



Reunited - Pam Kent and Lucca

Pam's New Year's Eve

Daphne Chamberlain

This is a tale of a bleeding radiator, a (similar, but well-loved) cat up a tree, and some good neighbours. This is how Archer team member Pam Kent spent last New Year's Eve.

Alone in the house, she realised that one of her radiators needed bleeding. It's a task she has done before, but this time the plug broke, and part of it disappeared inside. Boiling water was spurting over her clothes, her walls, her carpet. She threw down some towels and called her neighbour.

75 year-old Don Fade is the "neighbour who must never move". He knows a bit about everything, according to Pam. Don dammed the frightening flood with a clamp from his tool-kit, and returned next door for lunch.

Catastrophe

In the afternoon, Linda, another neighbour, knocked on Pam's door. "You don't know whose cat that is up the tree?" It was Pam's.

Lucca, who had never strayed beyond the back garden before, was clinging "like a koala" to the top of a tall, very thin and wobbly tree, crying loudly.

"I was taking Chandler, my Alsatian, for a walk. He saw the cat and thought, 'that's interesting', and the cat shot up the tree", said Linda.

Pam went back to Don this time for a ladder. It was extendable, but the branches of the tree were too thin for him to attempt the climb.

Enter Feizal, a more slightly-built neighbour, who managed it, succeeded in grabbing Lucca, but had no free hands to get down. Lucca, now upside-down and scrabbling wildly, was performing for his growing audience. One of them was David, a friend of Pam's, who climbed to the lowest branches to collar him.

Good neighbours

Lucca has remained demurely in the back garden ever since. He probably thinks

that he's done his duty. After all, every local newspaper must run a story about a cat up a tree, but this story is really about good neighbours.

As Pam said, "It's nice to know I live in a street of friendly people". She lives in Hamilton Road, but probably many more of us (myself included) have benefited from a good turn at the right time.

Have you got a tale of good neighbours you can tell us? Write in, or leave a message on our voice-mail, and help us to accentuate the positive in East Finchley life.

THE ARCHER SHOWCASE

The sound of silence

By Daphne Chamberlain

We continue our series of new writing submitted from local groups with a poem by Louise Finer (pictured right with her husband).

The theme is silence, but I think it will speak to many of us. Louise says that she wanted to express the beauty of silence, and its devastation.

She has "scribbled for years", purely poetry at first, but recently diversifying into essays, which are mostly centred on her inner world. Ideas sometimes surface after her own form of meditation, and sometimes in the moment just before waking from sleep.

However they come, she expresses them manually with pen and paper.

"I can't write straight on to a keyboard. I have to feel that I am providing the words not a computer."

Speaking about other scribblers, who feel too diffident to show their work to anyone, Louise comments, "Writing is a wonderful, creative activity, and there is always somebody else out there who can relate to it".

This poem was sent to us by East Finchley Writers Group, who meet at 6.30 pm on Wednesdays at the Old White Lion. For further details, please contact Lilian Chavert on 020 8444 1793.



The aloneness within silence possesses a voice to blister enamel or touches the senses like an angel's whisper.

Silence can ignite an inner inferno or intoxicate with spiritual ecstasy.

As its cold mist descends silence may unsettle or stimulate an adventure of self-discovery.

Silence can threaten our reality or bring the ethereal world into our soul.

Solitude within silence may deafen or be a soft place to fall.

Silence can be the dark end of a cul-de-sac or a map of exploration.

Sponge-like, silence assumes the qualities of its own voice. Incandescent with rage or the perfect chord, elevating to infinity.

Silence brings us to the lowest level of existence or elevates to the perfect point of harmony.

Filled with fear, silence trembles. Filled with peace, it hums life's melody.

Silence, when exaggerated by perfect wisdom, offers all there is and all that could be possible.

GARDENING

Sweet Spring

by Zena Robson

I have just returned from a walk during which my nostrils were assailed and my eyes treated to the smells and colours of early spring. Sarcococca is a star shrub at this time of the year and even though its flowers are small and not very pretty, the scent that sweeps from them on a still day is wonderful. I think it is only rivalled by Mahonia which has been flowering since December. The hellebores are looking magnificent and will continue for quite a few weeks and I am looking forward to the carpet of wood anemones and bluebells.

Other plants to look out for soon are Pulmonarias, with their spotted or almost completely silver leaves and small bell-shaped blue, pink or white flowers. They are quite low growers, will clump up quite quickly and are happy in semi-shade. Don't forget Dicentras, especially the spectabilis pink or white ones, that throw up ferny leaves and dangling flowers arranged in rows. They die away totally in about late June so plant them in the middle of the border so something can grow up in front later.

Multiply by division

Lift and divide grasses and any herbaceous perennials that you didn't do in autumn and have a go at basal stem cuttings from things like Delphiniums, Lupins, and Achilleas. Use the new growths that push out of the base of the original plant, pot up and place in a cold frame. They should root in about six weeks - mind you, you'll have to beat the slugs to get the new growths in the first place!

Wait until the end of this month for outdoor direct sowings when the soil should have dried out and warmed up enough to make it worth while. If you are going for the cottagey look you may want to broadcast sow but then it's difficult to tell seedlings from weeds. You can draw out informal shapes and sow in straight lines that will help you to thin things out; the plants will grow and disguise the lines so you needn't worry that they will look like soldiers!

A green thought

The Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association has launched a "green" poetry competition and invites entries from local people, particularly children, with verses (up to a 40-line maximum) on environmental issues such as global warning, pollution, trees, rivers, or even just the local scene.

The best poems will be published in the association's newsletter and all poets who submit entries will be invited to a special reading in a local library.

First prize, to be judged in conjunction with the Muswell

Hill Festival next July, will be a collection of works by 20th century poets, to be presented by the Muswell Hill Bookshop.

If you wish to enter, please send your poem to The Chairman, John Hajdu at 37 Ringwood Avenue, N2; along with your name and address.

East Finchley Baptist Church

just off the High Road in Creighton Avenue N2
Sundays at 11.00 am and 6.30 pm
for more information contact 8446 3571

Visitors always welcome

FINCHLEY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The Place to be - Every Sunday 11 am

**Holy Trinity Primary School
Eagans Close, East Finchley, N2**

For more information contact 020 8364 0469
www.cityvoice.org.uk e-mail jim@cityvoice.org.uk

Polysyllabic

Why are there 5 syllables in the word "monosyllabic"?

Ape shit

Why doesn't Tarzan have a beard?