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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



The parade making its way to Cherry Tree Wood for last year's festival. Photo by David Glick

Festival fun

This year's East Finchley Community Festival will take place on 26 & 27 June, with 5-a-side football and events at The Green Man Community Centre and live music, food and drink, craft stalls and entertainment in Cherry Tree Wood. See www.eastfinchley.co.uk/festival for details.

New initiative against crime

By Daphne Chamberlain

A large part of East Finchley has become a CSAZ (Community Safety Action Zone). This means it has been identified for a co-ordinated campaign to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, crime and the fear of crime. The designated area lies between the North Circular Road and the High Road to the north and east, and East End Road to the south and west.

Dedicated team

The area will have its own team of one police sergeant, two constables and three PCSOs (police and community support officers). These PCSOs will have the power of arrest in certain cases. The team will be based in the area, and should not be withdrawn for duty elsewhere.

A management group drawn from community workers, local organisations

and associations, and police and Council representatives will run the project, initially chaired by Inspector Nigel Walton from Golders Green. A preliminary meeting for this group has been arranged for 1pm on Tuesday 15 June at the Old Barn, Tarling Road.

Community involvement

This scheme, a joint initiative between Barnet Council and the police, is intended to allow local people to prioritise

their needs and concerns. Police spokesperson Anne Bellamy told *THE ARCHER*, "We want as much community involvement as possible." Local households and businesses should all receive questionnaires.

With an allocated budget and the highest number of officers in its history, the police are setting up CSAZs throughout all 32 London boroughs, and pilot schemes are reported as producing positive results.

Ann Owens Centre 'probably secure for two years'

By Daphne Chamberlain

It is "reasonably certain" that the Ann Owens Centre in Oak Lane will be staying open – for the next two years anyway. Mark Robinson, Chief Officer for Age Concern Barnet, told *THE ARCHER* that, although negotiations were still going on, he would be surprised if the Centre's immediate future was not secured.

Following the outcry against the threatened enforced closure of Ann Owens, Barnet have now found some funds

which, together with input from Finchley Age Concern, Age Concern Barnet and Freemantle's, should keep the centre open and running normally.

Freemantle's, the charity who have taken over some of Barnet's former centres for the elderly, are redeveloping Leaside, leaving those users temporarily without a day centre. Mark Robinson told us that an arrangement has been reached whereby the small number of Leaside users will be bussed to Ann Owens, where they will be integrated into the normal programme of activities.

THE ARCHER will look in more depth at the Ann Owens situation in future issues.

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Thank you to Madden's Ale House for providing us with a meeting place.

THE ARCHER team wishes to thank all the generous people who give up their spare time, in all weather, to deliver the paper for us.

Your contributions

If you have a story for us, please send it in to the above address. Comments to THE ARCHER may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text, email or voicemail.

14 June is the copy deadline for the July issue.

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Barnet

Admin/Town Hall 020 8359 2000
Council Tax 020 8359 2608
Recycling & refuse 020 8359 4600
Primary Care Trust 020 8201 4700
Benefits Agency 020 8258 6500
Employment Service 020 8258 3900
Haringey Council 020 8489 0000

Leisure

Alexandra Palace 020 8365 2121
East Finchley Library 020 8883 2664
Muswell Hill Odeon 0870 505 0007
Phoenix Cinema 020 8444 6789
Tourist Info Service 0870 128 8080
Warner Cinema 020 8446 9933

Transport

BR Enquiries 0845 7484950
City Airport 020 7646 0088
London Transport 020 7222 1234
National Express 08705 808080
Heathrow Airport 0870 000 0123

Help & Advice

Childline 0800 1111
Disability Info Service 020 8446 6935
E.F. Advice Service 020 8444 6265
Gingerbread 020 8445 4227
National Debt Line 0808 808 4000
NSPCC 0800 800500
Rape & Sexual Abuse 020 8683 3300
Relate 020 8447 8101
Samaritans 08457 909090
Refuge Crisis Line 0870 599 5443

Health Advice

AIDSline 020 8363 2141
Alcoholics Anonymous 0845 7697555
Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688
Cancer Support 020 8202 2211
Carers' Line 0808 808 7777
Drinkline 0800 917 8282
Drugs Helpline 0800 776600
Health Info Service 0800 665544
MIND 020 8343 5700
National Blood Ctr. 0845 7711 7711

OAP's Advice

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Help the Aged 0808 800 6565

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Finchley Memorial 020 8349 6300
Oak Lane Clinic 020 8346 9343
Royal Free 020 7794 0500
St Luke's 020 8219 1800
Whittington 020 7272 3070
Western Eye Hosp. 020 7886 6666

Crime

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❖ Toy library, Muswell Hill 020 8444 0244/ 8489 8774

Warm weather warning

The warmer weather is on its way and with it comes the ever present invitation to burglars by residents who leave their homes unoccupied with windows open, or who go to bed at night without making sure that patio doors and back doors are locked securely.

Going to bed and leaving downstairs windows open can also be a gift to the burglar who will seize any opportunity to relieve residents of their hard earned property. During the day, even the smallest window should be closed and locked if the house is left empty. A first floor window over a flat roof can easily give access to a larger window and getting into the house is then too easy for the opportunist burglar. Drainpipes, wheelie bins and garden sheds will all give opportunities for burglars to climb up to reach a small open window. Moving the shed or drainpipe is not an option, so close and lock the window.

Barnet Police are emphasising that residents need to be more cautious about leaving exterior doors and windows open and unlocked. Whenever the house is unoccupied, exterior doors should be locked and ALL ground floor windows closed and locked if possible. When residents are at home, care should be taken to ensure that all ground floor windows are closed, and where possible locked, before retiring for the night.

Detective Chief Inspector Keith Surtees said, "We need to get the message across not to make life easy for the burglar. The opportunist thief doesn't have to work very hard at the moment to make their living. Taking care of the security of our homes will put the burglars out of business."

Bus news

East Finchley Bus Watch group began its monitoring programme last month, concentrating on the 263 and 143.

New members are always welcome. Please contact Hazel Burnett on 020 8444 6824 for further information.



Maddens photo by Alison Roberts

CAMRA Award

Real Ale organisation CAMRA has awarded Madden's Ale House in the High Road 'Pub of the year' status for the Barnet area. Congratulations to Kieran and Margaret Madden and all their staff.

Latest crime figures

The Metropolitan Police Service has issued crime figures for the year ending March 2004 for London as a whole and for the individual boroughs.

Overall, crimes reported in Barnet rose by nearly 6%. The main contributors to this increase were 'crimes of violence against the person', up 11% - almost every other category was down or largely unchanged.

In particular, common assault was up 10% and possession of an offensive weapon up 57%! The latter figure may, however, reflect an increased police focus on this offence as much as an increase in the practice of carrying weapons.

By contrast, gun crime, homicide and burglary are down, and Barnet Police are

justifiably proud that a quarter of all rape allegations have led to an offender being charged in court. 46 Class 'A' drug dealers were prosecuted during the period.

More details of London crime figures may be found on the Met. Police web site at: www.met.police.uk/crimefigures.

Local Planning Applications

132 High Road, N2

Installation of new shop front and non-illuminated fascia signage and retractable canopy.

385-401 High Road, N2

Erection of five-storey self-storage building (Class B8) with associated access, parking, drop-off bay and security fencing.

258 East End Road, N2

Conversion of existing car repair workshops involving partial demolition and partial reconstruction and addition of two dormer windows, to form five three-room self-contained flats and maisonettes.

31 Durham Road, N2

Alteration to roof including addition of rear dormer window and rear roof extension.

