



Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column.

Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.



## Football Crazy

by Andrew Witek

The ubiquitous Manchester United were playing yet another game; and as far as I could tell there wasn't a pub in East Finchley that didn't have football as its main attraction. I wasn't asking for much, just a football-free zone where I could enjoy a Saturday afternoon tittle.

### No escape

I tried escaping to Highgate. *Rose's Ale House* looked pretty innocuous and I went in. To my utter dismay there were two televisions blasting out images of my least favourite sport.

I had just about run out of ideas and resigned myself to my fate. I found a blind spot in the pub and settled down with a pint. The commentary rang in my ears for the whole of the second half, and as the final whistle blew I felt relaxed enough to order another drink. I would head back to East Finchley as soon as I'd sunk it.

### The search continues

It was obvious to me on my way home that more research was needed in the hunt for that anomaly... a public house where soccer doesn't rule.

## LETTERS

### No pecs please, we're British!

Dear Editor

First I should like to apologise for not looking like Tarzan or Arnold Schwarzenegger: I have been working on it, but apparently with little effect.

The reason for making these remarks is that a lady at the Park Road swimming pool has complained about me doing one of the classes in the exercise room without a shirt.

The lady in question has evidently failed to notice all the topless men splashing about in the pool: or perhaps she has noticed, and in future no man (or boy) will be allowed to swim unless they are wearing a stripey one-piece bathing suit which allows only their heads, hands and feet to be seen. (Women will presumably be obliged to use bathing machines.)

I have now been informed that I must cover up the top part of my reasonable, but by no means outstanding, body.

The only good thing to come out of this absurdity is the spontaneous laughter that occurs whenever I relate the story.

Frank Gordon

## Christmas Cheer

A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories.

After about an hour, the manager came out of his office and asked them to disperse.

"But why?" they asked him as they moved off.

"Because," he replied, "I can't stand chess nuts boasting in an open foyer."

### High Road biohazard?

Dear Editor

It has recently come to my attention that there has been an application made by BT Cellnet for six antennae on the roof of Macdonalds Headquarters in East Finchley High Road.

According to a recent article by David Edwards in *The Ecologist*, October 2001 issue, Dr Gerard Hyland of the Department of Physics at Warwick University and the International Institute of Physics in Germany, has written that existing safety guidelines relating to mobile phone masts are completely inadequate.

### Electrosmog

In a report Dr Hyland warns that a major contemporary threat to health is man made 'electrosmog'. The nature of the pollution is such that for people living in the vicinity of mobile phone masts, there is literally 'nowhere to hide'. In addition, given the short time for which humans have been exposed to it, we have 'no evolutionary immunity against any adverse effects'.

### Adverse effects

There is consistent empirical, anecdotal evidence from many countries that the health of some people is adversely affected in various ways when they are exposed to the type of radiation emitted by mobile phone masts, despite its intensity being well below existing safety limits.

In my opinion, the possibility of six antennae on the roof of McDonalds Headquarters is a cause for serious concern for the residents of East Finchley, particularly for the health and safety of young children.

Write to Barnet Council (Finchley Office) Development and protection Department, 1255 High Road, London N20 OEJ (Planning Application No. CO1190 BN/01)

Anne Lalaguna  
Summerlee Avenue, N2.

## Old memories don't have to fade away

THE ARCHER has learned of a poignant find; a piece of black card with some photographs pasted to both sides, was found in East End Road near the Five Bells public house.

It shows a proud mother with her baby, and perhaps some relatives; perhaps it was part of a family album. In the centre of one side is written "Easter 1925". Perhaps this is the record of a local family. If you recognise any of these people, and could tell us a little about them, we would love to hear from you. If they are your relations, we would be pleased to return this memento.

Please contact THE ARCHER, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA Tel 08700 293 993 or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net



## GARDENING

### The Holly and the Ivy

by Zena Robson

I have decided to be traditional and talk about the joys of berries at this time of year. Let me talk about a few hollies of note: female plants need to have a male somewhere in the vicinity in order to berry up, but quite often a male will be lurking in someone else's garden or as street planting, so you don't have to have hollies all over your precious patch!

Hollies belong to the Ilex genus and there are several species and many cultivars. Ilex x altaclarensis 'Golden King' (female in spite of its name!) is good, being almost spineless and having golden, variegated leaves and wonderful bright red berries. It will grow to become a tree, as will Ilex aquifolium 'Argentea Marginata' that has white margins on dark green leaves, a weeping habit and orange-red fruits. The same can be said of Ilex x altaclarensis 'Camellifolia' which has spineless leaves of Camellia shape and shine. It grows naturally into a pyramid shape and has dark red fruits that shine out against the dark green leaves.

### Vandal-proof planting

At the other extreme, you could always go for the Silver Hedgehog Holly, Ilex aquifolium 'Ferox Argentea' with silver variegations and spines not only on the edges, but also down the leaf ribs. Great for vandal-proof planting and a good hedge; mind you, you'll have to wear armour to deal with it!

### When they are both full grown

Our other traditional plant at this time is ivy, the Hedera genus. Big leaved types can get up to 9 metres and become rampant but they do have their uses. Amongst the best are Hedera canariensis 'Gloire de Marengo' a large, leathery cream and green leaf, and one of my favourites Hedera colchica 'Sulphur Heart', also known as 'Paddy's Pride' with huge dollops of yellow amongst the green and not quite as vigorous.

Small leaved ones can be frilly - edged as in Hedera helix 'Cristata', golden splashed as in the well-known 'Gold Heart', yellow as in 'Buttercup' or arrow-shaped as in Hedera helix 'Sagittifolia'. All will need good haircuts on a regular basis to keep them in check.

Whatever you grow, I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas.

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