine handbags.

With all of us enjoying this long hot summer shouldn't your store still be full of summer stock.

Although Autumn deliveries are arriving in fast they have now been designed to be worn as soon as they are delivered. The first deliveries mainly consist of beautifully cut short sleeve dresses perfect with sandals for our hot



summers or with boots and opaque tights when our autumn finally arrives. It may seem strange that autumn collections are being delivered now and spring start arriving in November but it makes the shop very exciting as there is always something new to look at and indulge. I think the future will be less season derived and our customers will embrace the new collections as and when they arrive. We have deliveries every 10 days which always generates a buzz.

When did you start the buying process for Autumn/Winter

We start buying approximately 7 months in advance and we visit the London showroom 3 times a season. It is always very exciting to see what the

new design trends are. This also helps us guide our customers on which pieces are best for them to buy to extend their capsule wardrobe out of the current collections in store.

How do you decide what is going to be fashionable

Buyers do not really decide what is going to be fashionable. The trends come from the fabric designers who are first in the design chain, coupled with the forecast analysts who predict shape and form. Then the designers from the different brands start designing with the fabrics they can purchase, whilst using the predicted shape/form. The Oui designers then put their mark on the underlying trends predicted in order to produce their collection.



Fiona Grant owner of Oui talks about her store.

How long have Oui been established in Harpenden

I opened Oui as a family business over 14 years ago with my mother Pam. I graduated from London College of Fashion with BA (Hons) in Clothing and had always dreamed about running my own retail business. Our staff have also a wealth of experience including a Colour

Analyst, and Graduate from Harrods Retail. We believe in making fashion fun but always with the upmost professionalism. Our warm, relaxed atmosphere hopefully is always inviting and everyone is welcome to browse the latest collections or have a personalised shopping experience. We offer next day service on alterations and special orders within 3 days.

Oui' 14 Bowers Parade, Harpenden. 01582 766142

ouiset

DRAPERS AWARD "BRAND OF THE YEAR"

This special accolade was awarded to Oui'-Set in Harpenden for Brand of The Year, voted by the fashion industry.

What influences your decisions

We buy from a design led collection and I notice the main trends very quickly. Then I buy the collection in a way that I think my customers would like to wear it whilst always pushing the trends forward. Fashion should be fun and never remain static.

Are the fashion magazines a good guide

Yes, Vogue always show the latest trends from the top designers. Those trends diffuse down through the fashion hierarchy.

What about Fashion on TV

I love Gok Wan for his passion for fashion and he is a true stylist born and bred, not a television presenter who have stylists backing them up. He also loves the female form and boosts ladies self esteem. I feel it is so important for us to celebrate the female form as we all come in different shapes and sizes. I think it would be devastating if we all end up looking like each other. Individuality reigns.

Also I adore Mary Portas as she proves that retail can be difficult but the majority of retail and sales

assistants are in the business because they want to help and be supportive and friendly to their customers. She proves that relationships between retailers and customer are paramount. I am so appreciative when a customer tells me exactly what they want if we haven't got it as it allows me to be proactive in searching for that item and sourcing it for them. Customer service is paramount for all businesses.

How do you market the new range to your customers

We mail shot our customers when the new collections start to arrive often offering a late night champagne reception evening. A fantastic girly night, we all chat, laugh, drink champagne, eat chocolate and have fun with fashion. We also have a wish list and telephone our customers when their must have items have arrived. Window displays are very important and fashion shows can help enormously.

In such a competitive local market what is the secret of your success.

It's a combination of a fantastic collection mixed with excellent customer service. We always have WOW pieces which may be slightly more expensive but if your budget allows are amazing. Most important we have fun with our customers and try to make everyone feel special.

CREATE A STIR WITH LOUNGE LOVERS

What is going to be the "must have" item for the Autumn

Two main trends for autumn, the 'Dress' and 'Lounge Lovers'. The dress is so versatile; wear with sandals now, boots later, glam up with the latest Dyrberg/Kern statement piece for cocktail wear, or a chunky cardigan for the school run. Then the latest



trend 'Lounge Lovers' which is a collection of beautiful cashmere mix cardigans and dresses, ideal for lounging out at home in front of a roaring fire reading the papers, playing with the children, or having friends round for Sunday lunch.