345 Long Lane, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

109 Abbots Gardens, N2

Erection of single-storey rear extension.

7 Lancaster Gardens, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

5 Lancaster Gardens, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

2 Elmhurst Crescent, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

18 Elmfield Road, N2

Demolition of original single-storey rear extension. Creation of new single rear extension with hip roof and roof lights.

68 Leicester Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

23 Huntingdon Road, N2

Alteration to roof including rear dormer window and three velux windows to front roof slope.

Land between High Road and Strawberry Vale, N2

Erection of a 10m high telecommunications street type pole with 3 nos. Antenna and 2 nos. ground-based equipment cabinets and ancillary development.

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Friends of Cherry Tree Wood say thank you

By Anne Lalaguna, Secretary, Friends of Cherry Tree Wood.

At the recent Nature Walk held on Sunday 11 May through Cherry Tree and Highgate Woods, the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood took the opportunity to say a big Thank You to Rachel Keen, Project Manager from Countryside Management Service for her invaluable help, advice and inspirational enthusiasm in helping the Friends over the past few years with the 5 Year Greenspaces Action Plan.

Sadly, Barnet Council have now withdrawn funding to CMS. The CMS is a body which works in Barnet and Hertfordshire to help communities enjoy, care for and develop their green spaces. The 5-year GAP is less than half way through, but it is already having a positive effect on the Wood with new trees, wild flowers and shrubs planted and coppicing having taken place. The real value of CMS is that they enable people of all ages to become involved with their local environment. For example, the Friends were hoping to work with them to explore how improvements to the playground can be funded. This year, CMS provided young oak trees, which have all now been planted in the Wood by volunteers. They have also introduced regular walks in the Wood, which have proved successful, and we were hoping to work with them on organising children's activities for this summer's East Finchley Festival.

Loss of funding

Barnet say they are saving £37,000 by withdrawing the money to CMS. Obviously, Council money is very limited but FOCTW believe that £37,000 represents remarkable value given the services which



Chairman of the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood Ian Cormack presents Rachel Keen of Country Management Services with a token of appreciation. Photo by Diana Cormack

CMS perform across the borough and the volunteers they help mobilise. Indeed, FOCTW doubt that there will be any cost saving in the medium term, given that a deterioration of the Borough's green spaces and the loss of voluntary help

is likely to result in essential maintenance costs increasing.

In spite of all this, the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood remained undeterred and are presently exploring other ways of funding to complete the present Greenspaces Action Plan.

Pride of East Finchley

By Daphne Chamberlain

East Finchley had two nominees for the Palace Gardens Pride of North London Awards, presented last month. Neither of them has a clue who made the nominations, but would like to thank them all the same.

The Five Bells was up for Pub of the Year (won by The Rising Sun at Mill Hill). Landlord Pat O'Shaughnessy said, "Usually it's trouble when people want to speak to you. So it's nice to know there's someone out there I didn't upset! It was lovely to be nominated."

Pat, who has been at The Five Bells for 11 years on and off, enjoys East Finchley's famous 'village' atmosphere. He says that, while making necessary modernisations and improving provision for children, he would never want to change the character of his pub.

Lawrie Chivers of A1 Motors,

known for his involvement in the community, was nominated for the Local Hero award, but says, "I've still no idea why. So many people do so many things. It was fun going along though - there was a good meal and champagne, and then it was like the Oscars, with everyone waiting for the envelopes to be opened."

The awards, which covered the Barnet / Enfield area, were sponsored by Palace Gardens Shopping Centre and various businesses, and organised by The Press. Lawrie commented, "It's good to see another paper joining *THE ARCHER* in doing something positive for the community."

Farmers' Market closes

The Friday morning farmers' market at Whetstone has been discontinued. As reported in last summer's *ARCHER*, stallholders generally were not happy with the level of support.

Some thought it would have been more successful if it had been held at the weekend, while others blamed the venue.

London Farmers Markets have not commented on the closure. *THE ARCHER* will investigate the latest market scene in the autumn.

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Two children from Holy Trinity's School Council receive a cheque from Alnoor Thobhani of Cootes Pharmacy for their building project. Photo courtesy Holy Trinity School

Holy Trinity appeal

Two children from Holy Trinity's School Council receive a cheque from Alnoor Thobhani of Cootes Pharmacy for their building project.

Holy Trinity School is keen for local businesses to feel involved in the school's new Special Needs room and library building and so far Prickett & Ellis and Stewart Duncan opticians have also made generous donations. All sponsorship will be permanently recorded in a display at the school and donors will be offered prominent seats at the official opening. For more information contact Sylvia Duthie, Chair of Governors, at Holy Trinity School.

Finchley County memorial lives on

By Daphne Chamberlain

Finchley County School's unique hand-painted war memorial was lost when the school building - opposite the Hollywood Bowl - was demolished this year. However, the names it recorded will be set in stone for passers-by to see.

The original, recording names from both World Wars, had a William Morris inspired background about 40ft by 20ft, painted in 1921 by the school's art master, Bill Howland. Unfortunately it was painted directly onto the plaster of one of the end walls of the hall.

Preserved throughout the building's later use by Finchley Manorhill School and the Professional Development Centre, its admirers hoped it might help gain the old school Grade 2 listing. Their application was unsuccessful.

As Barratts of North London found they couldn't construct Fallowgate, their new apartments, within the shell of the old building, the bulldozers went in.

Godfrey Mann, Chair of

the Old Fincunians (former Finchley County pupils), found Barratts "very helpful and understanding".

"We tried to have the memorial moved in situ, but it wasn't possible," he said. "Anyway there was nowhere big enough for it to go, and also be accessible. In the end, we accepted the inevitable. After all, the key elements were the lists of names."

Set in stone

These will be reproduced on a stone tablet recessed into the wall on the High Road side of the building, with a hook for a remembrance wreath. The memorial, which Barratts have undertaken to maintain, will also carry an explanation of its history, the original inscription and the school crest.

Bill Howland's painting was not lost altogether. The Finchley Society's Norman Burgess, himself an Old Fincunian, took a scaffolding tower to the school before demolition, and together with Bob Payne cleaned the memorial with soap and water. Then he and Oliver Natelson took a comprehensive range of photos inside and outside the building. These will illustrate a book on the history of Finchley County, due out this autumn.

Norman keeps a photo of the memorial in his sitting room. As a schoolboy, he looked every morning at the names of Finchley County boys lost in World War 1. Now, as he looks at the names from World War II, he remembers his classmates.

Intelligent oysters

By Tony Roberts

Those of you who use a prepay oyster card should benefit from TfL's plan to introduce fare capping. No longer will you need to decide in advance whether to use a one day travel card; the Oyster card will do it all for you.

Transport for London has provided the following information from their web site enquiries.

"Currently Pre Pay Oyster cards can only calculate single fares. In the future a facility known as 'Capping' will be introduced. It will work by calculating the best combined fare(s) for your day's travel. For example, if you make five London Underground journeys between zones 1&2 using Oyster card Pre Pay, at a cost of £2.00 per journey, the cost

for those five journeys would currently be £10.00. Fare capping will ensure that as soon as your journey costs reach a pre-set level, your fares will be 'capped' at that rate, so these five journeys, if made off-peak, would cost you the off-peak capped rate of £4.30."

"Until such time as Capping is introduced you should continue to purchase paper Day Travelcards if you intend on doing multiple journeys in any one day."

Visit www.oystercard.com

Combating cemetery crime

In June the whole of Camden Cemetery Service, including St Pancras cemetery, transfers into Islington's control, after several years of planning.

