



Javad and Parvin Oskooee at the opening of Chorak. Photo by David Tupman

ARTS AND CINEMA

BY GEOFF GARFIELD

So, here we go again - it's Oscar nomination time and for once there is no outstanding candidate for the major honours.

Suffice it to say, in the age of the computer, that the two most likely contenders for the prizes owe more to technical wizardry than performances.

Gladiator, with its cast of thousands (all done with two mirrors and a piece of string), looks ahead of the other favourite, *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, to sweep all before it. Both movies reflect the trend not to have star names on the billing - though Russell Crowe has become pretty hot property since.

What pleases me regarding *Gladiator* is the long-overdue acknowledgement of just how versatile a director Ridley Scott is. From the moment when *Alien* arrived, via John Hurt's chest, to *Thelma and Louise* and not forgetting *Blade Runner*, Scott has not had the recognition he deserves - until now.

This year's outsider is *Billy Elliot* (and if you haven't seen it go, go, go) a story set in Durham against a backdrop of the miners' strike - a real triumph of hope over adversity.

Hanks for nothing

As for acting awards - will this be yet another Tom Hanks' benefit night? This year's Hanks' tour-de-force was *Castaway*, with Tom doing his Robinson Crusoe bit, staggering around a desert island, mumbling into his beard. Well, Tom, don't phone us - we'll phone you.

The best actress award is more than likely to go to Julia Roberts for *Erin Brockovich* - but don't quote me on it.

Coming shortly

However, while you're holding your breath in eager anticipation, why not make a note in your diary of these dates at the Phoenix:

- 2 March for three weeks - "Chocolat", a romantic comedy with a starry cast - Juliette Binoche, Alfred Molina, Judi Dench (Dame to her chums) and Johnny Depp.
- 23 March for one week - a touching drama by Paul Pavlikovsky

The matinees for March are as follows:

- 11 March *The Yards* and *The Way of the Gun*
- 18 March *Memento* and *Proof*
- 25 March *The Ice Storm* and *Happiness*

In April the Phoenix is showing two drama documentaries to tie in with the third International Human Rights Watch Festival. They are *Escape to Life* narrated by Vanessa Redgrave and *Terrorists in Retirement* narrated by Simone Signoret - more about this next month.

Fun, fun, fun

Just space to inform you of yet another venture from the Phoenix. If your little angel's birthday, coming-of-age or any old excuse is coming up, why not hire the Phoenix (on Sunday and school holiday weekday mornings for approx. four hours)? This will include a two-hour film, a one-hour food binge prepared by your good selves and one hour devoted to an art or drama-based activity. Whilst the rest of us have to troop boringly off to the pub for our birthday bashes, the lucky young things can have fun, fun, fun at the Phoenix.

Ring 020 8444 6789 for further information. Good movie viewing.



Mother's Day Memories

By Diana Cormack

I'm sure I gave my mum something on every Mothering Sunday when I was a child, but I can only remember one particular present. It wasn't anything different or special, just a small bunch of flowers, but it taught me a lesson I have never forgotten.

I knew exactly what I was going to buy her, because I had chosen carefully from the shop window display. My choice was decided by one thing and that was the price. My pocket money at that time was one old penny for each year of my life. I wasn't very old and a penny wasn't worth all that much, so I had to start saving well before Mother's Day arrived.

Eventually, added to the amount already in my money-box, I had enough. On the Saturday morning I set off for the shop, planning to hide the flowers and keep them fresh in water overnight. But when I looked in the window, I got a terrible shock. The price on the flowers I wanted had changed. They now cost more than I could afford. In fact, all the flowers had gone up in price!

I was really upset and it took me a while to decide what to do. Eventually I went in and persuaded the shopkeeper to sell me just half a bunch of the little flowers. When I handed them over the next day, I felt I had to explain to my mum why there were so few. In return she explained to me that when a lot of people want something, the price often goes up, so sellers and suppliers can make more money. I've since learned that it's called the law of supply and demand.

Mothering Sunday is on 25th March

From The Archer Archive

By David Tupman

March 1994:

The Archer reported on a plan to set up a refuge for homeless people in the heart of East Finchley. West Hampstead Housing Association applied for planning permission to convert a large Victorian house at no 269 East End Road into five self-contained flats and a day centre for the homeless. The prospect that 80 homeless people would use the centre each day was greeted with alarm by local residents.

Local contributor Len Willcocks reviewed the opening of Chorak on the High Road - a smart bakery, patisserie and café/restaurant. Husband and wife team Javad and Parvin Oskooee took over Hahns, the old bakery, and the office above for his architectural practice. Bread and pastries are baked on the premises while the restaurant offered a varied menu of fish, poultry and vegetarian dishes. Exhibitions by local artists and photographers were planned for the future.

Letters to the editor included one from then local Tory MP Hartley Booth congratulating *The Archer* on being "an outstanding community newspaper". Having spent time distributing the paper on the Strawberry Vale Estate, Hartley Booth told constituents that he was fighting against racial violence and harassment. [What ever happened to Hartley?]

YOUNG ARCHER

Chess Champion

Seven-year-old Oliver Glick of Lincoln Road, East Finchley, is the under-eight chess champion of Barnet. Here is Oliver's own modest story of how he achieved this notable success: -

"It started when I went to Christ's College to play chess in a tournament. You had to play six matches with clocks. You had half an hour per move. There were different kinds of trophies, for example there was the Barnet under-eights chess trophy. I won the trophy by beating a boy by one win."

Oliver is a pupil at Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, Eagans Close, East Finchley.

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

By Diana Cormack

Holy Trinity

The football team is at the top of the league, having lost only one game.

The Holy Trinity School Association organised a St Valentine's Day masked disco.

Road safety week is from 31 March - 6 April. Sadly, every year about 200 children die and 6000 are seriously injured on our roads.

The McDonald's Readers Scheme, in which employees of the firm go in to schools to help children read, has started with a good response from the company's workforce.

Everyone is immensely proud of Oliver Glick in Year 3, who has become the Barnet under 8 chess champion and has been selected for the borough's under-9 team! Read Oliver's own report in the *Young Archer*.

Martin Junior School

Each class has contributed to a "Famous People" corridor display theme.

An assembly based on excerpts from the life of Anne Frank marked Holocaust Day for Year 6 pupils. They listened to radio broadcasts from Anne Frank's house in Amsterdam, in which children described what it might have felt like to be confined in hiding for so long. It was an extremely moving occasion.

The usual non-uniform day in aid of the children's charity Unicef was changed in response to the disaster in Gujarat. Nearly everyone took part in raising £215, more than double the usual amount. This cause was particularly relevant as many families at the school have relatives in the Gujarat region.

The Tudor Day was a huge success! Everyone wore Tudor costume and the children made Tudor Rose sweets, learned some Latin and practised Gothic calligraphy. The caretaker helped boys make papier mache lutes while the girls did embroidery. They played Tudor games and had Tudor snacks prepared by the staff. When Year 5 visits Hampton Court, they will have a far greater understanding of life in Tudor times.

Breakfast Club

The club starts at 7.45am in the Methodist Church Hall Annex, High Road, East Finchley (nearly opposite the library). As well as a breakfast of cereal and toast, there is a selection of activities available for your children. Afterwards adults will escort them to Holy Trinity or Martin Schools. The daily cost is £3.50 per child then £3 per sibling. Phone 020 8444 6212 for more details.