



Popular local shop-owner will be missed

By Femke van Iperen

For the last seven years, Murali Nada has been running a successful Spar shop at 131 High Road with his family. He came to London from Sri Lanka 11 years ago to study IT at the South Bank University.

Whilst studying he became a supervisor at Tesco and afterwards he worked as a shelf assistant at the East Finchley Londis, which he bought and changed into a Spar. Murali works 15 hours a day and knows most of his customers' needs and demands. It will come as a surprise to many customers to learn that he is leaving.

Staff member Bernadette Robertson, or Bernie as she is known in the shop, described her employer as: "very chatty, someone who enjoys contact with his customers. He completely changed the business from a poor-looking shop, and it provides for a friendly, local atmosphere. The customers bring the happiness and they make the job easy," she concludes.

It could be you!

The shop has gained a reputation for selling winning lottery tickets. One of the lucky winners, who gained a life changing £7.3 million and who now owns a property in Kensington, still comes regularly for his freshly baked bread.

Murali's success at the Spar has enabled him to buy two



shops of his own in St. John's Wood and the Barbican, which mirror the Spar's methods. He feels that now is the time for him to move on, but he will miss East Finchley. Despite residing in Kingsbury, he has many friends in the area.

"East Finchley is one of the best places I have ever seen, it is like nowhere else in London. It is not too crowded, not too busy", he said.

Kathy Dare, one of Murali's earliest customers, comments: "He is a lovely person, you

could not get anyone else so nice. He is so helpful and he always makes sure that one of the boys carries the shopping for you. I will miss them dearly!"

The CPZ - two months on

By John Dearing

The East Finchley CPZ finally came into operation at the beginning of May, to a mixed response. So how has it changed matters?

The inner zone covers the High Road and the first part of adjacent side roads. Most of the kerb space has been put over to 'Pay and Display' bays, with natty, solar powered ticket machines that are reminiscent of an alien in a fifties 'B' movie (but regrettably, they don't respond to "Take me to your leader"). From a few, casual inspections, it seems that almost all the cars in these bays have tickets. Of course the minimum fee is a whole 20p, so perhaps it is not so surprising (almost all the other high streets in adjacent areas charge at least 50p, some a whole £1).

Bay watch

While there are usually one or two places empty, these bays are well used, presumably by shoppers. It seems likely that there are now more people using cars to shop in East Finchley, so it could be said that they have gained from the CPZ. It is probably too early to say whether this has improved local trade. Local traders seem more concerned about the difference between 'M' bays and 'Q' bays - it does actually say in the CPZ handbook, but it would take a lawyer's mind to notice it!

The permit bays in adjacent side roads are generally very well

The Archer comment...

What is happening?

Our front page this month tells a sorry story of ineptitude in respect to law and order. Recently we have experienced school youths committing acts of vandalism and harassment with impunity. Graffiti is endemic. Street violence, robbery and alcohol related incidents seem to be a familiar event.

With regard to the youth, the Police state that they cannot do much unless 'we catch them in the act'. Although we do have a community beat officer, how often do we see him or her? The only police presence seems to be high speed cars roaring through the High Road with sirens blaring at all times of day and night. Hardly the high profile policing that is likely to catch anyone in the act of petty crime.

Up beat

The Police undoubtedly have a resource problem, but if we have a beat officer, let's use him. Whilst it is reasonable to point to the local constabulary when looking for someone to blame, perhaps the respon-

sibility also lies closer to home. Politicians, Councillors, schools, churches, parents and the community at large all have a part to play in tackling the causes of crime.

It is not unreasonable, however, for law-abiding taxpayers to expect a prompt and robust response to criminal incidents, nor does it take a genius to work out that a regular, local and knowledgeable police presence can, and will, deter crime. This is an important issue that *THE ARCHER* intends to follow-up, so please, if you have a contribution to make, do get in touch. Together, perhaps, we can get things changed for the better!

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Retro hell

In these weird and wonderful days as we lurch uncontrollably into the twenty-first century your average car maker takes a deep breath and looks back at least forty years.

It started with Nissan who took a bland and ineffective Micra, stuck a fifties style body on it and produced the Figaro, a car that was bland, pointless and looked like a fifties Tonka Toy. But that's nothing compared with the Germans.

German efficiency means never having to admit that you're bonkers. Porsche are German. Their best selling car for thirty years was the 911, a car that was cramped, sounded like someone rattling stones in a tin can and had its engine hanging off the back so that any mistake gave you a chance to say hello to the scenery and goodbye to your no claims bonus. Finally they replaced it. Not with something new and cutting edge, but with something that looked like they'd fed the old one steroids. It still has the engine at the back, it's still dangerous. Inventive? Stupid? No, post-modern irony.

Beetle drive

VW built their success on the car Hitler commissioned, the Beetle. Braver men than I have tried to understand why this thirties design with its noisy engine, cramped interior and dodgy handling became so popular. What I do know is that when time caught up with the Beetle, it nearly killed VW. So, what did they do in the late 1990s? Yes, that's right, they went retro and took a perfectly good Golf, stuck a jelly-mould body on top and produced a cramped, ugly copy of a cramped ugly car of the fifties that they sell for several grand more than a Golf. And, guess what, we buy it.

But the worst of the bunch are BMW. They were bad enough in the eighties, but recently they've lost any plot they once had. Just look at what the lederhosen wearing maniacs have done to Britain's greatest motoring icon, the Mini. The Mini was original. No one had built a small, front wheel drive family car like that before. It changed the way cars are. Maybe a forty year life was too long, but it was a real classic. So, given the name you'd expect BMW to be original. You'd be wrong. The new Mini is the old one on steroids. It is charmless, expensive and has, as a fashion statement, a central speedo. This is retro gone mad. The new Mini looks like something drawn by an inartistic ten year old with a poor memory. The Mini was cheap, fun and clever. The new Mini is expensive, dull and stupid. But then, what did you expect from BMW?

used (except between 2pm and 3pm), presumably by residents and by shoppers too mean to part with 20p, with some surprising exceptions (for example, in East End road). On the other hand, the all-day bays on Cherry Tree Hill and Bishops Avenue are at best half empty.

Torrid zone

In the outer zone, usage of residents' bays varies from full all the time, to mostly empty. Roads like Deansway, which in the past were so badly parked that they were well nigh impassable, are now clear. Many of the roads just outside the CPZ, for instance Twyford Avenue, are absolutely choked with cars. Surprisingly, this even applies at a good distance: for example Brim Hill is clear up to the edge of the CPZ, and from then

on it is heavily parked, a good ten minutes walk from the tube station, presumably by die-hard all-day commuters for whom £2 a day is too much. Compare this with the thousands of pounds per year it costs to run a halfway decent car these days, and one wonders about some people - anyway, what is wrong with the bus, then? There are a few roads that these people seem to have missed, but it would not be fair to name them!

As a footnote, it would be interesting to learn how often the CPZ is patrolled; a few cars with tickets have been seen, but no wheel clamps. Regular enforcement is the key to a successful scheme; hopefully the council will maintain sufficient patrols to retain the credibility of the CPZ.

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