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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Gaudi too gaudy for Muswell Hill?

By John Dearing

In July, Chris Ostwald, a former film special effects designer, took over the shop between Halifax and Oddbins, on Muswell Hill Broadway, with the intention of opening a gallery and arts supply shop. Chris is an admirer of Antonio Gaudi, the architect whose buildings, such as the Casa Batlló, a celebrated building constructed in 1905 in the Art Nouveau style,



adorn Barcelona. So he decided to dispense with the anonymous modern shop front and rebuild it in the style of Gaudi, by placing sand and cement on a lattice work of steel to make it look a bit like a cave.

No to nouveau

However, he omitted to apply for planning permission and has now had an enforcement notice served on him to reinstate the shop-front and to abide by the planning permis-

sion granted in 1999. The notice will come into effect on 15 November. Haringey council is adamant that he must either seek retrospective planning permission, or tear down the Gaudi shop-front.

Chris Ostwald vows he will not observe the order: "It's different from the pseudo Edwardian-ness of almost every shop in this area. It stands out for its originality. The council want everything standard and uniform."

Lynne Featherstone, a Liberal Democrat councillor,

insisted that the law was the law: "There is no question the owner should have asked for planning permission ... This is a conservation area, and there is no way the shop-front ... is part of the norm."

The controversy has made it to the television news. Public opinion is divided – some say it's an eyesore, others that it's fantastic.

Next time you are in Muswell Hill, keep a look out for this phenomenon, and if you feel strongly either way, write to *THE ARCHER* and tell us.

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Funding for Stanley Road playing field?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Philip King, from The Walks Residents' Association, has asked Barnet about the future of Stanley Road playing field. Has the Council consulted Sport England about restoring the neglected field? The Government's Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell announced in April that grants are available under the Community Club Development Programme, and Mr King wants to know whether Barnet have made any moves in this direction.

Speaking last month at the Finchley Forum, he cited persistent local rumours about the possible sale of the field and the adjacent Herbert

Wilmot Centre, which houses some of its facilities. (As *THE ARCHER* reported last month, the Finchley Children's Music Group – the final remaining ten-

ants of the Centre – had to find alternative accommodation.)

Mr King said that the Football Foundation had told him that money to restore the field and develop the Wilmot Centre could be available.

Forum Chair Leslie Sussman referred him to a Council officer, undertaking that he would be kept informed about Barnet's plans. *THE ARCHER* will keep an eye on this.

For other topics at the Forum, see our report 'Finchley Forum' on page 3.

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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 November is the copy deadline for the December issue.

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

Horse thieves

Scotland Yard are appealing for witnesses and information following the theft of three horses and two horseboxes from the Stable Horse Activity Centre on Barnet Lane between 6pm and 8am on the night of 12 October. Barnet CID based at Colindale is investigating the theft.

The centre is one of the few integrated stables used by both able and disabled riders. The horses taken, named Kate, Porgie and Peggy, are all used for riding therapy with both adults and children.

Porgie, a 10-year-old gelding who is bay coloured with white socks and stands 14.2 hands high, was specially trained for an activity known as Hippotherapy which is a close contact therapy for children and adults with profound disability.

Kate (AKA Camdenkate), 10 years and Peggy (AKA Pegasus) 6 years are both black tobiano (black and white) mares, with the former standing 14 hands high and the latter being 15.2 hands high.

The horseboxes stolen were a Ford Livestock Carrier VRM CLC265Y and a grey Bedford Livestock Carrier VRM AJU543T.

A spokesperson for the centre said, "How do you explain to people with limited understanding that their favourite horse has been stolen? The horses and ponies for this yard have to be a certain stamp and because of the extra training these horses are very difficult to find and replace. We are now missing three characters."

Anybody with any information on the whereabouts of the horses should call 020 8733 5875. Alternatively if you wish to remain anonymous call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



The alleyway at Buckden Close. Photo by Diana Cormack.

Let there be light

By Diana Cormack

Residents of the sheltered housing accommodation at Buckden Close, N2 have been asking Haringey Council for some improvements to their security situation before the winter sets in.

Buckden Close, a row of eight bungalows, is situated at the start of the alleyway off Southern Road. The alleyway is bordered on one side by a tall fence and the many large trees overhanging it contribute to the poor lighting in the area. Lack of sufficient light is causing concern to the residents, many of whom are elderly. They feel unsafe to go out after dusk, fearing a fall in the dark alley or even becoming a victim of crime.

One 83-year-old resident told THE ARCHER of her dissatisfaction with the lighting and said that the local police share her concern.

Licensing Act

In 2005 Barnet Council will become the licensing authority for entertainment, night cafes, public sports and alcohol sales.

