



Home at last! Dolly (left) and Del Cartwright of Leicester Road - reunited. Photo by David Tupman

# Parrot fashion

By David Tupman

**Dolly, a 20-year-old parrot and much-loved pet of Del Cartwright of Leicester Road, spoke to The Archer over a cappuccino in Casa Pepe.**

**The Archer:** Now, Dolly, news has reached us that you left home recently in a huff and caused a lot of anxiety to your devoted owner, Del.

**Dolly:** Cheeky.

**The Archer:** Don't you feel bad, flying off down Leicester Road and taking a high perch in the plane tree in front of Cootes the Chemist? Then you obstinately refused to come down despite the arrival of the Fire Brigade.

**Dolly:** Who's a pretty boy then?

**The Archer:** Then, Dolly, having spent a whole night up the tree you flew off down Lincoln Road and then disappeared from East Finchley. Did you realize what worry you caused to Del, who thinks the world of you?

**Dolly:** Saucy.

**The Archer:** A week later, a worried householder in Highgate telephoned the RSPCA to report a parrot lurking in his garden. What were you doing there, Dolly?

**Sausage**

**Dolly:** Silly old (expletive deleted)!

**The Archer:** Dolly, you seem to be taking this very casually. Have you no regrets? No remorse?

**Dolly:** (after a long pause) (expletive deleted) off!

**Del Cartwright:** He's always been like this. We love him to bits but I think we'll have to stop him watching Channel 4 after this exhibition.

**The Archer:** Well, Dolly and Del, The Archer is very pleased that you have been reunited and life's now back to normal. But, Dolly, we really think that readers will want to know why you flew off to Highgate.

**Dolly:** Cheeky. Simple really, I got fed up waiting for a 143 bus. Goodbye.

## GARDENING

### Digging in the Rain

By Zena Robson

**A trip to Crews Hill has filled me with dread! I await the arrival of that utterly awful snowman that dominates the whole place, only overshadowed by the awfulness of the Father Christmas. Oh for a flame throwing sharp-pointed spear to burst the lot and shrivel them to the real toxic mass that they are.**

What a miserable old bag I hear some of you say. Personally I prefer garden centres to be just that. But we've all got to make a living and dolling the place up like a grotto and stocking it with tawdry trinkets seems to do the trick.

#### Wet blanket

I'd feel better if it just stopped raining for a half-decent interval. I have managed to leap out and lift and split some herbaceous but an awful lot of stuff has been just too wet and inaccessible. Enjoy the rest, but make sure that you have cleared up leaves from the lawn and put them into black bags with holes punched in. Water if not wet already and store out of the way. If you have lots of leaves on your borders, don't worry about collecting them all, just concentrate on the ones that land on and around herbaceous, especially grey-leaved types.

You may have ordered some bare-rooted roses or deciduous trees that will inevitably arrive in the middle of a howling gale. If you can find a fairly sheltered and un-

sodden area of the border, just heel them in and plant them properly in the spring. Any undivided herbaceous can be dealt with at the same time.

If you are growing any of the Cornus (dogwood) family (which might not be a bad idea given the fact that they like moist soil!), don't cut them down just because they have lost their leaves. The stems look great on a sunny winter's day and can be cut hard back in early spring.

#### Cast-off

On the lawn, the worms have been going berserk. Don't be tempted to smear the casts around with a lawnmower. Instead, either brush them off with a stiff broom or collect them up and allow to dry out. They make wonderful potting compost for the specials that need special attention!

Otherwise, just sit back and flick through the seed catalogues. Remember my tip about growing unusual annual climbers - they are definitely conversation points and people will want the seed!

## Contact AGM

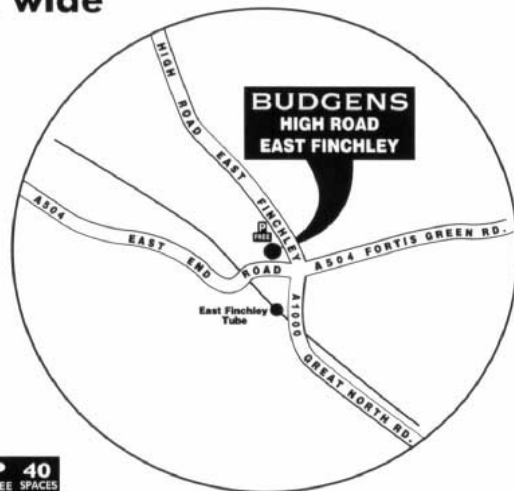
East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact has its Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 16 December, at The Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale. The meeting will begin at 11.30 am, and refreshments will be served. Everyone is welcome.

# FRESH FRIENDLY LOCAL BUDGENS

## EAST FINCHLEY

- DEPARTMENTS**
- FRESH FRUIT & VEGETABLES
- FRESH MEAT, POULTRY & FISH
- FRESH DAIRY PRODUCE
- FRESH BREAD & CAKES
- LUNCH BOX
- GROCERIES
- WINES, BEERS & SPIRITS
- NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES
- FRESH CUT FLOWERS & PLANTS
- SERVICES**
- HOME DELIVERY
- GLASS LOAN FOR PARTIES
- FREE FLOWER WRAPPING
- CUSTOMER SERVICE DESK
- BAG PACKING
- CARRY TO CAR
- OPENING HOURS**
- MON-SAT 8.00am - 10.00pm
- SUNDAY 10.00am - 4.00pm

**Budgens at East Finchley has everything you need - fresh fruit and vegetables, fresh meat, poultry and fish, freshly baked bread, a wide range of groceries, frozen foods, newspapers and magazines, a wine shop, glass loan for parties, free flower wrapping, customer service desk, bag packing and carry to car service.**



**VICEROY PARADE, 71 HIGH ROAD, EAST FINCHLEY • TEL 883 9670**

**BUDGENS - ALWAYS FRESH, ALWAYS GREAT VALUE, ALWAYS LOCAL WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES FURTHER. NOT YOU.**

## Writers United

By Ralph Goldswain

**If you are a writer, or have always thought about writing and never got around to it, there's a chance for you now to join an exciting initiative in East Finchley.**

London is full of writers and aspiring writers, but they don't know about each other. Some of the local ones have already met informally to discuss the formation of an East Finchley group to talk, and read and share our work. We feel that there are bound to be others who would like to join us.

You may be one of those others, maybe working in isolation, or perhaps telling yourself that one day you'll sit down and do it. A group like this will encourage you to get started, as well as offering feedback to those who have

already produced something.

Writing is a lonely and difficult business, and this project would offer an opportunity to share the anguish with those who can understand it and empathise with it. Writers also understand the vulnerability other writers feel when sharing their work, as well as the need to receive useful and practical advice. So a group would give support and help.

If you're interested, please phone Lilian on 8444 1793 for an invitation to a meeting to discuss setting up a group.