Pictured left. Pam Grant, Helen McNicholas (centre) and Fiona Grant





Top left:
A Ferrari 360 Modena F1 which is a 3.6 litre normally asperated engine pushing 400hp. It's a 2000 model year with Ferrari race wheels, Scudera Shields on the front wings, F1 paddle shift gear box, full race seats and harness seat belts and a high performance Capristo exhaust system. The 360 will achieve a top speed over 190MPH and 0 to 60 in 4 seconds. Owned by John Hanley. Featured with Tammi Harris. Plus lots of other classic cars on the Common.



Champagne beating Bubbly from Harpenden

Islay Kennedy (below right) interviewed by the Editor

Unbelievable but true, the Griffith Park Sparkling Rose won a bronze medal in the 2009 International Wine Challenge and was the best value sparkling rose in the competition to win a medal at this level, matching many big priced medal winning brands including Lanson Rose and Charles Heidsieck Rose Millesime, costing more than twice the price.

It's available now from Asda and Morrisons at the incredible price of £6.99* and it's the work of Harpenden wine maker Islay Kennedy, the founder of Griffith Park.

I wanted to find out how a small family business in Harpenden achieved distribution in the top supermarkets so I arranged to meet Islay over a glass of her sparkling rose.



What did you do to secure meetings with the supermarket buyers?

Having been in the UK wine trade and established as an Australian Wine Specialist for nearly 20 years I know all the key wine buyers so knew who to talk to. It always helps if you also know the wines the buyer could be interested in stocking as no point in trying to sell them a wine they already have on their shelves.

How did you "sell in" Griffith Park and secure shelf space?

I worked out that there was a gap in the UK market for a quality but inexpensive Australian sparkling wine as in 2007 there was very little choice for consumers apart from expensive champagnes and Cava's – this has now changed as new products have seen the gap also and extended their still wine range to include sparkling. But we were first to market with an offer of quality and price.

Did you have a mini wine tasting to prove how good your wine is?

We sent samples in to the wine buyer at Morrisons who tasted it in comparison with their competitive brands and then approved our brand.

How important was the branding.

The label design was crucial to our success with Morrisons who wanted a label with a "WOW" factor. We briefed 4 Design groups to come up with an exciting concept. During a six month period the concepts were presented and reviewed before the final decision was made.

Were their supply chain requirements daunting?

Not really as we have supplied all the large companies in the UK wine in one form or another over the years.

Did you have a marketing campaign in place to support the brand?

We have identified a gap in the wedding market to offer couples the chance to save money at their weddings but still be able to offer their guests award winning sparkling wines at a quarter of the price of champagne.

We are sponsoring some joint events with Glamour magazine and Benefit makeup (from California) in London over a couple of weekends and also sponsoring with You and Your Wedding magazine a weekend of seminars in September for prospective brides and their families. We will be exhibiting at the National Wedding Show in October and are also joining up with the hotel chain Bespoke Hotels to be able to offer consumers the chance to win a weekend break at one of their

hotels across Britain. Also on our web page each month we offer the chance to win a case of Griffith Park!

How did you achieve reviews via the wine columns in the national and local press?

Fortunately due to the success of the wine in the international wine competition – Effervescent du Monde in 2007 when the wine was judged to be in the top 10 sparkling wines of the world the media have been extremely interested and supportive of the wine. We liaise with all the national, regional, local and lifestyle magazines on a regular basis.

How do you manage the production of the wine?

Every two months or so I go over to the vineyards in South East Australia and taste the individual wines that I recommend for the final blend. As the wine is non vintage we can use blends from other years to produce the perfect wine.

With all the travel involved are you looking for some closer European connections?

At this stage Griffith Park is an Australian sparkling wine and will be for the foreseeable future



Finally, with UK consumers being accustomed to constant price promotions how do you ensure that they see Griffith Park as a quality brand and not just a discount offer.

The wine has been selling well since its launch in 2007 and does not just sell on promotion. Obviously when the price is cut by £2.00 per bottle then the volumes go up but otherwise there are steady sales over the year.

*** Price correct at press date of July 31 2009. Subject to availability.**

For more information and a chance to win a case of the wine go to: www.griffithpark.co.uk