At present, licences are granted through magistrates' courts, but from next year local residents and businesses will be able to deal directly with the Council. Anyone affected can object to a licence, or ask for a review.

The Council's drafted policy can be seen on their website www.barnet.gov.uk.

She believes that the alley is a by-way and therefore is subject to more stringent rules. There is a tall lamppost at each end of Buckden Close with shorter ones at intervals further down the alley. However, their light is obscured by the bend in the path and she feels that their height provides an inadequate spread of light.

A recent request to upgrade the street lighting there has been turned down by Haringey Council due to the cost involved. They have agreed, however, to prune the trees in order to let more light through. It remains to be seen whether this will benefit anyone who has to use the alley on dark winter nights.

Popular childminder dies

We are sorry to report the death of 71-year-old Georgina Rodis, of Bedford Road, who died in hospital on Friday 22 October after a long battle with illness.

Her children, who would like to thank everybody who showed recent support, were with her. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her.

Local Planning Applications

Rooftop at Viceroy Parade, N2

Installation of three no. dual-polar antennas and two no. transmission, and associated equipment cabinets to be installed at a lower level.

12-18 High Road N2

Change of use from offices (Class B1) to mixed use - part offices, part control and despatch for private hire vehicles (Class B1/sui generis).

McDonalds Restaurants Ltd, 11-59 High Road N2

Creation of purpose-built room to house an ATM machine.

McDonalds Restaurants Ltd, 11-59 High Road N2

Internally illuminated fascia signage to ATM machine.

Five Bells Public House, East End Road N2

Submission of details of ventilation and extraction equipment and sound insulation, pursuant to Conditions 3 and 4 of planning permission C01522W/04, dated 6/9/04.

240 High Road N2

Submission of detail of landscaping pursuant to Condition 2 of planning permission C02378E/01, granted 12/2/03.

24B Chandos Road N2

Installation of railings to existing balcony.

61 Park Hall Road N2

Partial retention of rear dormer window.

40 Fortis Green N2

First and second floor rear extension.

40 Fortis Green N2

Erection of single storey rear extension.

22 Beresford Road N2

Single storey rear conservatory extension.



Busker Idol winner

By Hannah Eisenman-Renyard

East Finchley resident, **Andrew Pisanu, 25**, has won Travel Lodge's first ever Busker Idol competition. A passer-by told him about the competition, and handed him a card with the details, on the very last day of the competition, which he entered online. Despite the gimmicky name, Andrew says the audition process was straightforward, with the final six performing for an audience of Travel Lodge employees and the other hopefuls.

Songwriter

A singer-songwriter, Andy's first gig came while he was at university, and he's been busking for about two years in London. He describes his style as "poppy-folky and melodic," and cites Bob Dylan, early

David Gray, and "maybe some Joni Mitchell" as influences.

The prize for winning the Busker Idol competition is a year's free accommodation in the Covent Garden Travel Lodge, worth roughly £30,000. The competition was in May,



Andy Pisanu in action. Picture by Hannah Eisenman-Renyard

but Andy still hasn't taken them up on the offer. "I only moved here (to East Finchley) recently, and I don't really like the idea of living in a hotel. It's a bit impersonal." A keen cook, he doesn't like the idea of living without a kitchen, or having to worry about the volume of music. "I like loud rock, at all hours of the day, and you can't really do that in a hotel." Unfortunately, Travel Lodge are not offering a cash alternative.

Rock band

Andy's still busking. Blackfriars Bridge is his favourite spot because of its great acoustics. It's easier to get a spot in the winter- in the summer there's more competition, but

the public are also more willing to stay and listen. At best, as many as eight or nine people stop to hear more, but at the other end of the spectrum, he once got a parking ticket for £50, having just made £27 busking.

Andy is now licensed to busk on the Carling Underground patches and also fronts a band, Eddyfink, whose sound is "very much rock." Their website (www.Eddyfink.co.uk) is full of rave reviews and comparisons to Radiohead. Eddyfink will be playing the Metro in Oxford Street on 19 November- and look out for Andy on his own if you're around Blackfriars Bridge.

Artsdepot opens

By Sheila Armstrong

Alison Duthie, director of Barnet's new arts centre the Artsdepot at Tally Ho Corner, gave a well-attended talk to the Finchley Society on 30 September at Avenue House. She outlined the work of the new centre which is part of the regeneration of North Finchley, on the site of the old Gaumont Cinema. At the Artsdepot there are two theatres, one with seating for 400, the other a studio space for educational and local groups (both with disabled access). Facilities are such that plays from the West End will be able to transfer to the larger theatre, with the first to do so being *Stones in His Pockets*.