We understand that drastic measures are to be taken to combat crime and vandalism. CCTV is being installed, the gate at Coppett's Road may be kept closed and some cemetery roads may be barred to vehicles. The new Cemetery Service Head is determined to tackle "the huge challenge" of fly-tipping and vandalism, as well as repairs to monuments.

The Three Peaks Challenge

By Diana Cormack
Local park keeper Chris Ward is taking part in a gruelling endurance event at the end of this month. Some people might find travelling between the highest mountains in England, Scotland and Wales enough of a trial in the short space of a weekend, but Chris has set himself the daunting task of climbing them too, with a time limit of just 24 hours.

Chris is hoping for sponsorship in reaching the top of Scafell Pike, Ben Nevis and Mount Snowdon, as the aim of the challenge is to raise money to buy a modified vehicle for a close friend who has been left paralysed by a horrific domestic accident.

If you would like to help with sponsorship, then you can see Chris when he is on duty in Cherry Tree Wood.

Support your friendly pharmacist

The annual charity walk organised by The Oshwal Pharmacists is taking place on Sunday 27 June at Northaw in Hertfordshire. This year, participants in the 10 km walk will be raising funds for the National Asthma Campaign, Macmillan Cancer Relief and N.S.S. Polio India.

Paresh Shah, pharmacist at the C.W. Andrew Pharmacy, will again be taking part. If you would

like to support him, there are sponsorship forms available in the shop at 32 High Road, East Finchley.

Opening time?

With the arrival of some good weather, visitors to Cherry Tree Wood are once again asking, "When is the café going to open?"

The replacement for the old kiosk, which was burned down in November 2002, arrived at the end of last summer.

Barnet Council stated last month that they were sending

out notifications to any tenders that have been received. They hope that this will allow enough time for the successful applicant to set up their business before the summer.

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Local charities need volunteers

Volunteers' Week (June 1-7 www.volunteersweek.org.uk) celebrates the work volunteers do. Charities are increasingly reliant on volunteers to maintain their services to the public. East Finchley has a number of local charities, several of which are highly visible with shops along the High Road. Other charities are less visible but nevertheless provide key services to local residents.

East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact, with offices in Church Lane, is a local charity founded in 1985 with the aim of bringing the community together to help protect and improve the quality of life of its most vulnerable citizens. East Finchley has many elderly and house-bound people in their 80s and 90s, with no one to call in every now and then for a chat, take them to a hospital appointment, pick up a bit of shopping, or accompany them on a walk.

Impaired sight and hearing, or a loss of mobility, coupled with the feeling they have no one they can trust, cause elderly people to become isolated and house-bound, making them prone to accidents, depression and further health problems.

Making life better
Contact aims to stop that

downward spiral through the work of its volunteers. They provide befriending and transport services, accompanied outings, as well as regular shopping buses, and lunch clubs.

Contact is keen to recruit volunteers. Anyone committed to the local community and who has a few hours a month to spare is welcome. For more information, call them on 8444 1162 or e-mail contact42@efnc.fsnet.co.uk.

For more about becoming a volunteer or working for a voluntary organisation consult the Barnet Voluntary Service Council Directory (available from libraries), which lists over 200 members (www.barnetvsc.org.uk) tel: 020 8446 6624. Or visit www.do-it.org.uk, which offers over 500 volunteering possibilities within a 5km radius of an East Finchley postal code!

Are you making Barnet bloom?

Gardeners may just have time to enter this year's Barnet in Bloom competition. All entries for this 14th annual event must be in by Friday 18 June.

Categories include gardens, patios, balconies, containers and floral displays, and entrants can be individuals, institutions, pubs or town centres. Finalists from all categories automatically go on to the London in Bloom contest.

Entry forms should be

available in libraries, or can be downloaded from the Internet. Further information is available from Renae Randle at Barnet Town Hall, NW4 4BG, tel. 020 8359 2339, e-mail renae.randle@barnet.gov.uk or by visiting www.barnet.gov.uk.



Teachers and parents looking at recommended software. Photo courtesy of Brookland school

Programming for the future

By Diana Cormack

Brookland Junior School held an innovative event aimed at helping parents support their children's learning at home with computer technology. Organiser Lorrae Jad-erberg, the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator, told parents about the significant benefits of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) when it is used properly throughout the curriculum.

Echoing this, Yota Dimitiadi PhD, Senior Lecturer at Kingston University, an expert on ICT in education, described how parents and carers could familiarise themselves with what the new technologies can offer in order to support their children.

Practical advice

Alison Lister, Parents Online Project Manager for the Department of Education and Skills, provided them with practical advice on dealing with its potential problems. This involved installing software which can switch off the computer at specified times to control children's computer usage. She advised parents to know their children's

online friends, to know how to chat themselves and to use only moderated chat rooms.

"Discuss the security issues with your children and encourage them to express any concerns they have," she said. "If the child wishes to meet an online friend, go along with them. Children must not give email addresses that use their name, school, home address or birth date."

Children foil invasion

The evening, which included workshops and product presentations, was dramatically interrupted by an 'alien invasion' staged by Year 6 children. Luckily they were able to use all their skills in information

and communications technology to deal with the situation successfully. They had some help in this from head teacher Heather Blackmore, who also announced that the school is investing in a new ICT suite to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity of developing their computer skills.

Praising what she called "a trail blazing event for Barnet" Susan Mehmet, ICT Primary Advisor, hoped that it would be used as a model by other schools in the borough. Alison Lister went further, saying that she hoped to see many similar events rolled out around the country.

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Ron and Marjorie Thomas on their wedding day
Photo courtesy of Marjorie Thomas

Recording your wartime memories

Anyone – and that means anyone – with wartime memories is invited to contact Peter Hart, archivist at the Imperial War Museum, through THE ARCHER.

Peter, who lives in East Finchley, is willing to visit interviewees at home. Interviews would probably last for a couple of hours, and would be taped.

Whatever your role – combatant, production worker, bringing up children or a child yourself – you have a story to tell, and Peter would like to record it. THE ARCHER will be happy to put you in touch.

Memories of WW II

By Mr T J Cremin (aged 80+)

I went into the services in 1942 and was “called up” to go to Yorkshire for training at Fulford Barracks with the Kings Royal Rifles and Rifle Brigade. After about ten weeks training I was sent to an Artillery Regiment.

After a while I saw on the notice board that 100 troops were needed to join the Royal Navy so I put my name down. While on a shoot at Barnard Castle with the army I was told, “You’re no longer in the army, you’re in the navy”!!

After a little training as a Chatham rating I was sent to a very old battleship, HMS Malaya. It only did about 15 knots, but we were involved in the bombardment of St Malo in France with Wellington Bombers. Later I was moved to another battleship, HMS Anson, and left for the Far East.

When the Japanese war ended we were sent to take Hong Kong harbour where our job was to round up Japanese prisoners and stop the looting. During this time I was stationed at Happy Race Course and before my duties ended I managed to go on a short cruise up to Japan to see some of the damage caused by the atom bomb to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

At the end of my duties we sailed to Australia for a short stay and eventually came back home on a cruiser, HMS Gambia, to be demobbed.

EAST FINCHLEY ARTS FESTIVAL 2004

Friday June 25th - Sunday July 4th

Friday June 25th *Concerto Concert for Organ & Strings*
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Saturday June 26th *London Mozart Players*

Sunday June 27th *Youth Music Centre Orchestra & Choir*

Monday June 28th *Art Exhibition Open Evening*

Wednesday June 30th *Faronell Baroque Music*

Thursday July 1st *Fidelio Piano Quartet*

Friday July 2nd *Theatre Roundabout*

Canterbury's Burning

Saturday July 3rd 2pm *Cemetery Walk*

7.30pm *London Ripieno Opera Group*

The Virgin Crown

Sunday July 4th *Finchley Children's Music Group*

Details and booking information on website

<http://eastfinchleyartsfestival.org.uk>

Brochure from Coral Travel 50 High Street N2

All events (except Cemetery Walk)

at All Saints' Church, Durham Road, N2 at 7.30pm

D-Day bride

By Marjorie Thomas

My late husband was with the first contingent at Arromanches, Gold Beach. After serving in the Middle East, El Alamein, Tobruk, and the landings on Crete, Sicily and Italy, he had returned to England in November 1943, as one of Monty's seasoned troops.

