

REACTIONS IN FINCHLEY

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Pigeon Corner rivals Trafalgar Square

by Paul Savill

Eating out

East Finchley has a tradition of high quality cuisine; something that is reflected in the large number of bustling restaurants in the area. No matter what your tastes, East Finchley can satisfy them. Try a traditional East Finchley dish like curry, or be daring and visit one of the wonderful Chinese restaurants for which the area is justly famous. Want a snack? How about a pizza? or maybe a bagel? Perhaps even a traditional breakfast in one of the area's numerous authentic cafes.

Sample the traditional atmosphere to be found in the many



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Sights and sounds

From scenic Cherry Tree Wood to the spectacular vistas of Strawberry Vale, there is so much to do in East Finchley.

Few cinemas can quite match the old world charm of the Phoenix, possibly one of the most historic cinemas in the whole of north London.

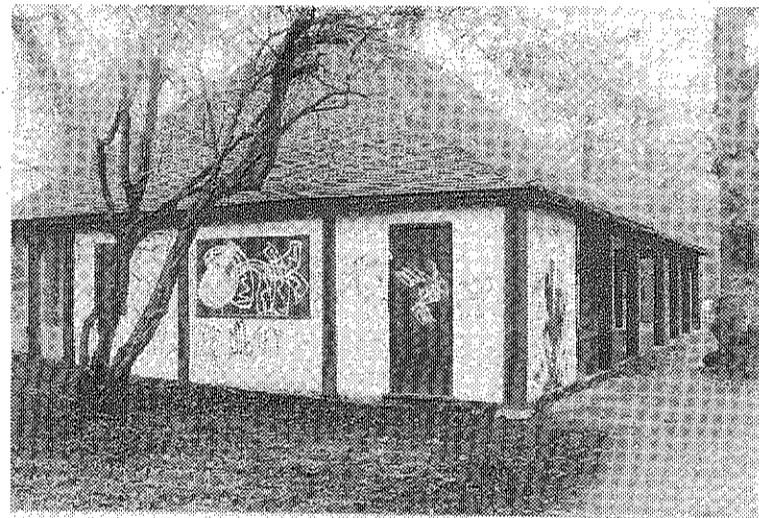
For those with a hankering for music, the famous Haringey Symphony Orchestra play regular concerts in Durham Road and theatre-goers will be amazed at the fabulous productions put on by the thespians of the Finchley Youth Theatre.

On those rare wet afternoons,

pubs. Close to the station is The Bald-faced Stag, a typically East Finchley pub and, like all the area's pubs, well worth a visit. A few minutes walk away is Welch's, a place notable for both the large selection of fine ales and as the home of renowned caterers, John Dacam and Kevin Finn. For a good pub lunch there can be nowhere better. But no matter where you eat in East Finchley you will remember the experience long after you have recovered from the sensory overload that is East Finchley.

Where to stay

East Finchley, as fits its village atmosphere, does not have many hotels. However, it is only a short drive or bus ride away from the thriving metropolis of Muswell Hill and the hotels of the red light district. A double room with bawd can be found at a most reasonable price.



Scenic Cherry Tree Woods

visit the library and immerse yourself in the exciting local history of the area before exploring the many historic places of interest in what can only be described as 'The Jewel of north London'.

EAST FINCHLEY - The holiday of a lifetime is only a tube ride away.

Visit the Jewel of north London...once you have seen the sights of East Finchley, nowhere else will ever seem the same.

East Finchley's "Pigeon Corner" has been described as a "close second" to Trafalgar Square by foreign tourists this month. Whilst it lacks a 184ft-high monument, giant bronze lions and fountains,

the corner's spreading plane tree, concrete pipe sections and gravel flower beds, almost compensate.

Its pigeons, however, "more than rival" their cousins in London's most famous square.

This was the view expressed



Swoop - photo: Mr Aki Takeuchistiatishi, Tokyo.

by Mr and Mrs Aki Takeuchistiatishi from Tokyo, who spent a day at East Finchley's famous High Road and East End Road junction recently.

They informed *The Archer* that they spent only 10 minutes in Trafalgar Square because there was not nearly as much to see.

Local colour

While not quite so plentiful, East Finchley's pigeons were, in their view, superior in colour and size. Their grey was a greyer shade of grey. Furthermore, they cooed more loudly.

When they swooped, they did so in a dramatic fashion which Mr T. had captured on his £5,000 camcorder with 900mm zoom lens.