Local talent

Local groups are already planning to make use of the Artsdepot. The Mill Hill Music Group's winter programme will be held there and the local disabled theatre group Community Focus and the Barnet Folk Club are to be based at the centre. There is a gallery, a dark room and multimedia space. Exhibitions by local visual arts groups, and community workshops and courses are planned. With a café and bar included, it is hoped that Artsdepot will become a meeting place for the local community.

Unsurprisingly, questions were asked about parking. There is no parking at the Artsdepot: the underground parking is only for Marks and Spencer customers or residents of the flats above the centre, but there are public car parks nearby at Lodge Lane, Stanhope Road, Woodhouse Road and Castle Road.

The new Artsdepot programme for October to January is widely available. To see the varied and exciting first programme, including Evelyn Glennie, Paco Pena, Sikhs in the City, Mark Thomas, and Benjamin Zephaniah, log on to the website at www.artsdepot.co.uk or get details from the box office on 020 8449 0048.

Finchley Forum

Report by Daphne Chamberlain

The meeting took place at The Green Man Centre, 20 October.

Allotment rents

There were protests about the rise in rents for allotments, and a petition has been delivered to Cllr Offord. The rent rise was justified as bringing Barnet into line with other local authorities. Forum Chair Cllr Sussman said that the new rents would not come into effect for East Finchley Allotments until 2006, as their existing lease runs until then.

It was said from the floor that many rents remained uncollected, as no demands had been made. If all rents were collected, would that make it unnecessary to raise the amount? The response was that as budgets were set on the assumption that all rents were being paid, it would make no difference.

Tally Ho pollution

Barnet Cabinet had adopted Air Quality Control recommendations in 2003, and it was hoped that this would move the pollution level downwards.

Access to flats on former TA site

Regarding access from the High Road into the flats on the former TA site, Peter Hayle from the Traffic Group drew attention to the cycle lanes, and expressed annoyance that the Group had not been consulted. He was told that the safety aspects of the access road would be reviewed in

November.

Parking spaces if M&S go?

If Marks & Spencer close their Tally Ho shop, would that free up significantly more car parking spaces beneath the Artsdepot? The questioner was told that Barnet had very little control over that, as it was not the Council's car park. (The questioner then hoped that the Artsdepot would not become a white elephant and be turned into a casino!)

The Torrington and Iceland

The Forum was told that no planning applications had been received for this site.

Friern Barnet Day Centre

There was continued disagreement about whether the proposed move into Friary House was entirely voluntary, or whether Age Concern was coming under pressure.

Reduced Council tax for pensioners?

It was asked why the Council tax could not be adjusted for pensioners. If "inhabitants of £30million palaces" in The Bishop's Avenue paid more, then ordinary pensioners could pay less. Cllr Sussman said this should be referred to Rudi Vis.

The next Forum will be at 6.30pm at Avenue House, N3, on 19 January.

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On cue to the community

By Dawn Powell



COPs members enjoy a pool tournament at The Bald Faced Stag.

Photo by Kevin Finn

On Tuesday 5 October, Barnet Mencap held a pool tournament at East Finchley's Bald Faced Stag. The tournament was part of the charity's COPs scheme. COPs stands for 'Community Opportunities Project'. Its goal is to allow people with learning difficulties greater access to the local (and wider) community.

The project organises a variety of events throughout the year. While this can be anything from going down to the local pub to taking a trip on Eurostar, the events share a common link – being ordinary. Although Shelley Gibbons, the manager of COPs, says it's about doing "ordinary things in ordinary places" they do organise one event that is out of the ordinary. Once a month, COPs takes a group of people to train at Arsenal's football ground in Highbury. They have yet to meet Thierry Henry!

The pool tournament

occurred because the Bald Faced Stag's licensees Rob and Jacqui Dobor wanted to do something for the charity, which regularly meets at the pub. As well as sponsoring the event, the pub paid for several of the tournament's games so that the competitors could play for longer. In fact, the pool playing went on for two and a half hours. Twenty people took part and the eventual winner was Mark Brown, who was presented with a special pool cue.

For more information on Barnet Mencap, call 020 8203 6688

Pre-Xmas shopping

Would you like to shop at Brent Cross or a similar venue, but need help in getting there?

East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact hope to organise small shopping groups in private cars during late November and early December. Wheelchairs, scooters and escorts can be arranged for the mobility or sensory impaired. Call Contact on 020 8444 1162.

Mia's Wish

By the Law Family

Mia's Wish was started on 4 March 2004 in memory of a very special little baby girl. The charity is for mothers and fathers bereaved of babies. We are working with The Whittington Hospital maternity unit where we have helped set up a room, for mothers and fathers to stay after their sad loss, to spend some very special time with their babies and where they can grieve in peace.

