



## Farmers' Market in Barnet at last

Barnet's first farmers' market will open on Friday 17 May in Whetstone High Road, opposite Waitrose. It will take place each Friday for a 12-week trial period, after which – depending on its success – the Council will consider putting it on a permanent weekly basis.

The market, which is a joint initiative with Barnet Council and London Farmers' Markets, will sell fresh produce and support locally-produced provisions. All goods will be grown, reared, baked or produced by the seller, and some produce will be organic.

Councillor Monroe Palmer said that the market would help encourage people to shop and eat locally, and would have a

positive knock-on effect on other businesses.

Local residents and traders approved the introduction of the scheme following consultation last year.

For further information, contact Mark Handley at London Farmers' Markets on 020 7704 9659 or Alan Everitt, Barnet's Town Centre Strategic Co-ordinator, on 020 8359 4155.



Commandant John M. Larimer (left) accepts the award of Detachment Charter from Marine Corps League Past National Vice Commandant Ernest J. Lutz. Photograph by Michael B. Kessler.

## US Marine Corps League London

East Finchley resident and Archer Team member John Larimer has been elected Commandant of the US Marine Corps League London England Detachment 1088.

Formal ceremonies were conducted at the American Embassy in London on 12 February. Marine Corps League (MCL) National Commandant John P. Tuohy awarded The London England Detachment 1088 their Charter and installed officers. He travelled from the US with a party of seven to conduct the ceremonies and carry out a week of official duties and tour London.

### First Detachment in Europe

MCL London Detachment is unique in that it is only the third outside the USA and the first in Europe. It enjoys a number of non-US special forces associate members from several European countries, including distinguished former Royal Marine Commandos. Some very senior former US Marines are also members of the London Detachment, including Honorary Detachment Commandant, General Charles C. Krulak, past Commandant of the Marine Corps.

The MCL is a non-profit veterans organization for US Marines of all eras and rank, organized by General John A. Lejeune in 1923 and chartered by Congress in 1937. Membership is open to qualified US Marines regardless of national origin, race or sex, numbers well in excess of 50,000 and is comprised of persons who are serving or who have served honourably in the United States Marine Corps or Marine Corps Reserve for a qualifying period of time, and certain qualified US Naval Medical Personnel who have trained or served with Marine FMF Units.

The League welcomes qualified Associate members. MCL London: tel/fax 020 8444 1341; e-mail MCLLondon@lineone.net.

## When Queen Victoria visited us

By John Dearing

In the 1890s Queen Victoria came to our neighbourhood to visit an elderly friend who was ill. She arrived in her carriage, with her royal retinue, at the house next door to Harewell House (a listed building that still stands) in Western Road.

She is said to have exclaimed "I cannot understand why there are no alleyways here!". Presumably she was fond of alleyways, or thought them appropriate to residential areas like this one, and even offered to give the Royal Seal of Approval to any local landowner who gave an alleyway to the public. As a result, the then owner of Harewell House did so (it is still called Harewell Passage on recent maps). The General Post Office put a pillar box with the initials 'VR' on it in Western Road next to the alleyway.

Subsequently, the two nurses who looked after the elderly friend left: one died and the other got married. The friend died soon afterwards, the building burned down and is now replaced by a block of flats.

### Unmoved

Many years later, the owner of Harewell House, a civil servant and theatre critic, looked out of the window and saw an enormous crane approaching down Western Road. On emerging into the street, he found the crane settled on top of the pillar box. He remonstrated with the driver who informed him that it was to be "moved"! Quite by accident, a friend from theatre-land, who also an official in the local authority or the GPO, happened to be passing by. She was able to prevent the removal, otherwise our own piece of genuine Victoriana would now be gone, probably to scrap.

As a postscript, the crane had pushed the



Photo by John Dearing

pillar box off vertical, and it was necessary for workmen to return to reset it. Probably as a result, it was given a coat of paint for the first time in decades, but the initials "VR" can still be clearly seen.

We are grateful to Mrs Frances Feldman and Mr David George for their help with this article.

## Watch out! Muntjak about!

By Anthony Tuck

East Finchley's elusive muntjak deer was heard in the vicinity of Fortis Green and Twyford Avenue recently at 4am.

The muntjak, introduced from China in the last century, is not much bigger than a large dog and has spectacular facial markings. Both sexes have tusks, which have led them to be called, colloquially, "pig deer".

England is the only country in Europe with a population of the deer - approximately 70,000, mostly concentrated in the south. Escapees from Woburn Park and Whipsnade Zoo began the feral populations and the deer are now

a common sight feeding in the centre of towns.

As the muntjak is able to breed all the year round, deer experts predict it will soon be an urban species as common as the fox.

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