



Some of the participants in the Arts Festival cemetery walk Photo by John Dearing

# I'll meet you at the cemetery gates

By Daphne Chamberlain

The Arts Festival's outdoor event was a voyage of discovery. Follow the Viaduct Road, and you'll reach the enormous Mond mausoleum. The original viaduct – a level path to transport funeral processions through St Pancras Cemetery – is now a grassy mound, buried by a World War II bomb.

Peer into a thicket, and you'll see the long-neglected grave of Victorian artist Ford Madox Brown, its headstone leaning forward at a dangerously acute angle.

Study the inscriptions, and you'll find the grave of half-dozen centenarians, brought here from St Pancras churchyard. On other pathways and overgrown tracks are memorials to the Aged Pilgrims Friends Society, the London City Mission to Cabmen (who have "received their last call"), the Lyceum Clown, and balloonist Percival Spencer (whose stone balloon has been removed).

### Change and decay

He is not the only victim of vandalism. A handsome statue of the original Pearly King has

been desecrated so often that the latest model has not yet been restored to the grave.

Some destruction of the graves is natural. In our climate, marble doesn't weather well. Ann Bronkhorst, who led the walk and provided informative handouts, referred to the different materials used, as well as to changing fashions in decoration and the meaning of many decorative symbols.

### ... and a new life

She also pointed out the flourishing wildlife – nesting-boxes, ecological areas, and evidence of groups of foxes.

St Pancras Cemetery is 150 years old this summer. Shortly after acquiring this vast tract of land, bounded by Coldfall Wood, the Allotments, Strawberry Vale and Coppetts Road, St Pancras sold most of the southern area to Islington. The combined cemeteries will be run by Islington from this year.

Between 40 and 50 people, including children, joined Ann on the walk, with donations going to the Royal National Institute for the Deaf.

# Success for East Finchley artists

On the weekend of 25 June East Finchley witnessed its first ever East Finchley Open in a bid to raise the community's awareness of local art. The idea, headed primarily by artists Adam Justice-Mills and David Aronsohn, was inspired by the Oxford and Cambridge Open art weeks.

The weekend began with a party held at the Finchley Youth Centre and hosted by EFO artists and crafts people with local music band *Orange Crush*, and other famed locals including Labour MPs Alison Moore and Rudy Vis. It was a hugely successful evening, attracting over 150 people; as Eti Wade commented, "... an excellent starting point for EFO and a wholly positive move for East Finchley."

### Local talent

In fact, according to Carolyn Butler, "many people including both artists and locals praised the event for giving people the rare opportunity to experience a very high standard of work within our own community."

The group now consists of 35 people from different artistic backgrounds. As one organiser said "... some people trekked around all the houses, and even went back to view the art in them for a second time... you could even say it was like a medieval pilgrimage!"

### See you next year

There is a multitude of talent within East Finchley that really cannot be missed. So keep a look out for information on next year's event - we are all looking forward to it!

For more information call Adam Justice-Mills on 07970 838 188 or visit [www.eastfinc hleyopen.org.uk](http://www.eastfinc hleyopen.org.uk)



# Arts Festival review

An unplanned drama – a power failure – brought Jennifer Bate's opening Arts Festival Organ Concerto Concerto to a temporary halt. 'None the less,' (writes Maureen Keetch) 'the event was highly enjoyable. The highlight of the programme came with the Liszt Fantasia and Fugue on Bach. Here Jennifer Bate was more able to demonstrate her total command of the organ.'

Christopher Hardy writes of the other two dramas, "The marriage of the clergy seemed to be a theme of this year's Festival. *Canterbury's Burning* explored the life of Thomas Cranmer through the eyes of his secret wife. *Theatre Roundabout's* presentation was impeccable. Sylvia Read and William Fry turned the chancel of All Saint's Church into Reformation Nuremberg, Lambeth Palace, Canterbury and Oxford by turns while chiselling out the profile of all the major actors involved in the historical drama. In Geoffrey Hanson's opera *The Virgin Crown*, produced by Maureen Keetch, a very able cast brought to life the extraordinary story of the haunted Abbey of St Elwin.

Europe to Italy;" (writes Jennifer Bate.) "Each member shone as a soloist and different instrumental combinations revealed a rich diversity of unfamiliar Baroque repertoire."

### Fresh Approach

The highly talented young *Fidelio Piano Quartet* delighted the audience with their fresh approach and virtuosity, giving performances both exhilarating and memorable.

Finally, the Finchley Children's Music Group sang a splendidly varied selection of songs with great enthusiasm and skill to a capacity and appreciative audience.

### Young talent in fine form

The Youth Music Centre choir & Orchestra were in fine form and gave a heart-warming display of young talent.

"On the second evening", writes Sara Medina, "David Juritz led the excellent London Mozart Players and spoke knowledgeably about the programme."

"The Baroque Group, *Faronell*, transported us through

# Festival raffle

There are still two unclaimed raffle prizes from the East Finchley Community Festival:

Ticket No. 02422 in the name of Brook and ticket No 02257 in the name of Emer.

Contact Kim George on 020 8444 8673 to claim your prize.

# Tu Destino

*Tu Destino*, which means 'Your Destiny' in Spanish or Italian, may have found its destiny at 128 High Road, East Finchley. Saturday, 26 June 2004, was the official opening of the High Street's newest arrival, Specialists in Floristry and Balloon Art combined with a café, which is the unique concept of three partners, Josephine Berardo, Androulla Costi and Rosario Soteriades.

In addition to a wide selection of flowers, plants and balloons, there is an unusual selection of stationery with meaningful messages (which match the table mats in the café), a range of photo frames and various gift items.

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