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THE ARCHER

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What's On...

Fitness

Badminton on Wednesdays at Christ's College from 8 - 10pm. First visit free, but not suitable for beginners. Call 020 8349 0170.

Alexandra Palace Ice Rink holds skating classes and ice hockey for all ages. For info call 020 8365 2121.

Body control pilates classes now in East Finchley 1-to-1 and small mat-work classes contact Deanna Wisbey 020 8883 7029.

Cycling

Barnet cyclists hold monthly meetings on the last Thursday of every month at Carey Hall, Trinity Church Nether St and have rides at least once a month; both attended by 20 - 30 people. Call Charles Harvey 020 8455 5174.

Dance & Drama

Adult Line Dancing - Beginner classes at Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale. £3 per class. Wednesdays, 7.30-9pm and Thursdays, 11am-12 noon. For details, call Footloose 8440 8530/ 8216 5633/ 0956 481243.

Britney - Billie - Five Street Dance. Beginners or advanced, take it from the beginning with our step-by-step instruction from qualified teachers. £2.50 per class. Wednesdays at the Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale: 4.15-4.55pm for 3,4 & 5 yr-olds. 5-5.45pm for 6,7 & 8 yr olds. 5.45-6.30pm for 9yrs and over. For details, call Footloose 8440 8530/ 8216 5633/ 0956 481243.

Columbian Party Dancing. Salsa etc., A 6 week course for beginners at Martin School. Various start dates. Contact Nelsy on 8444 2012.

Country and Barn Dancing on the first Wednesday of each month at Christ Church Whetstone Oakleigh Park, Call 020 8349 0754 for details.

Drama Club For 5-9 year olds at King Alfred's School, Hampstead on Saturdays from 10-11am. Adults can also enjoy drama classes on Thursday evenings in Highgate from 8-10pm. Vicky, former Head of Drama at King Alfred's, runs both classes. Contact Vicky on 020 8883 7110.

Drama Group Whatever your interests - acting, directing, producing, scenery, etc., why not try our friendly group which meets regularly. Phone Peter on 020 8441 8268.

Music and Movement on Fridays 2-2.30pm for 0-2 year olds & 2.30-3pm for 2-5 year olds at the Old Barn, Tarling Road, East Finchley. Contact Jennifer on 020 8444 7732.

Over-60s - Come dancing at Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane. Every Wednesday, 10.30 am - 12.30pm. Ring 020 8346 8736 for info.

MUSWELL HILL BOOKSHOP

Now holds regular author readings and discussions. If you would like further information or to join our mailing list contact us at:



72 FORTIS GREEN ROAD, N10
020 8444 7588

Walks & Tours

The Ramblers Association (Finchley & Hornsey Group). For further details contact Vivien Mallindine 020 8883 8190.

Stepping Out has guided walking tours in and around London. Contact 020 8881 2933 for further details.

Clubs & Social

All Saints Beer and Wine Circle are looking for new members interested in home brewing and winemaking as well as some social activities. They meet on third Friday every month at Thomas More Centre, Thomas More Way, N2. Call Richard Baldwin on 020 8883 7081 for more information.

Friendly Rubber Bridge at the Old Barn, Fallows Close, Tarling Road, Mondays approx 13.30 to 16.30. 75p including tea. For further information call 020 8439 4613.

The Hampstead Social Group, which includes the East Finchley Area, meets most evenings, largely in members' homes for social events. Late thirties and forties age group for new members. No membership fees, contact David Morris on 020 8455 0477 for further details.

Muswell Hill Synagogue, 31 Tetherdown, N10, has a full social and educational programme, as well as services on Friday night at the start of Shabbat, and on Saturday mornings, followed by a friendly kiddush. For further information call 020 8883 5925 Monday or Friday 11am-1pm.

The North London Bridge Club meets each Thursday at 1.15pm at Our Lady of Muswell Parish Hall, Colney Hatch Lane, N10. Call 020 8348 3495 for further details.

Single Solution, over 30s night every Friday at Sam's Bar, Fortis Green, call 020 8802 2326 weekdays, 020 8363 2328 evenings.

Art & exhibitions

Art Classes Tuesday evenings 7.30 - 9.30 at St Peter Le Poer, Albion Ave N10. Thursday morning 10 - 12.30 at The Old Railway Station (Cufos), The Avenue N10. 2.30 - 5 pm Fridays: Portrait of still life classes at The Old Railway Station (Cufos), The Avenue N10. For more information call Henry on 020 8888 5133.

Finchley Arts Society has a demonstration entitled Quick drying Genesis Oils, Wednesday 13 December 7.30pm at Trinity Church Centre N12.

The Jewish Museum, 80 East End Road, N3, has a special exhibition **Keeping the Light** - a diary of South India, photos of the Jews of Cochin runs until 28 January 2001. Also **What Remains: The Jewish East End then and now** - an exhibition of photographs by Sam Turner running until 22 April 2001. Call 020 8349 1143 for further details.

Events & Fairs

College Farm: Country Fair on the first Sunday of each month. Regular attractions are craft market, picture gallery, donkey rides and a horse bus, apart from being able to see the rare breeds of farm animals.

Theatre & Comedy

Millfield Theatre presents **Cinderella** from Thursday 7 December - Saturday 13 January. Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years Eve, also matinee performances; Call 020 8807 6680 for further details.

