



Paul Grey and Michael Wiltshire

Marathon for Michael

Very few people have heard of Prader-Willi Syndrome. It is a complex medical condition, which affects children from birth and continues to affect them for the rest of their lives.

PWS results in many disabilities; including an obsession with eating, weak muscles, learning difficulties and emotional instability. People do not catch PWS, nor can they grow out of it. Michael Wiltshire, a pupil in the infants at Holy Trinity School, suffers from this rare condition.

Five year old Rhian Grey is one of his classmates and her father Paul is taking part in this year's London Marathon. Paul last ran in the Paris Marathon in 1989 and leapt at the chance of a long-held dream to run in the London Marathon when Michael's parents, Rob and June Wiltshire, told him that the PWSA had obtained a small number of places in it. He started training for the April event last November and Rob Wiltshire has been cycling alongside him in the training runs as support. Duncan Mills, the headteacher at Holy Trinity School, has been very supportive and pupils' parents have been given the opportunity to sponsor Paul.

Target 2000

Now Paul needs your support in the form of sponsorship to help him to reach his target of £2000 for the PWSA. They can then offer further support for the families and children whose lives are affected by this cruel condition. If you would like to know more about this small charity, you can visit the website at www.pwsa-uk.demon.co.uk

You can sponsor Paul by sending a cheque (not cash) made out to PWSA. Send it to: Paul Grey, 342 High Road, East Finchley.

THE ARCHER will let you know how much Paul raises.

Are you running?

If any other East Finchley residents are running in the London Marathon, we would like to hear all about it.

Please write to us at PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA, e-mail us at the-archer@england.com or leave a message on our voice mail on 01426 923 549.

Cherry Tree Wood

By Martin Earl



Volunteers gather to check oak trees planted in December. Photo by Martin Earl

Cherry Tree Wood has recently been receiving a double dose of care. As reported in the January Archer, it has a new park keeper, Chris Ward, who, among other things, has made gallant attempts to keep the levels of rubbish down. And the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have been out in force practising Woodland Management - under the careful eye of Lee Tyson from the Countryside Management Service.

On Sunday 20 February, the Friends were checking to see that the 30 baby oak trees planted in December were still alive.

"They all seem to be well," said Anne Lalaguna, Hon Secretary of the Friends, and added, "Cherry Tree Wood is one of the last remnants of an ancient woodland which used to cover the whole area, and we want to try and preserve it as authentically as possible".

Having checked the oaks, the volunteers scoured the wood for rubbish that tends to get stuck in the most awkward and obscure places.

Their next job will be to rake the grass in the wetland by the

railway to encourage wild flowers to germinate. Anyone wishing to help should turn up at 10am on Sunday 30 April - with a rake, if possible! For more information, telephone 020 8883 3846.

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Where did all the daffodils go? Ask Valentine

By Daphne Chamberlain

I've got a special interest in daffs. I was named for them, as there were so many about when I was born. My birthday - in early February - has always been celebrated with a bunch of them. Until the last couple of years, that is.



Gary Dipple and Vicky of Iris florists. Photo by Daphne Chamberlain

There are daffodils at Christmas, daffodils all through March till Easter, - but where do they go in between? I asked Vicky, who has worked for 10 years at Iris, the florist between Chandos Road and the cemetery.

Seeing red

"They are around," she said, "but pushed out by Valentine's Day. As people get more geared up to that, they want red flowers." ("If someone could produce a red daffodil, they'd be laughing!" said her employer, Gary Dipple.)

Talking of Valentine's Day, some mums and loved ones' mums get bouquets then, too. Teachers strike lucky at the end of term, when a lot of children take them little plants or flowers.

Plants sell well at the Jewish New Year, particularly at Iris's Southgate shop, and there is a general fascination with novelty pots - like mini Christmas fir trees guarded by tiny teddy-bears.

A trained florist, with 17 years in the trade, Vicky does arrangements for both Iris's shops. When I spoke to her, she was

finishing an aeroplane for the funeral of a World War II pilot.

"This sort of thing gives you a lot of satisfaction, but it's not a glamorous career", she says. "I'm lucky to have strong nails! I like working here, though. East Finchley is a very close, friendly community."

Elegant exotics

Have customers' tastes changed? "Definitely. People want more exotic flowers now, and they often buy just three or four tall stems with lots of foliage. Lilies are very popular." Like chrysanthemums and carnations, these survive well in warm rooms.

As for daffodils the Christmas ones, from Holland and Guernsey, are taller. Later blooms are shorter - and cut without their leaves. And where do the last blooms of the season come from? Gary surprised me with this one - Scotland!

Iris, started by Gary's parents 30 years ago, is at 242, High Road, N2 9AH. Tel. 020 8444 0316.

The Dipple brothers also run a Landscaping Service. The number for that is 020 8444 3130 or 079 5735 7545.

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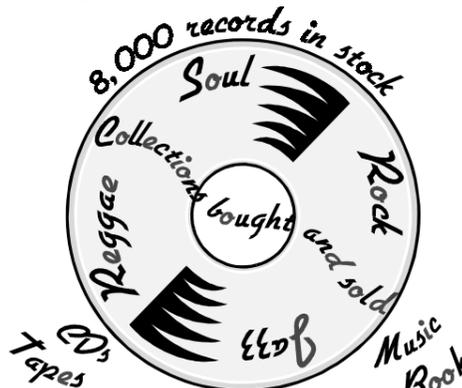
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Local talent

Actress Carolyn Pickles, of Bedford Road, can be seen on ITV in the children's series "Big Meg, Little Meg."

The programme is shown on Tuesdays at 4.40pm.

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