We planned to marry in the middle of 1944.

In May, troops were massed around the south coast, which for three miles inland was a forbidden area to anyone not resident there. My husband was at Beaulieu, Hampshire, near his home. He was sealed in barracks, but managed to get special permission to come to Royston, Hertfordshire, to get married.

Wedding day

On Thursday 18 May, I had a telegram, saying, “Get special licence. Marry tomorrow Friday 19th.” My superstitious mother would not let me marry on a Friday, so our vicar arranged the ceremony for 8.30am on the Saturday. My husband had to report back that evening, and I returned with him, his mother

and two sisters.

Everyone getting off trains in the closed zone had to show their identity cards, and I very self-consciously showed my new marriage lines. This caused a few grins and knowing looks from the soldiers on guard. I was only allowed in the ‘forbidden area’ because it was my mother-in-law’s home.

After reporting back, my husband was allowed out that night, as he was so near his home. I stayed there for a week, and must admit that he did sneak out once or twice, but after Thursday 25 May they were all completely sealed in barracks – even escorted to the loo.

Gold beach

The whole forest area around Beaulieu, down to the coast, was

packed with vehicles – tanks, guns, heavy-duty trucks and ‘ducks’ (jeeps that could float).

Outside my mother-in-law’s house were American troops. Everywhere were notices telling civilians not to communicate with the troops in any way, and there was a heavy penalty if you did, but we left them jugs of tea by the gate.

It was three or four weeks after the first landings before I got a letter from my husband, and he didn’t return until March 1945.

He was looking forward to the 50th celebrations in 1994, but sadly it was not to be. His ashes were scattered on Gold Beach by Brigadier Nelson-Smith, the commanding officer of 1st Battalion Royal Hampshires on D-Day.

Sixty years ago...

On Tuesday, 6 June 1944 Operation Overlord began with the first paratroops landing on French soil. Seven hours later the main assault began as the first landing craft hit the beaches of Normandy. This was just part of the largest seaborne invasion that had ever been mounted and involved 5,000 ships and 150,000 men.

6 June 1944 was not just about the troops on the Normandy beaches, it was also two days after the liberation of Rome; in the Pacific the Americans were still island hopping towards Japan and Londoners still had to face the terror of the V1 and V2.

Dixie's Tale

By Francis Coulson

Dixie wasn't at the D-Day Landings on 6 June 1944. He was otherwise engaged, helping the Americans to liberate Rome.

He had landed in Algiers in 1943 from the troopship *Samaria*. Dixie was a signaller with the 5th Battalion, Grenadier Guards. He recalls sharing a slit trench under a mortar barrage with his Adjutant, Capt. Lord Stanley, discussing the miners’ – or was it dockers’ – strike at home. They agreed that it wasn’t a clever time to strike.

On the road to Rome

The Anzio landing was on 22 January 1944. Dixie went in a week later with the transport echelon of the 5th Battalion as part of the 1st Infantry Division and the US 5th Army. They didn’t attack the prepared German positions in the Alban Hills behind Rome but turned up Route 6 for the Eternal City itself.

On the way, Dixie’s unit was detailed to take a bridge over the Tiber. Off they went in the 3-tonners, sitting up top in the sun – and ran into a US road-block. The White-Cap manning it said, “You can’t go up thar”. The British column commander in a jeep called, “Come on, Charles, keep going” – Charles was the company commander – and the squaddies all cheered. The White-Cap pulled a pistol – “You can’t go up thar!” Faces fell. The CO – later in life Lord de Lisle & Dudley – wrote out an order



Dixie, Ted and Curly Photo by courtesy of EJ 'Dixie' Dean

to the Yank to let the column through. They duly moved on, only to find that another unit had already taken the bridge.

I asked Dixie whether the Grenadiers had any officers who were not members of the aristocracy. “Oh yes,” he said, “Later on.”

Rome fell on 4 June 1944 and Dixie’s lot went through in the night. He remembers rows of US troops lining the streets, backs to the wall, one foot up against it – eyeing up the local talent.

Bloody lucky

Dixie’s last anecdote concerns the time when he and his

mate Curly were told to “take the P.I.A.T. (“Projectile Infantry Anti Tank”) up there and watch that road.” They dug themselves in, setting up the P.I.A.T. and settling down to a quick roll-up. There was the roar of armour on the road. Back to the P.I.A.T. and take aim. Round the corner comes a South African armoured column, led by its commander in an armoured car. Dixie and Curly stand up and show themselves. “You were bloody lucky we didn’t shoot there, mate,” they say. The South African looks over his shoulder at the tanks behind him; “My friend,” says he “so were you!”



D DAY 1944 remembered

Dear Sir

During World War II I was allocated to the Ministry of War Transport and sent to work in the London Docks. From the commencement of the Blitz in September 1940 until the capture of the V2 rocket sites in April 1945 those docks were subject to enemy attack almost every day, often four or five times.

Hitler knew that if he could sink the food ships coming into London Docks, the capital city would starve and Germany would win the war. Hence, those who worked getting the ships unloaded and the food transported were in constant danger.

About six months before D Day we noticed a difference in both the shipping and the personnel in dockland, although we had no idea what its significance was. Security was very strict!

Strange craft began to appear in channels and bays that would not block the main stream of the tidal Thames. These were deftly camouflaged. Then we became aware of new personnel in the docks, military men each wearing a blue flash at their shoulders bearing the initials "VP" meaning Vulnerable Point.

This meant that they had to live on board the boats to which they were allocated and could not move outside a strictly confined area – on one side of the river in Stepney and on the other side in Rotherhithe. Gradually we realised that these soldiers were not all English, they included Commonwealth Personnel and, ultimately, American GIs.

The Church

The Methodist Church had accepted me in 1942 as a candidate for their ministry and had asked me to spend any time I could deputising for the Southwark Park church minister who had been sent to be an army Chaplain. I had a bicycle and could travel between my office (in Stepney) and the church through the Rotherhithe Tunnel several times a day.

The church opened a club and reading room for the troops and provided a forces' canteen. The organist produced Gilbert and Sullivan operas, and I played in *The Mikado*, and *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Neither in the docks nor at the church did we ever hear that these men and their shipping were preparing for the invasion of Europe. Early in June, however, we became aware that there were less of them about. The forces' club was practically deserted and the food ships coming into the docks were flowing more easily.

D Day dawns

We became aware that something was happening. No announcement was made in the newspapers or on the wireless. Everything that was happening was extremely 'hush hush'.

On the Saturday afternoon, I had to take the scouts' cricket team to play at Blackheath. We had to wait to cross the road at Lewisham because a long convoy of military vehicles of many different kinds monopolized the roadway. I remember the exact spot and the excessive heat of the lovely June Day when one of the small boys, with a truly cockney accent said, "Cor, the invasion must 'ave started". It took that simple phrase from an 11-year-old to inform me of the truth of the situation.

Ronald W Frost
East End Road N2

The Secret Islands

By Daphne Chamberlain
Harold Perkins spent D-Day on the Cocos Islands, in the Indian Ocean, south of Sumatra. In World War II, these tiny coral islands became a vital air-base, an emergency stop for flying-boats and a secret cable radio link between Australia and London.

