



Mr Patel of Pristine Dry Cleaners, who can now supply your sewing items. Photo by Daphne Chamberlain

Cotton tale

By Daphne Chamberlain

Is one of your millennium wishes coming true? A haberdasher has been spotted in East Finchley. Pristine Dry Cleaners have a display just inside their window.

They stock a good range, including hooks and eyes, snap fasteners, chalk, tape, elastic, thimbles, glue, wonder-web, iron-on patches, pocket repairs, knicker elastic - and reels of thread.

There is a 48-hour order service for anything not in the shop.

Pristine's Mr Patel says that these haberdashery items have been lurking behind the scenes for about four or five years but have now been brought out in the open by public request.

Pocket watch

Diana Cormack thinks it pays to shop locally I was on my way home from Muswell Hill when I suddenly remembered that my daughter needed some A3 plastic pockets, so I popped in to Ryman's.

They only had two packs of ten left, priced at £10.29 per pack. Thinking that this was a bit expensive, I queried the price but the manager assured me that it was correct, so I bought them.

A few days later she needed some more, so I went to Universal Office Equipment at 120 High Road, East Finchley. Not only did they have plenty, but they cost only £5.30 per pack of ten, a price which the manager looked up in his catalogue. I phoned the Muswell Hill shop to complain, but was told that they must be of a different quality. To me there seemed to be no difference, but the more expensive ones were marked "Made in the UK especially for Ryman Ltd". So I wrote to Ryman's head office.

Indifference

The reply from their buying director thanked me for pointing out the price difference, but stated that it was not for them to comment on competitors' prices and that their very comprehensive range of products were overall competitive in the market place. Whilst it was not possible to match or indeed be below the competition on every single price, he confirmed that "we are not over pricing this line against the cost price paid".

That little word "overall" covers a lot! Almost £5.00 difference in price for a product, which looks the same, feels the same and serves the same purpose is more than puzzling to me. I will leave it to the shoppers of East Finchley to work it out for themselves.

Home deliveries via the web

By Helen O'Toole My mum works full time and does not have time to do a supermarket shop every week.

She used to make a trip to Sainsburys in North Finchley once a month, buying things which could be stored easily, and on Saturdays she would buy things like bread, fresh fruit and vegetables from the High Road.

Now mum has decided to use Tesco Direct home shopping. She makes her usual list and then finds the items she requires on the World Wide Web. This is more convenient for her as it cuts out the drive and saves her having to lift heavy loads in and out of the car.

Out of site

The trouble with Internet shopping is that it is often not easy to tell what things are. For example, in the shops you can see the size and exactly what the package contains. Sometimes it proves impossible to find items at all; last time biscuits were elusive!

The groceries are delivered to the home and the next convenient delivery slot is booked when placing the order. Somehow the van arrives in the middle of the evening meal!

Web feat

My mum has used Tesco Direct twice and has been sent the wrong type of baked beans, managed to get a free pork chop and the loo roll she decided to use is not very soft on the family's behinds!

As mum can't see what she is buying she often forgets things and ends up buying them from the local stores. On each occasion we have used the home delivery service there have been items which the store was unable to supply. Mum gets fresh fruit and vegetables and dairy products as well as the missing items from the High Road. This means the local shops have benefited as well as mum's back!

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ART EXHIBITION



Laura Fishman with some of her treasures.

One woman's treasure

By Daphne Chamberlain

Laura Fishman, who lives near Henley's Corner, is showing paintings of her collection of flowers, shells, pottery, etc, at Chorak Patisserie from 2 May.

The "etc" includes objects brought back by Laura's friends from all over the world.

American-born Laura worked as a textile designer and colourist in New York City, and her particular interest is in pattern and design. She says, "You don't have to be an art critic to understand my work. I aim to produce something balanced and harmonious, which is pleasing to look at."

Working in both watercolours and oils, she generally has

about three or four pictures on the go at one time. She often spends a few hours on an oil painting, and then may leave it for a few weeks while she reverts to watercolours.

Laura, who has a degree in art, has wanted to paint since she was three or four, and she will give lessons (either one-to-one or in very small groups) to both children and adults. She can be contacted on 0956 852881. Chorak is at 122, High Road, East Finchley.

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