



# Out & About...

with Noel Lynch

## Apology

Apologies to readers for the non-appearance of this column over the last few months. This was due to political and other commitments. "Out & About" will appear regularly in future, so please keep the news coming in.

## Brothel closed

Police closed one of East Finchley's two brothels recently. They acted in conjunction with Barnet Council to close the establishment which was located opposite a primary school.

## Early bird

Former MP John Marshall called at The Bargain Centre recently. Already canvassing for the next general election!

## Royal Artist

Local artist Sharon Gee had a full-page colour spread in the Evening Standard this month. Sharon only started painting in 1997, when she bought some brushes and watercolours at The Bargain Centre. One of her paintings now hangs in the Queen Mother's sitting room, and she has just had a sell-out exhibition in a prestigious Chicago gallery. Readers with good memories will remember that I advised them to buy her pics almost two years ago. At that time they could be picked up for under £100. You will now have to pay between £700 and £2,000.

## Credit Union

The Credit Union is now up and running with over 100 members. It opens for business at the Neighbourhood Centre on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. If you would like to join or have any questions, please go along then. You can also get membership forms from The Bargain Centre, where I am always quite pleased to talk about Credit Unions.

## Museum in Danger

The Jewish Museum in East End Road faces possible closure since its £32,000 annual grant from London Borough Grants has been withdrawn. Brian Coleman Conservative GLA member and Victor Anderson Green Party GLA member have both written to the LBG protesting about the cut-back and have hopes that something can be resolved.

## Holes

Lawrie Chivers recently wrote an article "Anyone want to buy an 'ole'" about the holes dug months ago on the High Road. It might be just a coincidence, but shortly after the article appeared, the holes were filled in!

Please send items suitable for this column to Noel Lynch at The Bargain Centre, 212 High Road, N2, Tel 020 8883 0234 or e-mail noellynch@lineone.net

## FINCHLEY FORUM UPDATE

By Daphne Chamberlain

### Death watch

East Finchley resident, Mr Chapman, asked the Forum to investigate the sorry situation of two trees outside All Saints Church, Durham Road.

In 1997, he said, Church authorities asked the Council to remove a sycamore because of subsidence problems. The application was refused, and last year the tree appeared healthy and in full bloom. It is now dead. The leaves of a neighbouring tree (not a sycamore) are also turning yellow.

Mr Chapman complained that Barnet have not responded to his letters, and maintained that it would be simple to analyse samples from the trees to establish the cause of their sudden sickness. He was told that a reply was in the post to him, and Chair Kathy McGuirk said that the Council would investigate and report back.

### Baronsmere Road delay

The Forum was told that "the impact of the measures will be reviewed over the next six months, before a final decision is made on the permanent retention of the scheme."

### On the market

In spite of protests, North Finchley Market will be moving into Lodge Lane carpark. The Environmental Policy Development Sub-Committee has approved planning application for the market to use the south-east part of the carpark on Fridays, for a temporary period of two years.

### Writer's cramp

About 10,000 square metres of graffiti have already been removed since April. A lot of it has gone straight back, but other authorities have reported that persistence pays. After their daubs have been cleaned off several times in succession, many of the vandals call it a day.

All racist or offensive graffiti should be removed from any property in the borough within twenty-four hours by the Council's specialised removal unit. Discussions are being held with Railtrack about defacement of bridges.

### Culling all cars

Between 1 April and 17 July, more than 900 abandoned vehicles have been removed and disposed of. Where possible, the cost is passed on to the last recorded keeper. If the keeper has sold it on without informing DVLA, they will be prosecuted.

The next Finchley Forum will be at 6.30pm on Tuesday, 7 November, at Avenue House, East End Road, N3.

# Picnic in the Park

By Martin Earl

It was a rather soggy Saturday afternoon on 8 July when Councillor Alison Moore officially opened the new picnic and quiet area in Cherry Tree Wood, but this didn't dampen the spirits of those who attended, including Rudi Vis, MP, nor The ChaChas who provided the jazz music – even though they had to play close to the trees and required a volunteer to hold up an umbrella!

The opening was organised by the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood (FOCTW) and the Local Agenda 21 and timed to coincide with Barnet's Environment week and, most importantly, the provision of new picnic tables by the council. The organisers say they were more than a little alarmed when the tables had not arrived by the day before, but in the end the council managed to get three there for the opening.

The new area is between the café and the cottage at the far end of the park from the High Road where many years ago there used to be clock golf. The Countryside Management Services have advised on planting



The ChaChas, Damian Martin and Stelios Kalisperides with Pam Smith on umbrella! Photo: Martin Earl.

for the area so that it will provide a reasonably secluded spot with six, very substantial - they need to be seen to be believed - picnic tables in a woodland setting.

Planting will take place in November and volunteers to join FOCTW and Agenda 21 to help with this would be very welcome. (Tel: 8883 3846)\*

There were sunny spells between the rain; enough to enjoy the wine and food bought by those who came, and to draw the raffle of which the third prize was appropriately enough

a woodland tree: a prize I have to admit - not having a large garden - I was rather relieved not to win.

\*Volunteers are also needed for a second clearing of the wild flower area at 10 am on Sunday 20 August. Please bring a rake if you can!

## All that Jazz

The Cha Chas give free jazz performances in the park every Thursday evening from 7 to 9.30 pm in conjunction with the Thursday night Bistro at the Café.

Throughout August the Café will be open until 9 pm every evening and offering excellent home cooked food and live jazz.

As they do not have a drinks licence you will have to bring your own wine, but this must be one of the most relaxed ways to spend an evening in East Finchley.



Rudi Vis, MP and Cllr. Alison Moore at the opening of the new picnic area. Photo: Martin Earl

## Missing link

Njazi Salilu has been reported missing since 24 December 1999. He may be in the borough, as his girlfriend is believed to live here. He was reported missing by his brother in Germany who has not heard from him for three years.

Njazi is an Albanian national, born in Kosovo and he may think that his application for asylum will be refused - this is not necessarily the case.

He is described as six feet tall, black hair, of dark European appearance, slim build. Anyone with further information is requested to contact the Missing Persons Unit on 020 8733 4535.

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