Harold was on Direction Island, in the air/sea rescue team. He was supposed to spend three months there, which became six months, and then a year. He was a duty fitter and repairer, which came easily to a motorbike enthusiast with a family background in engineering. He had started his war service as a flight mechanic with 248 Squadron, but in the Cocos most of his time was spent in the workshop, sometimes reconstructing engine parts from blueprints.

Flying boats

He was flown between the islands for different jobs, once to Home Island, which was generally out of bounds. That was "where the Governor drank his gin and tonic" and Gracie Fields paid a flying visit. Supplies came by Catalina flying-boat from Sri Lanka (an 18-hour journey).

There was a royal family of the Cocos, mostly of Javanese stock, but descended from the first king – a Scottish trader who had settled there in the 1820s. Until then the islands had been uninhabited, but he turned them into a socialist monarchy, with bungalows, jobs and pensions for all.



Harold Perkins today Photo by John Dearing.

Inset: Harold Perkins in the Cocos Photo courtesy of Harold Perkins



Rescue team

In 1942, the Japanese had attempted to bomb out the cable station on Direction Island. Deceived by decoy fires, they never realised that it went on working till the end of the war. Later on, as the battle focus turned to the Far East, the islands became a base for bombers, as well as for photographic reconnaissance missions to Malaya, Java and Sumatra. On their return journeys from Singapore, the bombers were met by boats from the rescue

team. "You wouldn't want to ditch in that water. It was full of sharks."

"We heard of D-Day, but we didn't even have a drink," he remembers. They made up for it the following year, when the Japanese surrendered. He saved a bottle of brandy for the flight home, which was just as well. Their plane landed on one wheel.

Find out about the Cocos in *Operation Pharos*, by Ken Rosam. Pub. Woodfield 2001. ISBN 1-873203-586.

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Elaine, Jan and afternoon nursery children. Photo by Diana Cormack

World Lupus Day

By Diana Cormack

When nursery nurse Elaine Montgomery organised a fundraising event at Holy Trinity School Nursery, she had no idea of how successful it would prove to be. With the help of nursery teacher Jan Wallin, the children were invited to come to school in fancy dress, for which they were sponsored by family and friends.

The symbol for the lupus movement is a butterfly, so Elaine and Jan dressed up appropriately and they also arranged activities that involved butterflies, such as songs, games and making models. The children were given badges to wear and were told about lupus. As Elaine was diagnosed with the disease five years ago, she knows all about it.

But she did not know that the forty-four children from morning and afternoon nursery would raise so much money. At the time of writing she has collected over £400 for

Lupus UK and the money is still coming in!

The secret garden

By Diana Cormack

There was an exciting surprise waiting for the children when they returned to Martin School after the Easter Holidays. The garden in front of Year 5 in the junior school had been transformed!

Unbeknown to staff and pupils, head teacher Maggie Driscoll had been approached the previous term by Peter and Jill from P.J. Landscapes. They wanted to create a



Model from re-cycled material in the seating area.

Photo courtesy of Martin School

garden in which their skills in landscape design could be demonstrated. So they went around the school collecting various materials suitable for their purpose. Things like coat-hooks, benches, ladders and old doors were then cleverly used to great effect. With the addition of pebbles, plants, pots and seating they have made a fantastic feature for Martin School Community to enjoy.

The remodelled area makes a pleasant, peaceful place for outside lessons, which will be even more enjoyable should there be enough sunshine this summer to run the solar-powered water feature!

Martin Schools PTA

SUMMER FUN DAY

Saturday 19th June, 12.00 - 3.00pm
School Field High Road East Finchley

Delicious food, plants, cakes,
 good quality second-hand books,
 toys and clothes, competitions, arts and crafts,
 bouncy castles, face-painting, tombola, entertainment,
and much more. All welcome.

YOUNG ARCHER

Packing them in

By Diana Cormack.

Members of the 4th East Finchley Brownie Pack kept the Brownie motto to "Lend a Hand" when they were raising money for charity recently. With the help of customer service manager Rosie Townsend and other staff members at Budgens, the girls spent their Saturday morning in the store on the High Road.

The Brownies were on hand offering to push customers' trolleys or pack bags at the check out. Contributors to their collection boxes were given a sticker and there were balloons for the children. Since January the girls have been working for their Disabilities Awareness Badge and this was reflected in their chosen charities, which were the Royal National Institute for the Blind, the

Royal National Institute for the Deaf, St Mary's Church Hall and Whizz-Kidz.

They managed to raise over £200, but the Brownies themselves did not go away empty handed, for Rosie gave them an Easter Egg to raffle for their own funds. Well done to all concerned!

Please tell *THE ARCHER* if you know of any young people in our community who are helping others.



Brownie Nadine collecting for charity in Budgen's. Photo by Daniela Antoinette

Ninety years on

This year the Brownies are celebrating their ninetieth birthday! They began as part of the Girl Guides (now called Girl Guiding UK) because girls wanted to have something like the Scouts, which Lord Baden-Powell had organized for boys in 1908.

So, helped by his sister Agnes, he set up a group with similar laws and promises and with much the same training as the Scouts. In fact, in the USA Girl Guides are called Girl Scouts. In Britain, Girl Guiding UK is the largest female youth organisation and around 30% of eight-year-old girls are Brownie Guides.

A Brownie was a Scottish spirit of the home, who was called Robin Goodfellow in England. At night he was supposed to busy himself doing helpful jobs about the house. This explains the Brownie Guide Law, "A Brownie guide thinks of others before herself

and does a good turn every day." Brownies can earn badges for household skills as well as for many other activities and interests.

A special Brownie rose is being launched at this year's Chelsea Flower Show. It has bright yellow petals to symbolise friendship and a light herbal scent. There have been celebration services for local Brownie packs and everyone has been given a 90th anniversary badge.

The 4th East Finchley Brownies meet on Mondays from 5.00-6.30 pm. in St Mary's Church Hall. For further details phone 8883 5654

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

By Diana Cormack

Martin Schools

London Marathon

This year it was a landmark event, with two praiseworthy medal winners from Martin School! (See back page)

Parent governor Laverne Cosbert also braved the rain and cold to complete the course in a creditable five hours, raising £1,230 for Hope, the charity for homeless people.

Parents' power

A group of parents generously gave their time to clear the school field. They filled countless bin bags with litter and weeds, to make the field a safe and pleasant place for the children.

Breakfast at school

As in previous years, Year 6 children have been able to chat and relax with each other and with staff before taking their SATs tests. Coming into school early to have breakfast prepared by the staff helps the children to feel more confident and happy.

Karaoke night

The PTA's first Karaoke Night was a huge success. The stars of the night proved to be *The Martinettes*, a new singing and dancing sensation created by the junior staff.

Allotment

Infant children are now able to plant their own vegetables in ground prepared by staff members Tracy Hills, Jackie Coghlan, Wendy Diamant and school keeper John Mitchell in their own time.

Holy Trinity

Tag rugby

Tigers and Cubs, the school's mixed tag rugby teams, finished as runners-up and in third place at the first tag rugby festival to be held at Holy Trinity. Robin Jacobs organised the event and trained the teams.

New extension

Work is progressing on the building to house a library and special educational needs area. Further funding has been received which will enable the whole project to be completed by the start of the new academic year.

May Fair

The Holy Trinity School Association's May Fair, run by parents and staff, raised over £3000 for school funds.

Walk to school week

The school took part in this national event, which aims to encourage parents to change their daily routine and leave their cars at home, thereby reducing pollution and congestion.

