



Constitutional Alliance

By Frank Tymkow

The bells rang more than last orders for East Finchley Constitutional Club Steward Alf Raine last month. He and his new wife Sue are shown here leaving Holy Trinity Church as man and wife on their way to a magnificent reception at the club they have served in recent times.

The wedding bells also ring the changes for the new couple, who have now left for a sunny future in Spain where they hope to set up a business of their own.

Wildlife Diary

By Linda Mitchell

Recently *THE ARCHER* told the story of the parakeets in my garden. I am now very pleased to share with you other wildlife goings-on there.

Strangely, parakeets didn't visit so much during the hot weather, though in June another baby came to feed with Mum. Also, the sparrowhawk, which usually appears in January, hasn't been this year. I'm not sorry, because it is very distressing to watch him peck a blackbird or wood pigeon to death on my lawn.

In spring, the birds took dog hair combings, which I had put in the hanging baskets. Lovely and cosy for their nests!

Only one of the robin's two babies seems to have survived. The woodpecker brought a baby, and in April I taped the song of the mistlethrush to send to my new granddaughter. There have been jays, dunnocks, a tree Creeper, and a bird that imitates a mobile phone.

Frogs are everywhere, though I have no pond. One lives in my greenhouse, and loves to hide in the compost bag.

There have been so many butterflies, grasshoppers and crickets – and the biggest moth I have ever seen. Its wingspan was about three inches, with tree-bark type markings. Lily beetles have feasted on the fritillaries, but sadly I have seen only five or six ladybirds. Where have they gone? I use no chemicals in the garden.

There was a spider explo-

sion this summer, and craneflies – dancing with great long legs like ballerinas – arrived in August instead of September.

The fox visits regularly, sometimes poking his nose right up to the patio doors. A woodmouse hops across the

patio most evenings, tours the garden, then retraces his route back home. The big fat hedgehog has been with us for many years, helping to keep down the slug and snail population.

It has been a lovely, busy year so far.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Remake/Remodel

These are dangerous times, it's no longer safe to take in a movie without doing a quick double-take first. *The Italian Job?* Classic Brit flick with Michael Caine? No way; it's new, it's shiny, it's American and it's set in Las Vegas. The plot? Well they lost that in mid-Atlantic. So what, it's got minis, but new, bloated Germanic minis, not the real thing and 'You're only meant to blow the bloody doors off' just ain't right with an American accent – just try it and you'll see what I mean.

The American Job is not the first. Who can forget the abomination that was the remake of *Get Carter*. No Michael Caine as the London hard man coming home to avenge his brother's death, instead you got Rambo Stallone – need I say more?

Sadly, two attempts at destroying great films with vile remakes is not enough for Hollywood imagination deficit sufferers because that Ealing classic, *The Ladykillers* is being remade! What next? Will *Passport to Pimlico* become *Visa to Vegas*? Will *The Titchfield Thunderbolt* become *Speed 4* – keep stoking or is *Elizabeth and Essex* due for a remake with Jennifer Lopez in the Bette Davis role? We should be told.

Desecrating the old is one thing, but these maniacs will destroy anything not made in America. Any day now, some bloated Hollywood mogul will announce the remake of *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. It will be set in downtown LA, star Tom Cruise, feature John Travolta in the Vinnie Jones role and be directed by some small-minded low life from the studio roster.

And so it goes on and on. With Harry Potter books all the rage I bet someone in tinsel town is already working on the American version. It will be set in a California high school, feature lots of teenage angst and romance and come at you like Buffy on a broomstick.

Now is the time to fight back, time to make a stand and make Brit versions of American classics. Get your kicks on the A406 and let's have *Insomnia in Islington*, *The Small Country*, or maybe even *Strangers on a (Delayed) Train*.

RSPCA News

This month we announce, with pride, that the long-considered and planned refurbishment of the clinic treatment room has been completed. Vera Thursby, who lived in Cherry Tree Road, left a generous legacy to the Branch specifically for the benefit of the Clinic. Now this money has been put to good use. Thanks are due to local members of the committee for giving their time to supervise and give access to the workmen who carried out replacement of old fittings and rotten wood.

An innovation in the Clinic is a selection of RSPCA 'goodies' on sale for owners and their pets. Our supporters who do not visit the Clinic will have an opportunity to buy these at our Christmas Fair – details in next month's *ARCHER*.

The committee have decided to continue our subsidised dog neutering until the end of the year. To take advantage, bring your dog or

bitch to be examined by our vet to make sure that they are suitable for treatment. Then, given the OK, you take your voucher to the Garden Vet in East End Road and arrange the operation. Clinic hours are Monday and Thursday evenings, 6-7.30pm.

Finally, we are appealing for an animal-loving Chartered Accountant to volunteer to carry out a yearly audit of

our accounts at a nominal fee. The books are straightforward and meticulously presented; full professional fees are a massive drain on our income, which is all raised by volunteers. Please telephone our Treasurer on 020 8444 2329 for details.

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