Five star Italian spa

From our travel correspondent

*Heal the soul and feed the mind.....*How could I intertwine these words into a holiday? **Bagni di Pisa** will fulfill your dreams. Step inside this 5 star hotel and you enter an emporium of sumptuous decor, antique furniture, paintings and furnishings of the highest quality. Relax in the library stocked with an amazing selection of art and travel books. On arrival we were given robes and slippers for use in the spa, then taken to our room. Every bedroom (or suite if desired) is different. Antique furniture, frescoes with cool smooth crushed stone floors and a king sized beds, despite its large size it appeared minute in the large room. The bathroom complete with two sinks, shower and separate bath tub. Towels and beds were changed daily. Each evening we ordered bellinis in the piano bar-comfortable sofas, busts on plinths, paintings and a painted frescoed ceiling befitting of Michelangelo's Cistine Chapel, whilst listening to the relaxing music from the resident pianist. Dining on our first evening was a revelation, the cuisine both in choice and execution was sublime. The daily changing menu befit the diet and choice from "healthy eating" to "loosen your belt eating". Being a vegetarian can often pose a challenge - usually the ubiquitous risotto and omelette is offered, but not so at **Bagni di Pisa**. I was presented with my very own "personal chef!" Whatever I desired, even if not on the menu was no problem. After a memorable dinner we couldn't wait to see what breakfast had to offer. We were not disappointed - another banquet for lovers of good food. Hand made breads of many varieties, yoghurts, fresh and dried fruits, various cheeses, meats, waters, teas, coffee and if you desired a bucks fizz (prosecco and freshly squeezed orange juice) it was on ice. After these temptations the Spa's options may ease your guilty conscience - thermal treatments, yoga, walking, steam baths, mud treatments, hydromassage and so much more. In fact this hotel was awarded the **Five Star Diamond**

Award "Best Spa 2009". You could just choose to be really lazy and lie by the thermal filled pool. Being thermal the water is around 30c, after you get over the initial shock of hot water it is surprisingly refreshing. We decided to meander through the winding olive groves which lead upwards to a beautiful ruined temple, the view from which was breathtaking, looking over Pisa and surrounding countryside. Some of the more energetic guests practiced yoga whilst butterflies danced amongst the flora and fauna.

If you feel you can drag yourself away from this haven of tranquility then **Pisa** is a must. Just 20 minutes in a car - yes it is touristy but the Piazza dei Miracoli is spectacular. We found a haven of peace and coolness in **The Botanical Museum** garden (begun 1543-44) whose ethos is of conservation and ecology. Another visit, again just 20 minutes by car, is **Lucca**. An historical walled town, which can be "walked" if you have the energy, or just do what the beautiful people do and sip cool drinks in shaded bars. Towards the end of our holiday we were desperate to see the coastline which can be reached by car in less than 45 minutes. **Viareggio** is a busy seaside resort favoured by wealthy Italians as a summer retreat, offered everything, sandy beaches and leafy avenues of elegant shops. Our last evening in **Bagni di Pisa** was memorable, listening to a Baroque Concert in the candle lit courtyard. The period instruments, flute, harpsicord and violin being played by talented musicians. The air heavy with the scent of honeysuckle and jasmine -a step back in time. If this hotel is good enough for famous guests like George IV, Mary Shelley and Gustav of Sweden (to name just a few) then it certainly is good enough for you!

Full details can be found on their website.

www.bagnidipisa.com

Artists welcome visitors to Open Studios

By Sue Gay

Between 12th September and 4th October artists and craftspeople throughout Hertfordshire will be opening the doors of their studios and homes to the public.

There are twenty-three participating makers in Harpenden alone, with work ranging from jewellery, ceramics and textiles, through drawing, painting and printmaking, to large-scale outdoor sculptures. Some of the artists will be opening for the first time in 2009, while others are 'old hands' who really enjoy the event and welcome return visitors year after year. One of the exciting things about Open Studios is the diversity of the people who take part – from well-established makers with a strong local profile, to relative newcomers and emerging artists.

Entry is always free and gives you the opportunity to see the artists at work or giving demonstrations. All creative people are passionate about what the things they make and are always pleased to talk about their work with you. Some of them even run classes or hold workshops in which they will share their skills with others.

And, of course, there is the potential satisfaction of buying an original artwork directly from the person who has crafted it. Or, perhaps even more exciting, you could commission a piece of work that is specific to your own requirements. Most artists welcome commissions and are keen to meet the client's needs.

Brochures are available that directory the exact dates and times that individual studios are open. You can pick up a brochure from places like the library or the public hall and from a number of the businesses in town.

There is a map at the back of the directory that you may like to use to plan a trail that allows you visit several studios in the same day. Generally, the artists are available at weekends, but some studios are open on weekdays as well. And most of the studios can be opened by appointment if needs be.

A number of Harpenden artists will be previewing their work ahead of the event, at a special 'taster' exhibition mounted as part of the Farmer's Market on 23rd August. You are cordially invited to come along and enjoy a glass of wine in their company. If you like someone's work, you might want to make an advance appointment to get along to their studio and find that something special.