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All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir of both adults and children.
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 Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.

<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>



Happy Birthday to a peaceful place

By Ann Bronkhorst

In last June's feature on the St Pancras and Islington dual cemetery, readers were encouraged to discover its history and its wild places. This summer the largest of East Finchley's green spaces – and the first publicly-owned cemetery in London – has its 150th anniversary. Some may wonder what there is to celebrate about an overgrown burial ground.

Landscaping the

Common

What made St Pancras parish decide, in 1853, to send their dead seven miles north for burial? After the mid-nineteenth century cholera epidemics London churchyards were grossly overcrowded. Once the 1852 Burial Act allowed parishes to set up cemeteries outside the city (as private companies were already doing) the first to respond was the St Pancras Burial Board. They bought some farmland at the southern end of Finchley Common, later selling 30 acres to Islington, and hired the great William Masters to landscape it. Despite the shrinking water table many of his cedars, limes, redwoods and specimen conifers remain.

Change and decay

Architects Barnett and Birch designed several Gothic lodges, an Episcopal and a Dissenters' chapel and a viaduct with 'Gothic circles and buttresses' (Illustrated London News, July

1854). Sadly, most of these architectural features have gone and the 1896 RC chapel is boarded up, following arson. The 'capacious catacombs' were never built; probably such burials were too expensive for St Pancras and Islington folk. There are impressive statues and mausolea, however, and a wealth of Victorian tombstone symbols: urns, broken columns, open books and angels galore. More individually, a mycologist lies beneath carved mushrooms and a balloonist beneath a three-dimensional balloon – except that it's been vandalised and removed.

Honouring the dead

The memorials put up by devout Victorians should



Photo by Ann Bronkhorst

receive respect and care, but the dual cemetery is run on a limited budget. Famous private cemeteries such as Kensal Green and Highgate have *Friends* and/or support from English Heritage: our 'green lung' doesn't. So although the 1854 foundation of the St Pancras cemetery is a significant part of London's civic history it seems unlikely that there will be much of a birthday celebration this summer.

Notable Birds

By Jeremy Gaskell

As the Spring advances, high perches are dominated by a small, chunky bird that advertises its presence with a loud, nasal, twittering song. This is the Greenfinch, one of the more successful species in London. As it flies you may glimpse the prominent yellow panels in its tail. Much less common is the Bullfinch, with its carmine red breast. Earlier this year I encountered a pair of these retiring birds in St Pancras Cemetery.



'The Nuthatch' by T.C. Eyton

On the edge of the cemetery and around Fortis Green it is still possible to see the House Sparrow, despite the dramatic decline in numbers in London. Possible reasons for this decline are the shortage of nooks and crannies in which to nest as a consequence of home improvements, and a shortage of insect life. Another bird that consumes insects, the House Martin, still builds its mud nest under the eaves of houses south of Fortis Green. Smaller than the noisy Swifts, and with a conspicuous white rump visible in flight, the House Martin shares the Swift's long bowed wings and forked tail.

Bird of prey

Our only bird of prey that can catch a House Martin or Swift is the Hobby, a longer-winged, darker and more slightly-built bird than the Kestrel with heavy dark streaking along its underparts. The Hobby, which used to be a rare breeding bird, has increased noticeably in the south of England in the last twenty years. They are quite shy in the nesting season but range widely in pursuit of prey for their young. Last June, my attention was drawn to the presence of one on the edge of Cherry Tree Wood by the

alarm calls of the local House Martins.

Look out for the Stock Dove in the woodland around East Finchley, a bird that nests in hollow trees. Smaller than the Woodpigeon, the Stock Dove lacks white anywhere on its upper-parts. In bright sunlight, the side of the neck shimmers with a beautiful green and amethyst iridescence.

Sadness and joy

Sadly the Nuthatches breeding in Coldfall Wood [*ARCHER* March 2004] had no success. All seemed well until early April. On Good Friday I saw that the mud the birds had used to constrict the entrance hole to their nest had been broken and the tip of the tail of a grey squirrel was protruding from the hole. I leave the fate of the occupants to the imagination. This depressing occurrence was alleviated on my return journey by the faint, high-pitched tinkling song of the Goldcrest, named after its crown of red and gold. This bird, even smaller than the Wren, chooses evergreens for its tiny nest. Although not common, any garden could hold a pair. June is a good month to look out for local birds as the numbers will be at their highest as the new broods stretch their wings.

Cemetery Walk

Don't forget – there is a chance to explore the huge and fascinating St Pancras & Islington cemetery on Saturday 3 July. Meet at 2pm at the main gates in the High Road, immediately opposite The Grange. The walk is being organised as part of the East Finchley Arts Festival.

Black Bess remembered

By Len Willcocks

Len Willcocks has responded to last month's article about the Black Bess Temperance Hotel with these memories; perhaps other readers will send us their own

I remember well the Black Bess café and boarding house, situated on the High Road, just on the corner of Hertford Road. Above the café was a high building with rooms used as a hotel. It was a stopover for lorry drivers on their way north.

Right opposite was a huge bomb site, now covered with flats. I was working during the early 50s in a small factory on this site, which had been rebuilt because it was on vital war work. By the time I was working there, it was producing surgical and other instruments. This tiny workshop, the only building rebuilt, stood isolated amongst the desolation of this area.

Bread and dripping

While working there, I often used to go over to the Black Bess

for a snack – maybe one of its famous sausage or bacon sandwiches and a cup of strong hot tea. Another popular snack was bread and dripping – two slices covered with salt. No worries about cholesterol in those days!

I left the area in 1954 to live in Australia. When I returned three years later, the factory was no longer there, the empty bomb site had become high-rise flats, and the Black Bess had gone. Such a change in just three years.

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❖ **Club Dramatika** drama club for kids. Call Vicky 020 8883 1554
❖ **Country & Barn Dancing**, at Oakleigh Park, 020 8349 0754
❖ **Columbian party dancing classes**, Call Nelsy 020 8444 2012
❖ **Incognito Theatre workshops**, Colney Hatch Lane, 020 8883 0911
❖ **Finchley Jazz Club**, Monday 14 & 28 June at Wilf Slack Cricket Pavilion, East End Rd, N3.
❖ **Over 60s come dancing** at Ann Owens Centre 020 8346 8736
❖ **Pottery Class** at The Green Man, Call Celia Holmes 020 8349 9315
❖ **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church. Call 020 8883 4070 for info.
❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** of North London, Contact Caroline Egan 020 8340 2706

Clubs & Social

❖ **Bingo**, Green Man Community Centre, 020 8883 4916
❖ **Contact Lunch Club** at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book a place. Every Thursday. 12.30-2pm
❖ **East Finchley National Childbirth Trust**, Contact Sophie Spence 020 8444 1890
❖ **East Finchley Writers** meet weekly at the Old White Lion. Contact Lillian on 020 8444 1793.
❖ **Fairacres Monday Club** for Jewish people, Rene & Reuby Hyams, 020 8883 0448 or Sylvia Lee 8958 7878
❖ **Finchley & District Philatelic Society**, Contact Brian 8444 3251
❖ **Friendly Rubber Bridge** at The Old Barn, 020 8349 4613
❖ **Haringey Recorded Music Society**, informal meetings locally. Call David Mouldon on 020 83611696.
❖ **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill, 020 8348 3495
❖ **Northern Lights Speakers' Club** alt. Monday eves at The Old White Lion www.northernlightsspeakers.org.uk
❖ **Muswell Hill and Highgate Pensioners' Action Group** Call Bob Cottingham on 8444 7635.
❖ **Muswell Hill Synagogue**, Tetherdown, 020 8883 5925
❖ **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, 020 8883 4390
❖ **Old Barn pre-school club**, 020 8349 4613/1961
❖ **Parent & Toddler Group**, Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
❖ **Probus Lunch Club** for retired professionals. Call Eric 8340 0822.

