



Another Con-Merchant in East Finchley

Flowery Tale

People in East Finchley are again being bothered by someone trying to cash in on their generosity. This time it is a man who, like the woman featured on the front page of last month's *Archer*, calls early in the morning or late at night. A resident of Summerlee Avenue tells of her encounter with him.

"One Sunday morning at 7.15am my doorbell rang. There was a man standing there whom I did not recognise. He asked me if I knew the lady who worked in Josephine's the florist. I said that I did. He said he was her son and that their van had been clamped in the High Road with £43,000 worth of flowers on board, he said they were short by £17 to pay for it to be unclamped.

I realised immediately that it was a trick. I know Trish and her son and this man certainly was not her son. I know they have not got a van and that there are no clamps in the High Road on Sunday mornings! I simply said 'We don't keep money in the house'. But he persisted, asking me if I realised who he was talking about. I said 'Everybody in East Finchley knows her and I still have no money!'. At which point he turned on his heel and walked

quickly up the road.

I telephoned the police immediately and reported the incident. Later I went to see Trish at Josephine's and told her.

Early Call

It seems that this same scam has been going on for months. This man had called on the priest of All Saints Church in Durham Road just 15 minutes before he knocked on my door."

There have also been reports of him in Temple Fortune and Hampstead Garden Suburb, claiming to have been sent by "the man who owns the greengrocers" or "Ralph from the flower stall" again asking for cash to get his van unclamped.

The man is white, medium height, aged between 30 and 40. He has light coloured hair and very round blue eyes. He speaks with a London accent. Do not give him any money and call the police.



Finchley Credit Union holds its first AGM.

Credit Union hits the spot

The Finchley Credit Union, launched in May last year, held its first Annual General Meeting at the Green Man Community Centre, East Finchley, on 3 March.

The credit union is a financial co-operative, run by volunteers, which offers a basic financial service for those who want to save a small amount regularly or wish to borrow at a low rate of interest.

The meeting heard from

Credit Union Chairman, Kim George, how the credit union had met its target of attracting 150 members in its first year, and had considerably exceeded its target with regard to savings.

"The credit union has been

successful because we are meeting a need, providing services to the otherwise financially excluded", he said. "But we have also been successful because even those able to gain finance elsewhere, realise our rates are very competitive"



Walkers gather outside the station. Photo by Jane Revell

Big Fun Walk 2001

By Irene Jeary

On Sunday 11 March, a thousand-plus people were milling around East Finchley underground station to register for the Big Fun Walk 2001 in aid of the North London Hospice. Everyone was given a map and a sheet of useful advice. I walked with John, a sprightly 80-year-old, and we set off at 9.30am.

After Cherry Tree Wood and Queenswood, a long drag up to Highgate village then down to Parliament Hill and Highgate Ponds, all very lovely with the trees bursting into Spring.

Next stop Belsize Park, where we had our forms stamped and were given biscuits and bottled water. John and I sat down for about 10 minutes: not a good idea because the muscles start seizing up.

On to Primrose Hill, the halfway point; where are all the primroses? Parliament Hill Fields was next, through to Regents Park, our second stopping place where sandwiches and fruit were available.

One of us

The next leg was boring; Baker Street, Oxford Street along to Hyde Park. We could see others ahead, some wearing the white North London Hospice

baseball caps. The other way of telling if someone was "one of us" was a bottle of water and a map in its plastic folder.

Green Park then St James Park - surely the prettiest park in London. If you have not been, go; there are a lot of interesting water birds and the view from the bridge is spectacular.

Sense of achievement

Now I knew I was nearing the end of the walk. The Methodist Central Hall was the finishing point where more refreshments were provided, and there was a steel band to entertain us. A bit foot-sore and weary but with a great sense of achievement, John and I wended our way by London Transport back to East Finchley. John and I were not the fastest nor the slowest walkers, but then it is not a race but a Big Fun Walk.

Join us next year!

Solitary Nature Reserve Under Threat

Local voluntary group, Coppets Wood Conservationists, is worried that Finchley & Friern Barnet's only public nature reserve is about to be systematically destroyed after 18 years of careful nurturing.

The Coppets Wood site is home to a number of rare and endangered plant species, which, it appears, Barnet Council are determined to eradicate, through path widening, application of weed killer and uprooting of plant life alongside many of the footpaths. Barnet gave the group ten days to identify the rare plants that would be affected by the work but has rejected the submissions made, and has written to the group notifying them that the work they do is no longer approved. Furthermore, it has ceased paying the groups expenses for work on the site, and for

the educational work they do with local schools.

Dr. Oliver Natelson is outraged by these latest moves on the part of the Council, and is suspicious that this may be the pre-cursor of a plan to 'allow developers to move onto the site'. As evidence for this belief Dr. Natelson cites the recent tolerance of tipping on and around the site, the bulldozing of an ancient walk and hedge and the blocking of a vital wildlife corridor due to dumping.

The Archer has not been able to obtain a response from Barnet in time for this month's deadline; however, should

you wish to find out more, we understand that Mr. Mark Evison, an officer of Barnet Council, is co-ordinating the Council's management of Coppets Wood.

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Passover 2001

By Sippy Azizollah

Well, another year has flown by and Passover is almost here. It doesn't feel like a year ago that I was spring-cleaning the flat (Did I say Spring?) to get ready for the celebration.

The Passover starts on 7 April at 8.32 p.m. and ends on the 8th day which is 15 April at 8.47 p.m., when if you're anything like me you will be looking forward to sinking your teeth into a lovely soft slice of bread. (it's just something I've always looked forward to - it's

a childhood thing!)

All of us here at *The*

Archer would like to wish the East Finchley Jewish community a very happy and healthy Passover.

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