Picture caption:

Sue Gay, a painter based in Ox Lane, makes contemporary figurative works. She is shown here with a work in progress called 'Times Are Tidy', inspired from the poem by Sylvia Plath, and another example of her work (right)

Click on the link below for a pdf of the brochure:

www.hvaf.org.uk/open-studios/OPEN-STUDIOS-2009/Brochure



ASTOUNDING..... INNOVATIVE..... UNUSUAL.....

By The Editor

As a regular visitor to the Margaret Harvey Gallery in St Albans I would implore anyone with an interest in art to visit the gallery soon, you will be amazed by the quality and variety of the exhibitions.

Critically acclaimed UH Galleries are among the most innovative art spaces in the UK. They pride themselves on not only supporting and exhibiting the work of emerging British artists, but also providing a platform for international artists wishing to enter the British art scene. Many of these artists have since gone on to carve significant careers in contemporary visual arts, crafts, applied arts and design. During the winter of 1996 the Margaret Harvey Gallery was transformed by Andy Goldsworthy's installation; almost ten years later in 2005 they exhibited the work of now-renowned sculptor Eduardo Paolozzi. More recently they have been fortunate to mount exhibitions on artists such as David Moore, Heli Ryhänen and Margareta Kern. In focusing on the work of emerging and sometimes, at the time, relatively unknown artists they hope to expand the field of contemporary art, bringing new work to national audiences.



DREAMS MADE MANIFEST

Halima Cassell

Halima is one of the UK's leading young ceramic artists whose recent exhibition (3 June - 18 July) included trademark carved ceramic vessels alongside a series of new bronzes and sculptural work. She concentrates on simple forms as the basis of her work in order to maximise the impact of the complex surface patterns in combination with heavily contrasting contours.

Visitors praised her work with comments like *"Halima, your journey into experimental ideas has resulted in tactile sculptures - as a viewer (and artist myself) it is so difficult not to touch your work. The concave works are as beautiful viewed from the inside as from the outside. It is an inspirational exhibition."* ST. 20th June 09.

Visit Halima's web site for more info

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

As the winner of the Margaret Harvey Open Exhibition 2008, Christina Bryant will be back in St Albans, **July 31-15 Aug** with her show **"DRAWN ON, DRAWN IN"**. Christina explores the use of line to map everyday, human environments, and attempts to question and distort our relationship to these intimate spaces.

Then from **Sept 2 - 3 October** there is an exciting photographic event.

"MAJORITY REPORT: AMERICA, AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE INTERNET". Curated by Roger Hargreaves it comprises a selected snapshot of the state of amateur photography in the digital age through a photographic narrative of America at a pivotal moment.

More events to be announced.



MARGARET HARVEY GALLERY
7 HATFIELD ROAD, ST ALBANS. AL1 3RR
01707 284 290
OPENING HOURS
WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY 11.00am - 5.00pm



GALLERY TOUR -ON LINE

On line gallery viewing is becoming ever more popular with so many of the top galleries having access to their work, not just in the UK but around the world. Now you can log on to the Saatchi Gallery, The Royal Academy, Tate Modern and Tate Britain to name just 4 and spend the day clicking round some of the world's most important galleries looking at great works of art, all from the relative comfort of your home.



Tony Briggs- "Kate Moss circa 1992"

It will never replace the joy and emotion of experiencing art "in the flesh" but at least it may give you the inspiration to go and see it "live".

Local gallery A &K Wilson have their own web site on which they feature the work of over 32 artists they represent. I decided to take an on line tour to see what they had to offer. A simple to navigate site with each artist receiving a short biography, a description of their style and imagery, a summary of their work with several examples showing dimensions, the medium and the cost.



Frank Taylor "Bo-Kaap1"



Thomas Plunkett "Chrysler Building New York"

There are paintings in oils, acrylics and water colours, mixed media assemblages and sculptures. Mostly from UK artists but also a few examples of Russian and Soviet art. With prices ranging from a few hundred pounds to several thousand pounds there is an extensive choice to satisfy almost all tastes.

Of course the subjective nature of art interpretation means that what I like may be disliked by someone else. I spent a very pleasant evening reviewing all 32 artist's work and have nominated my favourite four: Frank Taylor -quirky yet warmly appealing images in soft tones
John Brown - powerful relationship related sculptures
Thomas Plunkett ARWS - emotionally satisfying oil and ink interpretations of iconic buildings
Tony Briggs - high impact celebrity photographs

*John Brown
"Safekeeping"*



Why not go on line yourself and see how your choices compare with mine?

www.akwilsongallery.co.uk

SPECTACULAR ARTS FOR ALL THE FAMILY

This year's Arts Fair proved to be a spectacular success not just in terms of the attendance and good weather but in the wide range of exhibitors. Not just the big names but lots of up and coming artists and artisans with traditional skills. Visiting the fair over 3 days (July 3 - 5) at the Childwickbury Stables I found an array of exhibits to keep adults and children of all ages engrossed and entertained.

