

459 words

Editing Buzz 1984-86
by Vanessa Whinney

There was no internet. I didn't know how to use a computer hence no access to layout-software. So it all had to be done with scissors and paste. It was quite fun actually, and the printer made sure that the margins were straight and the pictures were not wonky. But bits of paper and copy flew around my office in semi-controlled chaos.

I had inherited the office of editor, a huge responsibility, from Tim Ades, and before him there were distinguished precedents, including of course, the first editor, Ion Trewin. I felt I had a contribution to make, particularly in the picture department, which was my forte (after a long career in picture research). I wasn't the first to introduce a full page front cover picture, but tried to have one most issues. And I particularly wanted to break up the text with *more* pictures.

Of course they had to be *free* pictures, bit of a challenge. Various artists gave permission and photographers, too. I persuaded a splendid elderly gentleman called Harry Blacker to allow inclusion of his witty cartoons. Being married to a keen amateur photographer helped. The Highgate Watercolour Group artists chipped in and member Mary Williams painted a wonderful Christmas scene set inside 10A for the front of the December 1985 issue and Sara Kaye painted the outside of 10A for the back page. A shame that we were published in black and white then.

Yehudi Menuhin, our President, was leaving Highgate, so his outstanding contribution to the Society was recognized in September '84 with a presentation of Richard Downer's painting of his former home in The Grove. He in turn presented the Society with a signed photo of himself, which to this day hangs in 10A. Two years later, in 1986, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Society, with all the razzmatazz which is descending on us again in this 50th anniversary year.

Ruth Phillips (now Hazeldine) was helping me and introduced advertising, with the enthusiastic support of Chairman Mat Schwitzer. In September 1985 we inserted three paid ads in the actual magazine, including one from Marie Lecko, the dress designer in the High Street. Ruth became official Advertising Rep and sold two whole pages of ads for the Christmas '85 issue and many more in subsequent issues. This sparked a huge furore of opposition (especially from the Treasurer) who thought it made Buzz look "commercial and déclassé", even though the revenue paid our print bill. The appetite of local advertisers knew no bounds. Ruth was very successful; she had ambitious plans for Buzz and took over from me as editor a year later. Ken Whinney took a mad photo of her in her crawfish hat, which became her logo. They were happy days.