



Archie - 60 this year and not looking a day over 35.  
Photo: Rob Steinberg

## Archie's anniversary

'Archie' - East Finchley Station's exotic statue is 60 this July and gives an exclusive interview to David Tupman of The Archer.

**The Archer:** Are you really 60 years old Archie - you look so much younger?

**Archie:** Oh yes, I was unveiled on 22 July 1940 by my dear old friend Eric Aumonier the famous sculptor though I was recast in 1957 and touched up in 1996. £245 - that's all I cost all those years ago. Eric did other sculptures, you know, for London Transport, but none are as distinguished as me. I am twice the size of a typical chap and do you know I'm very international in make-up.

**The Archer:** International, Archie?

**Archie:** Indeed, I am made up of 6 cwt of beech built around a steel support and covered in 5 cwt of sheet lead. The beech came from Czechoslovakia, so cruelly annexed by Herr Hitler, and the gold for my gilt features is from South Africa. I am proud to say my bow is of English Ash, which was bent by steam and coated in copper and gilt.

**The Archer:** You are a mine of information Archie, what else can you recall?

**Archie:** Dear me yes I have seen so many things in East Finchley - the Blitz and that frightful land mine in Chapel Court, the destruction of the Congregational Church where Budgens now is, the end of the routemaster buses. I loved them all. Oh yes just imagine the times before all that traffic, graffiti and the funny old red brick MacDonalds building.

**The Archer:** Is it true that you are a trainspotter?

**Archie:** If only I hadn't lost my spectacles in the 1987 gales. I do love trains. We used to have steam train excursions to Southend - yes from East Finchley! I've seen them all on the Northern Line; the 1938 electric stock with its red livery, green interiors and comfy seats was my favourite. You could open the windows you know. They tell me the new trains with that woman's ghostly voice are a trifle hot. I am glad I don't have to travel with my lead coat - I'd die!

**The Archer:** So Archie, don't you get a bit lonely up there on that parapet?

**Archie:** Oh no. I see hordes of people everyday. Where do they all come from? I've seen famous people, too. Peter Sellers used to live on the High Road you know - opposite the Library. And Spike Milligan used to lodge there with Peter's mum. I think we should have our own blue plaque.

**The Archer:** So Archie, you seem very chippa, what is your recipe for looking so good at 60?

**Archie:** Quite simply, I put it down to an outdoor life and I haven't put any weight on since 1940. Holding this bow for 60 years has certainly kept me fit. Between you and me, I do have to admit to a bit of rust in my inspection plate, and the occasional bout of vertigo, but I musn't grumble.

**The Archer:** Thank you so much for talking to us. Happy Birthday.

**Archie:** The pleasure was all mine. We are both East Finchley icons - here's to the next 60 years!

**CONTACT** CONTACT, East Finchley's Good Neighbour Scheme, is appealing for **VOLUNTEERS** to support the elderly and housebound who need help in the N2 area. Expenses will be paid and training given. Please call the co-ordinator between 9am and 1pm on 020 8444 1162. **CONTACT**

42 Church Lane  
London N2 8DT Telephone: 020 8444 6265

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**Training given**

If you are interested contact the co-ordinator on 020 8444 6265.

## EAST FINCHLEY FAMILIES

### The Weston brothers & Elsie Bolding

By Daphne Chamberlain

**Who were the Weston Brothers? Some of you might plump for a famous variety act, but in East Finchley between the wars there was another answer. Greengrocers.**

Archie Weston's shop was at the junction of Church Lane and the High Road, where the garage stands today; Ernest's was further up Church Lane, facing Long Lane; and Tom's was on the corner of New Trinity Road.

Archie's daughter, Mrs Elsie Bolding, had many rides in their delivery carts. They were drawn by horses stabled near the Red Lion pub, on what is now the Grange estate. She was never allowed to get up on the horses themselves, though. "They were workers," she says, "not pets, but my father was mad about horses. He'd often spend three days at Barnet Horse Fair."

#### Barnet Fair

Barnet Fair was a great event then, drawing "crowds of people streaming up the road from Holloway".

Elsie also remembers other, very different, processions along the High Road. Cows, pigs and sheep walked to Pulham's slaughterhouse by the cemetery, (now the newer block of St. Pancras Court). "They started making a noise when they were near, but we didn't think anything of it as children. We loved seeing them go past, and we always followed the Salvation Army parades too."

Elsie was born in Albert Street, North Finchley, but the family moved to East Finchley when she was two, living first



A Christmas party at Pryors (now The Alexandra), Church Lane, in the '50s. Landlord Arthur Pryor is on the far right, his wife, Vera, seated in the white hat (and red nose), Marie Pryor 2nd from right, Elsie Bolding 3rd from left (back) with her daughter, Helen, on her left.

near Red Lion Hill and then opposite her father's shop. Their house and a sweet shop kept by a Mrs Wallace were on the site of Church Court.

Both her parents were local people, her mother coming from North and her father from East Finchley, and her grandfather kept watercress beds off East End Road.

#### Apple pie order

Elsie worked for 18 years in the kitchen of Oak Lodge School for children with learning difficulties, both in Oak Lane and later in Heathview. She enjoyed that. ("They were nice children.")

She herself went to Allder School in Long Lane. Of her two brothers, Archie

was killed in World War II, and Charlie moved to Suffolk, but her cousin Winnie - Uncle Tom's daughter - still lives in Hendon.

As for the fruit and vegetable connection, Elsie, now 80, helps to cook the Salvation Army's Friday lunches, where her speciality is apple pie. It's a favourite with her grandsons too.

Next month: The history of the Alexandra (Pryor's), Church Lane.



Elsie Bolding (Archie Weston's daughter). Photo: Daphne Chamberlain.

## Strings to their bows

By Daphne Chamberlain

**You might think that one thing an archer needs is good eyesight. If so, you might be wrong.**

A man called Ted comes up to East Finchley from Camden Town almost every week. He comes to an archery club, and he's blind. The other members are sighted, but they all have disabilities.

One of them is Julie Murphy, from Dunstan Close. A few years ago, she was walking along East End Road with her

mother, Sylvia, when a man asked them if they were on the way to the Monarchs Club. At the time they hadn't even heard of it, but Julie has now been a member for several years.

Archery is just one of the activities at Monarchs, though Julie estimates that about half the club's 20 or so members take part in it. Some are in wheelchairs, but they all use standard equipment. Occasionally they are joined by members from another local archery

group, and they are interested in getting involved in inter-club competition.

#### Royal welcome

Sylvia Murphy is a helper at Monarchs, which has been going for more than 10 years. She says, "There is such a warm, friendly atmosphere there, much friendlier than in many social clubs. As well as the sporting activities, which helpers can take part in, we have birthday parties and outings." There is a mixed age-range, with quite a few - like Julie - in their thirties.

Unfortunately, the club was taking a short break when I was researching this article, because they meet in the main hall of Bishop Douglass school, which was out of bounds during exam time. However, we'll bring you more news of the Monarchs in future editions.

Monarchs Bowmen meet at Bishop Douglass on Monday evenings. For further information, contact organiser Maggie Wolf on 8440 1558.

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