My journey began with a visit to **Natalie**. The photographer with the Artist's Eye. Awe inspiring talent in photography, life drawing, painting and print making.

www.bynatalie.co.uk



Just next door was **Emma Pyrah**, an abstract landscape painter using bold colours and shapes...joyous and full of life. www.emmapyrah.co.uk



Then on to **Yvonne Calsou** who had made the journey from Toulouse. A painter who uses black and white to create dramatic images to reflect the power of nature. www.yvonne.calsou.free.fr



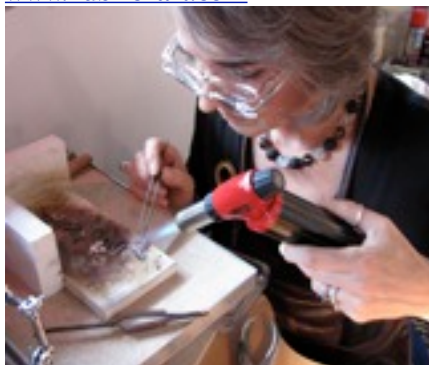
Into one of the main stable buildings I found print maker **Melvyn Petterson**. I watched in wonder as a skilled craftsman printed images from his own etched plates on a small hand print press.

www.melvyn.petterson.com

Close by I found artist and printmaker **Vicky Oldfield** who specialises in collage prints using everyday materials to create soft, tactile and atmospheric plant studies. www.vickyoldfield.co.uk

Next to see on my favourite artists was **Katharina Kubrick**, working not on art but her new passion, jewellery making. Painting is not forgotten though, just temporarily. on hold.

www.kubrickart.com



Onto the fascinating world of wood engraving with a display of intricate skill. www.woodengravers.co.uk

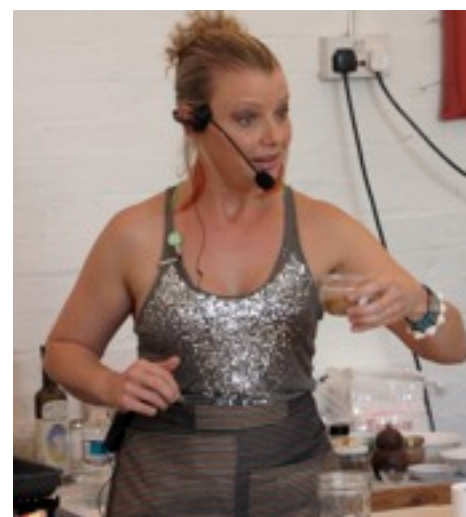


Music entertainment ranged from rock, to punk and soul with day time performances and 2 evening concerts.



Eye catching, sculptural creations from top hat maker **Andrew Fisher** caught the eye of most ladies.

www.fishheadhats.com



Finally cooking up a storm each day was **Celia Brooks Brown**, a passionate cook and food writer, famous for her many TV appearances. Celia gave a number of daily demonstrations on cooking various vegetarian dishes and how to cook with spices

www.celiabrooksbrown.com



Shocking treatment for Harpenden fish!

By our Environment Correspondent.

Ask a Harpenden resident about the River Lea and you will likely receive a varied response. Some may describe it as a dirty, smelly backwater with little flow and no redeeming features; some may not even know it exists. Yet the river is home to a healthy population of fish, the size of which may come as quite a surprise.

The Lea's source begins in Luton and continues its path parallel to the Lower Luton Road where it meanders through the fields and woodland of Luton Hoo, navigating past south Harpenden and eventually joining the Thames at Leamouth. A few weeks ago a stretch of the river just upstream from Batford Mill was being electro-fished by the Environmental Agency. Electro-fishing is a common scientific method used to sample fish populations to determine their abundance, health, and to compare year on year



records. It's a technique where electricity is used to stun the fish before they are netted. It is a perfectly safe method where the fish involuntary swim towards the electrode, at this moment a net is used to capture the fish and then transfer it to a large oxygenated tank. Every fish is subsequently weighed and photographed before being carefully released again. During the session the environmental team netted more than fifty fish which included Chub, Carp, Perch and Barbel, the largest fish weighing close to 9lbs. Adam Ellis, one of the team leaders commented on the fine health of the fish and that the same stretch had produced good results for the past four years when he first studied the river. The findings suggest this stretch of the Lea has a healthy ecosystem in which a good head of fish can be supported for many years in the future.



