



Getting Wired

PART 10 - Hitting the target

On visiting *THE ARCHER* web site recently I noticed that recent issues are now available for downloading to your computer. So no longer do you need to wait for a copy to land on your doorstep. You'll also find lots of interesting photos of East Finchley past and present.

Searching for East Finchley with a search engine revealed 1,100 pages - far too many to look at one by one. There are now 2.8 million web servers on the net, holding 800 million web pages comprising 6 trillion bytes of text and 3 trillion bytes of images. Even the best search engines only keep track of 16% of these and one wonders what other interesting pages about East Finchley there might be.

To bring your pages to the attention of East Finchley readers, you could consider three additional strategies. Obviously the best is a small advertisement in *THE ARCHER*, giving your site details! (For a quote you could e-mail *THE ARCHER* at the-archer@england.com). Consider also registering your own domain. The third is to link your site to other local pages in return for the same favour.

In fact the more reciprocal links you have, the higher up the list some search engines will place you. Always be sure to visit your links and keep them up to date. For a free plug for your site in this series, space permitting, e-mail me at tonylondon@compuserve.com.

Finally, to complete last issue's article on frames, how to get a link in one frame to bring up a page in another frame? Easy - just add **target = "framename"** to the link as follows:- `` where the frame name is the name of the frame you specified in the `<frame>` tag of the frame set. To replace all frames use `"_top"` and if nesting frames to replace the next frame up use `"_parent"`. In these two cases be sure to include the underscore.

The frame example is illustrated at <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/tonylondon>.

Tony's whopper!

Picture and story by Paul Savill



Tony Russo: "horse muck and "tocco magico"

Not quite large enough for a coach, but weighing in at an impressive 100 lbs., is this impressive pumpkin grown in an East Finchley allotment by Tony Russo, proprietor of Home and Garden Store in East End Road.

It is one of three pumpkins Tony has produced this year with a combined weight of 280 lbs., now on display at his plant, flower and household goods shop. Mind you, they pale a bit against this year's record pumpkin said to be 800 lbs. (sic). Large enough for a coach, certainly, but do you believe it?

So since none of his pumpkins is large enough for a coach for his granddaughter, Amy, aged 6, weighing in at a mere 60 lbs., Tony is using them for food. He is now slicing them up and giving them away to customers. Readers are advised to hurry.

Pumpkin makes excellent pie or soup, providing you add dollops of onions, tomatoes and garlic, says Tony's wife, Maria. Or try *THE ARCHER*'s recipe (left).

Tony, originally from Italy, attributes his pumpkin success to a combination of horse muck from College Farm and his own "tocco magico".

Pumpkin Fudge

If you have a sweet tooth, brighten up a dull November day by making this topical fruit fudge.

Ingredients

6 oz castor sugar, 4 oz cooked pumpkin, Pinch each of cinnamon, cloves and ginger, 14-oz tin of sweetened condensed milk ¼ tsp. vanilla essence

Method

1. Put everything except the vanilla essence into a heavy-based saucepan and mix together, stirring well.
2. Bring to the boil until the mixture reaches the soft ball

stage - about 25 minutes. To test, drop a little of the mixture into a cup of very cold water. If it forms into a soft ball, then it is ready.

3. Remove from the heat, add the vanilla essence and beat well until smooth.

4. Pour into a buttered baking tray or dish to a depth of one inch.

5. Leave to cool, then cut into squares and enjoy!

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR BARNET'S GRAMMAR SCHOOLS?

Will parents be able to vote?

By Naomi Burgess

It is possible that Barnet parents may not get a chance to vote on the issue of selection for secondary education. If there is no chance to vote, then there is no chance either, for many local parents to be able to choose a local comprehensive school!

Unfortunately, Barnet Parents Federation had to cancel the scheduled meeting on 4 October. This was the meeting organised to explain the voting process and to provide speakers both for and against selection. The hall at Underhill Primary has space for 100, but due to extensive leafleting and the number of media expected to attend, it became apparent that we could expect many more. It was felt that it would not have been safe to go ahead as the health and

safety regulations regarding overcrowding and fire etc, would have been contravened.