East Finchley Open

A few drinks at the East Finchley Constitutional Club discussing politicians' remarks led to a local voluntary group forming. Margaret Thatcher's "there is no such thing as society" was challenged and energised by the unlikely pairing of Norman Tebbit's "get on your bike" and Tony Blair's "we need joined up thinking". So the handful of artists and craftspeople thought, "who lives around this area and what could we do?" A couple of months later the East Finchley Open (EFO) was born as a group of thirty local East Finchley artists and craftspeople who have linked up for a variety of future activities in this area.

Exhibitions

There is a set of exhibitions from mid June to mid July with all 30 EFO members represented. The premiere exhibition of the new Phoenix Cinema gallery will be from 12 June to 10 July, showing paintings, photos and video art.

From Friday 25 June to Sunday 4 July there will be an exhibition at All Saints Church Durham Road as part of the East Finchley Arts Festival. All the EFO members will be represented there, and will include sculpture, ceramics, jewellery, textiles, photographs and paintings. There will be a private view there on Monday 28 June.

There will be an EFO launching event at the Finchley Youth Theatre on the evening of 25 June, with a combination of films, projections music and

refreshments.

The Open House weekend

This is the core of the East Finchley Open and will consist of nine members' houses open to the public 11am-5pm on Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 June. Each house will have the work of at least two artists or craftspeople on show.

Also on 27 June 2-6pm there will be a multimedia showcase in the Finchley Youth Theatre, High Road. Yet more work will be shown in shops in Church Lane.

A free EFO catalogue with all these listings will be available in June from East Finchley library, Phoenix Cinema and several high street shops. Tickets for the launch event go on sale early June



Above: Just some of the exhibits on display at East Finchley Open. Top by Christine Watson, above left by Keith M Hewett and above right by Peter Hale

and will be available at these and other outlets (and from all EFO events)

Catalogue information will also be available on the EFO

website: www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk. On it you can see more examples of members' work and updated information about all the forthcoming activities.

Louisiana comes to Finchley!

On Wednesday, 16 June, a new dance club is opening at the Torrington in Finchley bringing the best Zydeco, Swamp pop, Cajun, New Orleans Rhythm & Blues and Rock 'n Roll from the Bayous of Louisiana to the dancers of London. Every month a different live band will be featured, each one guaranteed to give the best in hip swingin', foot stompin', good time dance music for all tastes.

For our opening night we have the greatest pleasure in presenting Z Funk, unquestionably the hottest Zydeco band this side of the Big Pond, featuring, from Lake Charles, Louisiana, the awesome Harold Guilory on Rubboard & Vocals. Harold plays in his cousin, Chris Ardoins' band and has his own TV station, Louisiana Live. Check it out on www.louisianazydecolive.com.

A steamy night of wild Zydeco rhythms, hot blues,

incredibly talented musicianship and a great party atmosphere is promised.

The Torrington is on the corner of Lodge Lane and the High Road, North Finchley. Nearest tube Woodside Park. Entry £8. Doors open at 8 pm.

For further information, please contact Carole Lateman 020 8810 7454, clateman2002@yahoo.co.uk or Neil Papworth, 01727 830280, neilpapworth@yahoo.co.uk.

What's On...

E-mail your listings to the-archer@lineone.net

Sunday 13 June: Friends of Finchley Memorial are holding their **Summer Fete** in the grounds of Finchley Memorial Hospital, N3 from 1.30pm.

Wednesday 16 June: Finchley & District Philatelic Society - Members are invited to display 9 sheets of stamps beginning with the letter 'D'. Visitors welcome. Meet at Trinity Church Hall, Nether St, Finchley at 8 pm. Enquiries to Brian Merryweather 020 8349 1602 or visit www.stampdomain.com/finchley.

Saturday 19 June: Martin Schools summer fun day - Martin Schools PTA invite you to their annual Summer Fun Day, 12 noon - 3pm. Come for lunch! BBQ, Indian food stall, ice-cream sodas, cream teas etc. Bouncy castles, craft tables, second-hand clothes, books and toys, plants, cakes and much more. Come and view the human fruit machine! See you there!

Friday 25 June - Sunday 4 July: East Finchley Arts Festival - Concerts, Drama & Art at All Saints' Church, Durham Road. Plus a Cemetery Walk. For details see the display ad on page 6 or visit <http://eastfinchleyartsfestival.org.uk>. Brochure giving details available at Coral Travel, 50 High Road N2

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

A fete worse than death

Here comes summer and with it comes the dreaded world of festivals. At one end you've got Glastonbury, that unique chance to choke in dust or drown in mud or both while getting sunburn, food poisoning and ripped off while listening to music. A genteel distance away you've got Kenwood, which is just like Glastonbury without the dysentery, but with added deckchairs. But at the far end is that uniquely British event that sucks the will to live out of all sentient beings, the local 'community' festival or school or church fete.

There is a standard format for these insults to the intelligence. Firstly you need a 'venue', which means anything from the school field, if it hasn't been flogged off for executive housing, to the patch of derelict land behind the old gasworks. Then you need a reason. That it's hot and sunny and the wasps are after you doesn't count. They either go for charities like *Save the Whales*, *Blind dogs for the Guides*, or giving each poor South Korean child their own puppy in time for Christmas. Sometimes it's just plain mercenary, as they demand money for some new bit of school equipment like a nuclear reactor for A Level physics or helping complete the junior vivisection lab.

The worst events of the summer are those that have no hidden moneymaking agenda, but are purely for 'fun'. This is fun as in sadistic delight. There are 20 'food' stalls offering 10 types of kebab, 11 different burgers and 12 kinds of food poisoning. All the local charities are there with their stalls flogging everything from fifth-hand books to "something odd we found in the garage" to Griselda's homemade turnip wine. Naturally 'fun' means having a beer tent where you can queue for up to an hour to buy a can of luke-warm lager two years past its sell-by date.

But nothing, repeat nothing, quite matches the horror of the 'entertainment'. This means some local band that were dire after 17 pints in the local pub proving just how bad they can sound on a wet Sunday in the park. But they don't stop at one musical crime; you also get the local kiddie choir singing too loud, for too long and way too flat. It is, quite simply, a fete worse than death.

Free bus service

If you're attending Music on a Summer Evening at Kenwood, 3 July to 29 August, there is a free shuttle bus service around 5.30 pm and after all concerts from/to Golders Green and East Finchley Tube stations. The buses will be marked 'Music on a Summer Evening'. Visit www.picnicconcerts.com for more information.



Letters to The Editor

Phone mast objections

Dear Editor,
I was appalled to discover the other day that an application has been put to Barnet Council to site a phone mast on the land between East Finchley High Road and Strawberry Vale (Application Number: C15724/04). If the mast is given planning permission it will end up being sited very near to homes and a local community centre.

Phone masts have not been shown to be without health risks and caution must be exercised when masts are to be situated so close to homes. It is for this reason that I myself have lodged an objection and I strongly urge the rest of the community to do so as well. It is only by showing our displeasure at the insensitive siting of masts that we will ever get local councils to take our concerns seriously.

Noel Lynch
Member of the London Assembly
City Hall

Rubbish tips

THE ARCHER received the following letter from a resident of Sedgemere Avenue, so we contacted the Council to find out:

Dear Archer,
I am an East Finchley resident for a few years now. I like the area and the community. It's the council that bothers me. First of all, I rang the council a few times to request recycling bins for plastic, cardboards and so on. I left my address, name and my phone number - nothing happened. So I've given up.