THE PERFECT PICNIC

Outdoor eating with a trip to somewhere specialthat's what summer is all about. So do you plan out the detail in advance and find that on the day the weather has changed for the worst or leave it till the last minute when the weather is good and find that you just don't have the food to satisfy your needs for this special occasion.

Well don't worry, if you want a surprise spontaneous picnic with the satisfaction of a fantastic spread then call the **PICNIC HOT LINE** at **Silver Palate** in Vaughan Road. They have an amazing array of picnic food and drinks to satisfy discerning palates and that includes children of all ages.

So now you can plan a trip to a favourite location..... Whipsnade Zoo, watching hang gliders at Dunstable.....a day at Hatfield House or even longer journey to the seaside on the Suffolk coast confident in the knowledge that your "picnic feast" for the day will be a complete success with food from **Silver Palate**.

They have a wide range of tasty foods that will enable you to satisfy everyone's appetite on the day.....speciality breads like olive loaves, ciabatta and french baguettes.....thinly sliced salamis to spice up weary palates... flavoursome cheeses.....smoked salmon.....delicious salads and couscous....luxury olives...sun dried tomatoes



and much more. A slice of refreshing watermelon to start off the picnic maybe and of course a welcoming drink to go with the food.....a cool Rosé, a bottle of sparkling wine, a refreshing fruit drink or some Italian fizzy San Pellegrino water. Established in Harpenden for several years they are the premier delicatessen in the area.

Call Georgina or Angelo at **Silver Palate** and ask for their advice on how to make up the perfect picnic.....then drop by a bit later and pick up your order and be off for your day of enjoyment. Alternatively call in on spec and choose the items yourself, they will pack up everything individually making transport easy, leaving you to present a glorious meal within minutes of your arrival at your destination.

And if you decide it's just too hot to travel, then why not have a picnic in your own garden and indulge in an extra bottle of fizz to make it an afternoon to remember!

PICNIC HOT LINE 01582 713722
VAUGHAN ROAD, HARPENDEN

www.silverpalate.co.uk

Photo captions.

An array of food and drink presented by Sophie Swietochowski

A warm welcome to Silver Palate from Kate Ashdown and Sophie Swietochowski

Cool ways to beat the heat

By our food correspondent

Who needs the hot weather to enjoy some of the coolest products on the market right now. Well they may help to quench your thirst if the sun ever arrives, but what the heck, just enjoy the moment.

ITALIAN ICE CREAM.... WOW!

Calling to **De Angelis** on Station Road recently I was given an introduction to Italian ice cream. For starters it is made entirely from milk, not cream and known back home as Gelato. Rocco the owner imports this artisan gelato direct from Italy. Light and full of the blended flavours (chocolate, vanilla, berries, and pistachio) it is pure heaven to eat and also makes great milk shakes.

Rocco and a customer (below) enjoying gelato cones



ITALIAN ICED COFFEE.....Mmmmmm!

Ordering up an iced coffee at **Saporito** on Harpenden high street recently I was given another lesson about real Italian coffees. They are called Caffè Fredo, being made with chilled coffee, ice cream and a touch of sugar. The end result is divine and extremely refreshing.

Abbey (right) and Monika on a relaxing break with a Caffè Fredo and a Vanilla Caffè Fredo



A LONG COOL BEER.....so refreshing.

There are so many brands on the market these days it's difficult to make a choice between the bland and the tasty. Local wine merchant **Rollings Wine** are selling a number of locally produced beers from the Tring Brewery that are packed full of flavour. I tried their "Side Pocket for a Toad" bottled beer which has a floral aroma and a crisp, citrus finish. The beer's unusual name comes from an old Hertfordshire saying that means 'of no use'. Well I can certainly think of a very good use for this tasty beer!



REFRESHING SOFT DRINKS

There's many a time when a simple fruit juice, sparkling water, a ginger beer or a shandy will hit the spot. There are literally dozens and dozens of brands around to satisfy all tastes or why not make your own with a base of sparkling water.



Freshly picked salads, fruit and vegetables - sheer heaven!

By our nutrition expert.