In all, he recorded five hours of pigeon movements at Pigeon Corner and he hopes to sell the results to Japan's equivalent of David Attenborough, who is planning a TV series of wildlife in the UK.

Sophie Orr (aged 24) of Park Hall Road recently visited Uganda and sent us a letter about her observations. Perhaps we are lucky to live in East Finchley!

Letter from Uganda

I arrived in Kampala at the end of March. I'd been looking forward to my first visit to Africa for a long time, and at last here I was. My friend met me at the airport in her car and as I looked out of the window I was overwhelmed by the sight of poverty and desolation as we passed barely-clothed people sitting outside their homes.

There is an awful lot of poverty, but things seem to be improving, with much investment and companies opening up all over the place. The house I'm staying in is very peaceful, with a garden full of roses, wicker chairs on the balcony and a guard, gardener and house-girl to look after it all. The lifestyle is luxurious but unrealistic since outside the iron gates you see mud huts and deprivation.

School trip

I was extremely lucky to spend three days on the Sese Islands of Lake Victoria. Some friends working for the Ministry of Education have been visiting schools all over the country conducting a survey, and I was invited to join this trip. It took us seven hours to get there, travelling in a Land Rover and crossing the lake on a 'raft'. This had four huge engines and moved at a snail's pace, but I saw an unspoilt Uganda, the island being almost completely covered in dense forest. There was no running water or electricity, so in the evenings at our camp next to

the lake, we played cards under a paraffin lamp.

It was very interesting seeing the schools. I spoke to some of the pupils and teachers, whose education levels had a worryingly fine line between them.

Bus roots

Getting the local bus - a 'matatu' - to the city centre is quite an experience. You are delivered to the taxi-park where all the matatus congregate facing completely different directions. It always seems as though they have no possible hope of getting in or out! Going back home, you have to walk all round the matatus asking each driver if he is going to your particular district. This can take quite a while!

Walking the streets can also be traumatic. A white woman attracts attention from all. Those selling their wares by the side of the road, be they matches, boiled toothpaste, cream crackers or cigarettes, cry out, "Hello Musungu", how are you?" ('Musungu' roughly translates as 'white person') I believe this is meant in a friendly manner, although being on show makes me feel quite awkward when I'm not too familiar with the streets. It's hard to look where one is going for fear of accidentally stepping into a knee-high pothole or of being knocked over by a wheelbarrow (laden with bricks or bananas) or other vehicle coming from any direction at a great speed. There's never a dull moment in this city!

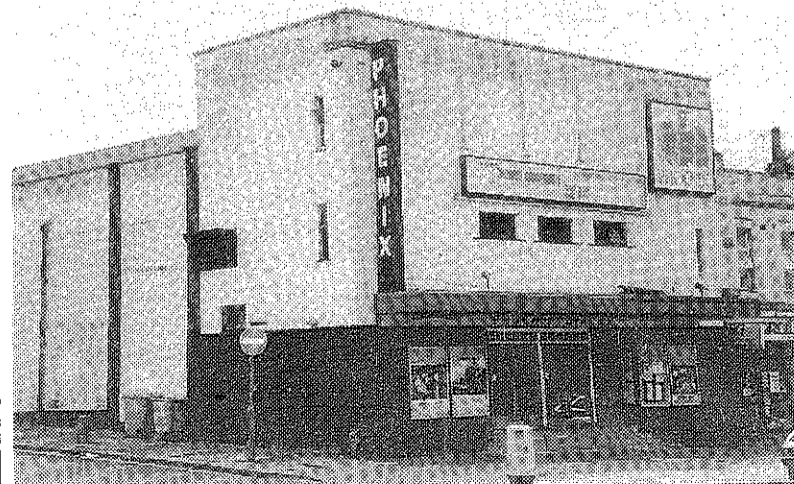
Dog days

With more than half of British households now keeping animals, more people than ever before are taking their pet along on the family holiday. Holidays which cater for both humans and animals are now big business, and over 1200 hotels and guest houses throughout Britain welcome pets.

However, forward planning is needed if all are to enjoy the break and the RSPCA has issued advice for holidaymakers.

Pet care leaflets entitled *Leave your pets in safe hands!* and *Hot tips for summer* are available from the RSPCA Enquiries Department, Causeway, Horsham, Sussex, RH12 1HG. Tel: 01403-264181.

The Archer thanks Mary Atkinson of Summerlee Gardens for sending this piece in.



The Phoenix, a centre of international cinematographic excellence

All photographs: David Tupman