



# From The Archer Archive...

By David Tupman



Parking one's Rolls has always been a problem in East Finchley. Photo by David Tupman

## December 1993:

The Archer's 12-page festive edition had a familiar lead story 'No Parking in N2'. Investigative sleuth, John Dacam, reported that Barnet Council's plans for a Controlled Parking Zone or CPZ will have a huge impact on East Finchley. Residents' groups including the Finchley Society thought that the CPZ would damage local businesses by restricting access to local shops. Many felt that "the Council's scheme is papering over problems caused by an inadequate public transport system".

Five year old Hannah Featherstone's front page picture shows off a Yamaha XV 1000 Virago motorcycle, a 1:16 scale reproduction model for 3-8 year olds available from A1 Motors Stores, High Road for £259.

## KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

### Fast Forward

After the wonderful waterworld that was early November I gazed myopically into my crystal balls, all three of them, I was seeing treble, and fast forwarded into the future...

The full effect of global warming hit me as I emerged from my own personal time capsule outside the A1 Sailing Supply Centre and got my bearings. To the north stretched the busy waterway of the North Circular Canal and I could barely see the sunlit shores of North Finchley for super tankers heading for the docks at Brent Cross. To the east Fortis Green Causeway hugged the high ground as it wound its precarious way towards the island of Muswell Hill. Even if the view to the west seemed little different, apart from the Mercedes motor cruisers and BMW speedboats, the view to the south towards what used to be London brought tears to my eyes. Only the twin islands of Hampstead and Highgate stood out in the Greater London Sea, St. Paul's was no longer a cathedral, it was a hazard to shipping and the Telecom Tower was now a mooring for cruise ships.

I could barely recognise East Finchley. True, Maddens, now called the Sailor's Retreat, still offered a warm welcome, but beyond what had become Seagull Corner there was only the boathouse with its distinctive statue of an archer rising above the waves. No Phoenix, that had been relocated to the higher ground of Muswell Hill and no Cherry Tree Woods, merely an expanse of calm water. The only good news was that the McDonalds Hamburger University was now a favourite with scuba divers.

Of course not everything had changed, The Archer was still serving the community and when I picked up a stray copy I was unsurprised to see that the houseboat owners along Baronsmere Wharf were still complaining. Their 'Not in My Backwater' campaign was about stopping speedboats racing past as little as fifty yards away and disturbing their expensively purchased tranquillity. The big news wasn't the houseboat owners' protest, but a report of the East Finchley Community Regatta. Apparently this was a big success and, unlike the previous year, the five-a-side water polo passed without any of the horses drowning. Some nutcase called Ricky Savage Junior was still winding up anything that moved and most things that didn't and local history was provided by the editor's grandmother describing how her wedding took place in the same week as that of the Prince of Wales! That, obviously, was before the House of Blair replaced the House of Windsor and when King Tony II was not even a twinkle in the late King Euan's eye...Normal service will be resumed in 2001.

## EAST FINCHLEY FAMILIES

# The Plowmans

By Daphne Chamberlain

John Sparrow lives in Fortis Green, in a house which his great-great-uncle, Thomas Plowman, probably helped to build. A lot of us have lived or worked or spent some time in a Plowman building. In fact, you could say that his family has left its mark on East Finchley.

Mark Plowman, John's great-great-grandfather, came here in 1826 from Wavendon, Buckinghamshire. He met cement manufacturer James Frost, who had bought Strawberry Vale, and they put up several houses there, although only Hawthorndene survives today.

Mark also rebuilt the George Inn, possibly helped put up Colethall and Springcroft Lodge (vanished mansions along Fortis Green), and built Stanley Road, Homefield Cottages and Homefield House, where he lived from 1829 to 1841. (Remember our interview with Dorothy Seymour, whose father later ran a car-hire business from Homefield House?).

In the 1840s, "There were many godless people in East End Village.... prize fights (footraces, steeple chases, etc.) gave rise to much that was bad. Drunkards abounded and there was no moral restraint, no orderly rule, no wholesome supervision."

Not long after a local resident wrote this, some of the not-so-godless of East Finchley started collecting to build Holy Trinity church and its original school (now the Bobath Centre in East End Road). Mark Plowman built them, using bricks from his eldest son, Thomas, a brick maker in the Hogmarket.

When Mark died in 1857, his business went to another of his sons, Mark the second, who built Vernon Terrace (near the Long Lane/Church Lane junction), and was probably involved in the construction of Avenue House.

Another son, Charles, established Plowman's Timberyard at Church End on the Tesco site. The connection with John Sparrow is through the first Mark's daughter, Emily, who became his great-grandmother. She married Joseph Sparrow, son of the inn-keeper at the Bald-Faced Stag, in 1851.

John came to Finchley as a child, via Pinner and evacuation, and attended Manorside School. The Plowman business continued for 150 years, but John has no idea if any of the four subscribers of that name in the Barnet phone directory are his relatives.

However, Finchley Archives material mentions a "family firm of Plowman at Ballards Lane", established by "Charles Plowman, a carpenter" before 1790 - before Mark was born. Coincidence? Or was the family even deeper-rooted in Finchley than he thought?



Thomas Plowman 1823-1829, great-great-uncle of John Sparrow.

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