Summer's here - that's official - with temperatures rising, the chef in your home breathes a sigh of relief. *Salads everyday - so no cooking*. These words can be daunting to many - especially to those who are always hungry after "rabbit food". If you plan your meals ahead you can please everyone. Baked potatoes or polenta (cooked, cooled - cut into triangles and shallow fried in olive oil) will satisfy the hungry. Quiches - easy to bake at home or purchase one of the many excellent supermarket brands. Baby vegetables, readily available at good supermarkets or the Farmer's Markets, provide vitamins and minerals. Carrots, peppers, courgettes and peas are all delicious, and can be enhanced by an easy "dip" using home made mayonnaise or the best shop bought jar and stir in chopped capers - this is equally as good in the middle of baked potatoes. Lighter foods energise both body and mind - nature's answer to anti-depressants.

Encourage your children to grow their own salads. Let them begin with something easy - cress grown on damp muslin or even damp kitchen roll, once the children have given it a "trim" and eaten it they will be full of enthusiasm. Give them their own special space in your garden (no garden then a couple of large pots or grow bags will suffice) lettuce and radish are fun to grow and even cherry tomatoes - how exciting taking a packed lunch to school with their own handywork!. I began on a positive note about the summer - but let's be real - we have had our fair share of rain. **Picnics at home!** How many times have you planned a picnic only to have the heaven's open just as you arrive at your chosen spot. Well, on dodgy



days why not stay at home - eat your picnic in the garden. Yes do all the usual preparations -involving the children who love a bit of play acting by mums and dads - make your picnic, pack up with everything including travel rug and venture into the garden - it really is fun. If you forget something - well its not far to return - and also if it rains, again, a quick run back indoors - you can even finish off your picnic on the floor in a chosen room - and yes spread out the travel rug - everyone will have such fun.

Summer Fruits. There are so many to choose from and usually they arrive all at once - if you become bored with fresh berries then bake them - equal quantities of your favourites : black currants, red currants and raspberries are



lovely, or try strawberries and rhubarb - remember that some fruits cook quicker than others and may require being added separately whilst cooking. All fruits require sugar to taste and a split vanilla pod adds a decadent flavour that will linger - (oh yes don't be tempted to add water as the fruits come with their own juices) bake uncovered - medium temperature - for 20 minutes - keep checking - some fruits take much longer. Cool to room temperature and serve with ice cream or whatever takes your fancy - actually delicious with nothing added. **Want to create a mini WOW factor** - buy or make some meringue bases - fill with your baked fruits and let your guests pour over their chosen cream/ice cream. Its an easy sensational looking dessert, as well as tasting fabulous.





Rewarding times for allotment newcomers

Sally and Nick Griffith report on their allotment experiences

Having moved to Harpenden and into a rented flat, we thought we would chance our luck and put our name down for an allotment as a substitute garden. Expecting to wait 2 years for a plot to come up, we were surprised when 5 poles came up for the taking 7 months later.

The allotment started life with us totally overgrown with thick grass a couple of feet high - quite a challenge, however we started our new adventure with a lot of enthusiasm and not much knowledge – only that gleaned from a borrowed 'Beginners Guide to Allotments' book.

The first job was digging, the second job was digging and the third job – you get the picture. In between the digging, Nick tried out the house rotavator – it was fantastic comedy value as the rotavator ended up pulling him around the allotment. Our neighbour, Keith (also a newcomer) vowed that he would only rotavate his allotment after dark after seeing Nick's efforts.

Lucky for us, Dark Lane allotments are full of friendly and experienced allotmenters – all on hand to give advice as to which veg are the easiest to grow and how to grow them - we even got a few free plants thrown our way.

4 months down the line, our plot is now so much part of our life we cannot think what life was like before we had it! We have made good in roads and planted out 1 of the 2 poles with lettuces, herbs, mangetout, corn, broccoli and beans to name but a few. We enjoy many a sunny afternoon at our plot weeding and planting, and it has become part of the Harpenden tour when friends and family come to visit – whether they like it or not, we are proud!

We have learnt about how to beat off pigeons (not literally), make compost, deter slugs and most importantly grow from seed – much more cost effective in these credit crunch times than buying plants from the local nursery

Of course some growth has been more successful than others but you cannot beat the feeling of visiting your own bit of turf and picking some veg for your Sunday roast, and offering up many a lettuce leaves to friends and family!

Picture info above: Sally and Nick showing off the rewards of their labour. Plus a look at some of the plot that still needs to be cleared ready for more planting.



Green Fingers galore in the South Harpenden Allotment Gardens Society

By the Editor

With over 400 plots, a 98% letting ratio and a waiting list of 50, allotment holding has never been so popular in Harpenden. There are 8 sites of varying sizes spread over the Harpenden district governed by a hard working committee chaired by Clennell Collingwood (above) and renowned for having fun.