I don't think that the number expected was a coincidence, and I know that some media representatives are keen to view this possible vote as "Armageddon" in the future of secondary education. But I don't believe that most parents want to stifle debate about their children's education, or throw away their chance of having their say.

The information you would

have been able to get on the 4th, was that only one third of our primaries qualify as feeder schools to our three grammar schools (Henrietta Barnett, St Michael's, and Queen Elizabeth's School for Boys). Altogether there are 78 feeder primaries and, of those, 20% are private schools, and it's only parents of children in feeder schools who qualify for a vote. This means that the majority of parents of primary school children in Barnet local education authority schools will not qualify to vote. You also have to remember that 6,000 signatures of eligible parents have to be submitted to ensure that a vote is triggered.

So, let's make sure that eligible local parents get a vote by collecting 6,000 signatures. Let's make sure that the Press report reliably, and provide a forum for intelligent debate. Let's not be side-tracked by hysterical and ill thought out statements about disgruntled residents depriving children of a grammar school place. Let's get our principles right - I think locals want the right to clearly presented information, to debate and to vote. These are the priorities of Barnet Parents Federation.

For more information about the voting procedures and about which are feeder schools, please contact Barnet Parents Federation at PO Box 25525 London NW7 1WN.

Say 'yes' to excellent schools

By Charlotte Wolff

How extraordinary it is that some people would like to dismantle some of the country's most successful state schools. You may think that energy, time and resource would be put to better use if invested into improving problem schools.

I refer to the anti-grammar school campaigners who are currently targeting the Barnet grammar schools - Queen Elizabeth's School for Boys, The Henrietta Barnett School and St Michael's Catholic Grammar. By collecting signatures from parents at feeder primary schools, they seek to instigate a ballot, and hope that voters will opt for the termination of selection by academic ability at these schools.

As a parent of a Henrietta Barnett pupil, I have first hand experience of the excellence that can exist at a grammar school. Girls who are happy to do their homework and enjoy a fast pace of learning can thrive amongst peers who feel the same way. They are not penalised by others in their class for being 'swots', and they can go on to achieve some of the highest results in the country. What parent in their right mind would want their children to be denied this opportunity? Clearly, there are some who want others to be denied this chance.

A state grammar school selects by academic ability because it exists to allow fast-learning children, with excep-

tional academic ability, the chance to study in an environment that suits them best. It is not set up so that those children who excel in other areas, or who prefer to learn at a slower pace, can feel like 'failures'. My other child attends a comprehensive school and has no sense of failure. Neither was he forced to sit an exam at 11. He thrives in an atmosphere that is best suited to him and has no desire to attend a grammar school.

At present, the Barnet grammar schools take in children from a broad range of social and ethnic backgrounds, and this also is what makes them so valuable. If they were forced to become comprehensive, only those who can afford to live in the neighbouring area would be eligible for entry. Children whose parents cannot afford private school would be divided further against those who can.

State schools and their staff have enough to struggle against as it is. We can do without this extraordinary and senseless attack on schools whose heads and teachers have invested immense energy over many years, so that they could become the centres of excellence they are now.

CONTACT CONTACT, the East Finchley Neighbourhood Group, who support the elderly and housebound in the area, are appealing for **VOLUNTEERS** with an hour or two to spare to help with shopping and odd jobs. Expenses will be paid. If you are willing to help a neighbour, please call the co-ordinator on 020 8444 1162.

42 Church Lane
London N2 8DT



Telephone:
020 8444 6265

EAST FINCHLEY ADVICE SERVICE NEEDS VOLUNTEER ADVISERS

Do you enjoy helping others?

Could you give advice?

Are you a sympathetic listener?

Can you spare two and a half hours a week?

Training given

If you are interested contact the co-ordinator on 020 8444 6265.