Music - clubs

Barnet Schools Music Centre meets Sat mornings Finchley (strings), East Barnet and Hendon (woodwind/brass) call 020 8445 6831 for details.

Broadway & Westend Musical Singing Workshop-Regular courses provide vocal coaching and teach performing skills. St Mary's church hall Finchley Central N3. For further details call Idit Gold 020 8449 0011 email: iditgold@hotmail.com

Learn to sing at the Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards Lane on Tuesday 2-4pm. Wednesday 7.30 - 9.30pm and Friday 1-3pm call 020 8455 2403 for more information.

The Memory Lane Singing Club-Singing training centre open for all levels. Musicians are welcome to join the club's band. St Mary's Church Hall, Finchley N3. For further details call Idit Gold 020 8449 0011 email: iditgold@hotmail.com

SWON the Symphonic Wind Orchestra of North London rehearse during term time on Tuesday at Brookland Junior School, Hill Top, Hampstead Garden Suburb, NW11 at 7.30pm. New players (minimum grade 5) are welcome. Call 020 8883 3365.

Performance

The Frank Gordon Quintet, featuring vocalist Debbie Gould, play modern jazz standards every Saturday from 10pm - 1am at The Tufnell Park Tavern, 162 Tufnell Park Road, N7. Admission free - but no admission after 11pm.

Cinema

The Phoenix Cinema - call 020 8883 2233 for listings or 020 8444 6789 for the box office.

ARTS AND CINEMA

By GEOFF GARFIELD

Hasn't this year gone by in a blink of an eye? It doesn't seem like twelve months since the Thames supposedly caught fire in an orgy of celebration to bring in the Millennium.

As the year draws on towards that big blowout that represents Christmas, it is reflection time. What were the highs and lows of the year 2000 in terms of movies? What films will still be talked about this time next year, and what were those little (or not so little) horrors that irritated you, frustrated you or allowed you to catch up on your sleep?

Well, in no particular order I have listed the films which have won a place in my affections. Plenty of room there!

"Billy Elliot", "High Fidelity", Clint Eastwood's "Space Cowboys", "Gladiator", Woody Allen's "Sweet and Lowdown", "Beau Travail", "In the Mood for Love", Steve Martin's "Bowfinger" and last, but not least, "Snatch".

Stinkers invariably include remakes, on the understanding that you cannot improve on a great movie. I say leave well alone. Shame on Eddie Murphy for the woeful "Nuttty Professor"; and the people responsible for "Bedazzled" should personally apologise to the late lamented Peter Cook (unfortunately he left no forwarding address). Whoever thought Elizabeth Hurley could act must have been bedazzled by her other charms.

There were other mishaps but the oxygen of publicity might revive them. Best not seen, best forgotten would apply to "Guest Hotel Paradise", Mel Gibson's "The Patriot", "Love, Honour and Obey", "Gangster Number One" and "Essex Boys" - the last three being pale imitations of "Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels". I think I am probably on my own here, but "Being John Malkovitch" was my personal low spot of the year. Of course, these lists are very subjective and, if you have any comments or ideas of your own, you can contact me through the paper.

Recommendations for 2001: The reissue of "Some Like it Hot" and "Raging Bull". Also, Woody Allen must have read my article earlier this year, for his new movie "Small Time Crooks" has a high quota of one-liners. Back on form at last.

It leaves me just space to say: Be nice to one another in 2001 and be extra nice to the Phoenix. Go as often as you can - it is the best little movie house for miles around.

Life through a lens

British and Colonial's East Finchley studio

By Sonia Singham

Did you know that one of the biggest film companies in pre-1914 Britain had its studio in East Finchley? Lecturer in film history, Gerald Turvey, found a reference to East Finchley in a book on the history of the British film industry and decided to investigate and discovered that there had been a film studio here before the First World War.

Unfortunately he found that very few of the films the company made had survived and he had to obtain most of his information from trade magazines like Bioscope and Pictures and the Picturegoer.

The British and Colonial Kinetograph Company was founded in 1908 and initially made news and documentary films, but in the autumn of 1909 moved into making fiction films - both dramas and comedies. This proved to be a great success and by 1915 they were producing twenty-one hours of fiction films, making them the third largest British producers.

The East Finchley studio opened in 1911 and was based at Newstead House on the High Road, on the left, just past Sylvester Road as you go north. Described by Bioscope as 'a romantic spot' it was a large private house with extensive grounds which was converted to suit the needs of the company. The house contained a refectory, dressing rooms and wardrobe stores while the filming itself was done on a large open-air platform built over an old tennis court.

East Finchley, described by Pictures and the Picturegoer as 'one of the most charming of all

London suburbs' had been chosen because of its tube and tram links which made for easy access from London.

As all filming was done out of doors using natural light, summer was the busiest period for the studio with the working day starting at eight in the morning and often continuing until eight at night. Local residents apparently got used to the studio's activities, particularly its explosions. On one occasion

a specially erected building was blown up and not only scattered shattered wood all over Newstead House, but was heard for miles around, slamming doors and rattling windows!

The company effectively ceased operations in 1916 when its managing director, J.B. McDowell, a brilliant cameraman, assumed official responsibility for filming the battles on the Western Front for the government.



A fond farewell...to The Manor Cottage, East End Road. Recently demolished to build a selection of two-bedroom flats. Photo by Alison Roberts