The 40th Anniversary Celebration Fete took place on a sunny July 5th at the Aldwickbury site where many site holders from all over Harpenden gathered to witness the official opening by Town Mayor, Councillor Rosemary Farmer. Several hours were spent during the afternoon enjoying drinks, a BBQ and lots of games. And for those who wanted to find out more there was a historical exhibition in The Ted Allen Room (below right.)

Competition is intense between plot holders who compete every year for a variety of prizes with the top one being the Chairman's Shield For Best Plot. The current holder is Hazel Upton, Aldwickbury (shown

above with some of her superb crop of beetroots.)

Each of the nine sites has it's own representative who keeps an eye on the plots and looks to help out where necessary. Shown below is David Ebbels of Harpenden Rise tasting the first of his early plums, a Belgian variety called Sanctus Hubertus.

All plot holders are kept up to date with news via a quarterly newsletter "The Plot So Far", produced under the watchful eye of Publicity Office and Webmaster Joan Graham.

Having visited 3 sites recently I was amazed by the outstanding effort plot holders put into their allotments. Packed with vegetables of prodigious sizes, fruit laden bushes and small trees and many super displays of flowers. All members have use of the Society Shop in Dark Lane. Open on Sunday morning, it is staffed by knowledgeable people and offers a wide variety of seasonal products at fantastic value.

If you would like more information about the Society click on to their web site:

www.geocities.com/shallotments/





“It is my aim to help people to be the best they can be”

Lindy Fox, Harmonize

Harmonize your way to happiness

Having reported on the benefits of complementary therapy in the Spring edition of HARPENDIA I decided to explore the subject further and try a treatment myself courtesy of Lindy Fox. A Harpenden resident for 30 years, she now runs the Harmonize Therapy Practice where she offers a full range of Complementary Therapies including Relaxation Techniques, Life Coaching, and Healing Meditation.

These therapies can help if you are suffering with stress, anxiety, pain, challenges at work, phobias, and relationship problems.

Considering myself to be fit and healthy Lindy recommended a detox foot bath to demonstrate the efficacy of the treatment. After sitting with my feet in a bath of warm salted water for approx 30 minutes I was astounded to see the water transform from clear to light yellow, progressing through orange to dark brown with a greasy scum floating on the surface. After a thorough rinse and soaping my feet felt incredibly clean.

Lindy explained that the treatment had removed toxins from my body via the

lymphatic system. Had I not been in the best of health this treatment may have aided recovery.

On July 7th Lindy offered sample treatments to members of the Harpenden Lawn Tennis Club, as can be seen by the photograph above where she is giving an Indian Head massage to one of the members. The evening proved a great success with several members receiving treatments.

Before beginning any treatment Lindy will discuss your current life style, diet, problems etc before deciding on a plan of action, so you can be confident that you are being offered the right approach. She will refer you to other practitioners and counsellors if that is going to suit you best.

Check out Lindy's web site for a full range of her services.

www.harmonize-us.co.uk

Or call her on 01582 627224 or 07977 584059

APPENDIUM

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

12th September - 4th October OPEN STUDIOS

Artists from Harpenden and surrounding areas showing their work.



2nd September - 3rd October MARGARET HARVEY GALLERY

American photography exhibition



A & K WILSON GALLERY

18th September - 3rd October

Station Approach, Harpenden.
Michael Ewart Painting Exhibition

9th October - 24th October

Peter Wileman RROI, FRSA
Painting Exhibition



COMING SOON.....

HOME ENTERTAINMENT

The nights are drawing in so what better time to look at all the new home technology around. We'll be talking with local experts to find out the best in home systems.

LITERATURE

With the advent of digital technology, book publishing will be changing dramatically very soon. We will be exploring developments, plus looking at the work of local authors.

MUSIC

Harpenden is alive with the sound of music. We'll tell you where to find it.

HALLOWEEN

Haunted houses...ghosts and spirits. Harpenden has a history to be investigated. We will reveal all in time for the Autumn equinox.

PLUS

Lots more interesting articles on art, health and the environment.

SPREAD THE WORD - PLEASE

If you enjoyed HARPENDIA then why not forward it on to friends and family.

REGISTER FOR FUTURE ISSUES

Simply send an e mail to the Editor for your personal copy. And remember it is free of charge.
info@harpendia.com

**AUTUMN ISSUE LIVE ON
OCTOBER 31st.**