What I do find most ridiculous though is when my bin doesn't get emptied just because there is a bucketful of weeds in it. Like last week. The bin is not heavy, but there's a bit of soil on the top of my rubbish, and so it gets left behind! When I rang Barnet Council, I was told that 'no garden waste' should be in my bin. Not even a bucket of weeds. So where exactly am I supposed to put it if Barnet refuses to help me recycle and they do not provide garden waste bins in my area? What if I didn't have a car to take it to the dump? Why should I

pollute the air with petrol and waste my time and money when I do pay my council tax? Am I supposed to go through my rubbish now to take it all out? I don't think so! As the kind lady from Barnet Council customer care said to me - cover it all up with more rubbish, they'll take it. Hmmm.

Kind regards,
Name and address supplied

The Archer contacted the Waste Statutory + Contracts Manager at Barnet's Recycling Department regarding the collection of garden refuse if left inside wheelie bins. She advised that refuse collectors should collect garden refuse left inside wheelie bins unless the bin is too heavy (e.g. if rubble has been left in it) or unless the bin's lid is not closed (i.e. the bin is over-full, restricting closure). Refuse should not of course be left at the side of a wheelie bin even in bags.

There is in addition the council's three times a year free local street collection of a much wider range of items. (The Museum of Garden History in Lambeth will recycle your old seed packets, old plant labels and old gardening books. Phone 7401 8865 for details.)

Send your correspondence to:
"Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA or
e-mail the-archer@lineone.net.
(Due to space restrictions, letters over 200 words will be edited)

12 Things You Didn't Know About....

Every month [despite a brief lull] *THE ARCHER* hits an eminent member of the community with 12 quick-fire questions. This week a living legend...

1. **Name:** Jim Dimitris.
2. **Date of birth:** 6/3/36.
3. **Family in this country:** Two brothers, a wife, two sons.
4. **How long have you worked as a barber on Lincoln Road?** Since 1964 - 40 years.
5. **What is the best thing to have changed in East Finchley in that time?** Plenty of restaurants now.
6. **And the worst?** Not enough funeral directors.
7. **Why is there always a red stripy pole outside barber shops?** Red for men. Hairdressers have blue stripes.
8. **Favourite inane barber conversation?** How is the love life?
9. **How often do you visit Cyprus?** Every 2-3 years.
10. **Favourite Film?** *Zorba The Greek* - very funny. But English films? *The Sound of Music* or *West Side Story*.
11. **What was the last book you read?** Don't read much - I watch sexy movies. Wait... is Page 3 reading?
12. **If you won the lottery what would be the first thing you would buy?** Seven women.

RSPCA news

Recently, more than 12 cats had to be removed from a local house when their owner died. An inspector and police, all in protective clothing, carried out the rescue operation.

This is still ongoing as, obviously, cats come and go and some will still be returning to the empty house. So far, £50 has been spent on making food available for them. Natalie, the inspector, told us that the cats had not been ill-treated but they were becoming undomesticated and were breeding indiscriminately. The ones removed are now in the RSPCA animal home and are being neutered and prepared to go to new owners.

The winner of the Easter Bonnet Cake, star raffle prize at our recent Spring Fair, was Marian Dewey, one of our volunteer workers for many years, delighted never having won a raffle prize before.

The committee have decided that the next fundraising will be held at the Clinic to make it easier for our neighbourhood friends to drop in and see the next seasonal cake on show. Date to be announced in this column later in the year.

Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column.



Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.

A-star arrogance

By Hannah Eiseman-Renyard

A level student, Fortismere School

In an education system organised purely around exams, in which all schools are, unsurprisingly, getting better exam results, private schools are now beginning to wish there was something to distinguish their students' grades from everyone else's. I read in the 26th April's Evening Standard that private sector schools and colleges are pushing for a greater distinction to be made between A grades, as too many people are achieving them these days. They would like to see the grade A* introduced for AS and A2 levels, as it was for GCSEs. The introduction of A* would, by definition, make hard-earned A grades worth less by comparison, and would push the merit of every other grade down one notch, too.

What angers me, is that those in private schools have the cheek to complain and want 'ordinary' A grades demoted because those in state education are doing almost as well as they are. If you have the money you can buy your child a better grade. I don't like it, but you can pay to take yourself out of the system. Once you have done this, however, what right have you to complain when the system you have turned your back on is doing well? As the gap between rich and poor in education appears, slowly, to be closing, instead of sending their children back to the apparently successful state schools, those in the private sector want to maintain an elitism within the very top grade - an example of snobbery and arrogance surely worthy of an A*.

She's got to hand it to you!

By Diana Cormack

Sandra Stokes, of Milton Keynes, contacted *THE ARCHER* to share a story which will gladden many readers' hearts.

One Saturday afternoon a few weeks ago, Sandra and her elderly mother came to East Finchley to visit her father's grave. Sandra accidentally left her handbag in the bus shelter opposite the Phoenix cinema and only realised her mistake once she was on the bus. It took at least 20 minutes to

get back to the shelter where, to her amazement, she found her bag where she had left it.

Sandra would like to pass on her thanks to the community for being so honest. She said that the people of East Finchley have restored her faith in humanity.

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Born to run

Josh Derraji loves to run. And as a member of Barnet and District Athletics Club Josh, a Year 6 pupil at Martin Junior School, was selected during trials in February as one of ten boys in his age group (11-12 years) to represent Barnet in the London Mini Marathon held on Sunday 18 April.

Running a race of 2.65 miles, from Southwark Bridge to The Mall, Josh put in an incredible performance, finishing in 17 minutes and 50 seconds, a personal best. He also raised £150 in sponsorship for Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Tired but happy

Josh takes up the story. "It was wet and cold on the morning. I was really nervous and didn't think I would finish the run. But once we were at the starting point I felt better."

"The race went quickly and it was great to see my mum, nana, brothers Max and Noah and sister, Salma, shouting for me at the finish line. I came 60th out of 226. I think I did okay but hope to do better next year. Barnet did really well as

they came third overall. I was pleased to finish but felt very tired later on."

"My mum and I chose Great Ormond Street Hospital to receive my sponsorship money because my brother Max had an operation there when he was a baby. One of the best bits of the day was shaking hands with rugby star Martin Johnson. He fired the starting pistol at the beginning of my race."

Well done, Barnet's boys

Jim Neville, the youth coach for Barnet and District Athletics Club, is full of praise for Josh. "His friendly attitude has endeared him to many of the other young athletes in the club and I was pleased when he ran so well to get into the team for the Mini Marathon. With him was another of Barnet's boys, Niall Flem-



A relaxed Josh after running the Mini Marathon. Photo by Haron Derraji

ing, who was third overall in the race and I know he is an inspiration to Josh." Looking ahead, Jim is confident that Josh has "a big future in

sport".

Anyone interested in running can contact Jim Neville on 0208 449 6487 or james@neville6883.freemove.co.uk.

Interested in reporting?

THE ARCHER is looking for people to report on all manner of activities involving East Finchley and its residents.

We would welcome reports and pictures about all kinds of subjects such as sports, arts or current affairs. Writers could be participants, organisers, or even casual spectators.

Aspiring young journalists could cut their teeth on gathering reports, visiting venues and even taking photographs.

If you have any particular interest, or would like to report on activities in your area, do please get in touch. Training can be given.

Please call our enquiry voicemail 08717 33 4465, email us at the-archer@lineone.net – or visit us at the festival. Please note that participation in *THE ARCHER* is on an entirely voluntary basis.

See you at the festival!

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