


ANOTHER FABULOUS SUMMERSTOWN182 COMMUNITY HISTORY INITIATIVE

The Daffodil King **PLAQUE UNVEILING**

SATURDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2PM

ENTRANCE TO ABOYNE ESTATE
JUNCTION OF GARRATT LANE
AND WIMBLEDON ROAD,
SUMMERSTOWN, LONDON SW17

See the plaque unveiled, collect your
'BLOOMING TOOTING' daffodil bulbs,
join a **WILDFLOWER WALK** in **Streatham**
Cemetery with **ROY VICKERY** of the
South London Botanical Institute

 @summerstown182 summerstown182.wordpress.com



Get ready for 'Blooming Tooting'

Thousands of people at the spectacular Tooting Community Fun Day a few weeks ago found out about the remarkable daffodil growing history in this part of the Wandle Valley. All ages joined Summerstown 182 volunteers in making floral tributes to the gardeners who once worked in local nurseries. They also heard about plans for mass planting of Daffodil bulbs, turning this area into the 'fields of gold' of one hundred and fifty years ago.

What on earth is this all about? 'Blooming Tooting' centres around a big day coming up on Saturday 21st September. We will be celebrating the extraordinary horticultural history of this area with a blue plaque on Garratt Lane commemorating Peter Barr 'The Daffodil King'. Over a twenty year period he rejuvenated the fortunes of this humble flower, buying up forgotten collections and reintroducing varieties collected on perilous trips to Spain and Portugal. In doing so he turned the daffodil into one of our country's favourite flowers. It all happened at his nurseries here in Tooting!

The Unveiling will take place at the entrance to the Aboyne Estate (junction of Garratt Lane and Wimbledon Road) Summerstown at 2pm on Saturday 21st September. The Mayor of Wandsworth will be present as well as a number of leading figures with connections to the Royal Horticultural Society who have given out a Memorial Cup named after Peter Barr for over one hundred years. Jan Pennings chair of their Bulb Committee is jetting in from Holland and a very special guest is former International Daffodil Registrar Sally Kington who first researched this story with local historian George Dear over twenty years ago. After the Unveiling we'll follow a spectacular 'Daffodil Chain' a short distance down Garratt Lane to Streatham Cemetery. These handmade flowers have been crafted by local people of all ages at community events over the past months. Once the site of 'Springfield Nursery' the Cemetery opened for business in 1892 shortly after Peter Barr relocated his daffodil nurseries to Surbiton. In this beautiful, tranquil space, renowned botanist Roy Vickery of the South London Botanical Institute will be doing a Wildflower Walk followed by tea and refreshments. Broadwater

Primary School will be exhibiting some of their work. Poet John Byrne has penned a special verse dedicated to 'The Daffodil King'. All are welcome to come, but don't go home without a daffodil bulb so you can play your part in making sure the Wandle Valley is a swathe of glorious yellow next Spring!

Just a week before this, a special trip has been organised to visit Peter Barr's grave in St Pancras and Islington Cemetery. 'Whoever will plant my grave with primroses?' he lamented in correspondence a few years before his death. It's twenty three stops on the Northern Line between Tooting Broadway and East Finchley but we'll see what we can do. Located in a remote shady section of this massive cemetery, the first line on the family grave records the death of an infant son Samuel Hewlings Barr 'Born at Tooting'.

Raising funds for this and making sure as many people as possible know about it and have been involved, Summerstown182 Community History Group have been drawing attention to it on local history walks over the past six months. Schools, charities, businesses and community groups have got involved. Organiser Geoff Simmons has been thrilled with the enthusiasm received 'It's been genuinely exciting to see people of all ages find out about the significant part this area played in the history of the daffodil. Something that really isn't widely known. Thanks to everyone who has contributed and given us all something to be really proud of'.

Handing out bulbs, of the type once grown here by Peter Barr extends the project further and allows the whole community to get involved. Packs will be distributed to schools, residents associations, churches, mosques - anyone who wants to bring a bit of colour to their neighbourhood and celebrate this history. Come the spring a carpet of yellow will once again cover this area, a vibrant salute to the work of Peter Barr and all who once worked in the Tooting Nurseries.

Look out for more information about this project at summerstown182.wordpress.com or come on our next 'Fields of Gold' walk, Saturday 27 July 2pm from St Mary's Church, Wimbledon Road SW17

Flower to the People!