We have made the room more homely than clinical; we have helped to buy a crib (with mattress and linen) for the babies, a stained glass window with a peace lily, a tea and coffee machine, microwave, clock, pictures, TV stand, cushions, bed protectors, training books for future mid-wives and a digital camera with printer to enable mothers and fathers to have photos of their babies.

A big thank you

Our first fundraiser to help us buy these things was a race night at Maddens pub, on the High Road in April this year. We had a great turn out so a big thank you to everyone who helped and donated prizes, including Healthy Glow and Spa Supermarkets.

Our second fundraiser was a five mile sponsored walk over Hampstead Heath on Saturday 11 September, sponsored by Slimming World in East Finchley, so another big thank

you to all the girls there.

Great atmosphere

On Saturday 25 September we held our third fund raising event, which was an Autumn Fair at All Saints Church, Durham Road. It was to start at 11am but by 10.30am people were waiting to come in so we opened the doors early, and the church hall was packed until 2pm. There was a great atmosphere and we raised over £1,000. So we would like to thank everyone for their help and support, to everyone who donated goods and all the people that came along to buy.

Local support

A big thank you also to all our local shops who have donated prizes for our events.

Please keep a lookout for more of our events – we are still making improvements – and find out more about Mia's Wish and up and coming events on our web site, www.miaswish.co.uk.

New fitness centre at Lido

By John Dearing

The Finchley Lido, which many people from East Finchley use regularly, has recently undergone a £1million refurbishment as part of a joint initiative between London Borough of Barnet and Greenwich Leisure Limited, who run the Lido on behalf of the Council. The new Wellness Fitness Centre opened on 6 September.

The new fitness room on the first floor is greatly expanded and 80 exercise machines are now available, including static bikes, treadmill running machines, stepping machines, resistance machines for numerous different muscle groups and floor exercise mats. Some of the machines even feature a screen for enjoying music videos (although this is not compulsory – you can take your own personal stereo, if you wish!).

Also on the refurbished first floor is a new exercise and dance studio, and new changing rooms dedicated to the Wellness Fitness Centre. Organised group activities include circuit training, group exercising and aerobics, a total of 35 classes per week currently. Personalised fitness programmes are also available.

Bright and friendly

Use of the Centre is either by membership (there are already over 1000 members) or 'pay and play', in either case preceded by a mandatory induction session.

First impressions are that the new fitness room is a considerable improvement over the previous facility, the machines are superlative, the area is bright and fresh, and the staff are friendly and helpful. In particular, the induction course is

most useful and enjoyable, even for those who are familiar with the use of such equipment.

Similarly, the new dance studio is a pleasant and well-ventilated area for group exercise, and the new changing rooms are clean and well appointed.

The downside is that the new fitness centre is built over the existing swimming pool changing area. Swimmers in the main pool may now find it somewhat hemmed in, and the noise levels at peak times are appreciably greater.

Going where she wants

By Daphne Chamberlain

When Sippy Azizollah was stopped by police, they told her, "It's not a good idea to ride in the road". She knew that already. "I was petrified, but I couldn't get back on the pavement."

That episode triggered her campaign to make wheelchair journeys easier, quicker and safer. Following her latest request, she heard last month that Barnet is planning to install 10 new pavement drop crossings in East Finchley by Christmas. These will be at junctions on Deansway, and will follow installations she asked for successfully in the last year or so along East End Road.

Barnet say that, as part of their commitment to the safety of disabled travellers, they lower kerb heights and also put in textured paving to direct people with impaired sight. A spokesperson told *THE ARCHER*

that the Council are spending £15,000 this year to improve the streets for the disabled. If a disabled resident asks for more help in getting about, highway engineers will "assess the site and discuss their concerns".

Sippy is delighted with the help she and fellow wheelchair users (not to mention buggy pushers) have received. She made her first contact with Council engineers when she saw them assessing a site near her home, but recommends just picking up the phone.

Disabled residents should contact the Highways Department on 020 8359 7200 with their suggestions and requests.

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Hands of friendship at Fairacres Monday Club
Photo by Ben Domb. Reproduced by kind permission of Jewish News

Many Happy Returns

By Daphne Chamberlain

It was Fairacres Monday Club's 17th anniversary last month, and also the birthday of club member Karen. So when entertainers Ann Shirley and Colby sang *I want to be a part of it!* their audience were not thinking about New York. The accent of this celebration was on participation.

Led by Sandra ("I just love to join in") Awkin, everyone – whether on feet or on wheels – was up on the floor, with encouragement from club organiser Reuby Hyams to raise the roof.

Reuby and his wife, Rene, who have been running the club from the beginning, said they still considered it a joy and a privilege. Although based at Fairacres – sheltered accommodation in East End Road for

Jewish blind and disabled – the club has many non-residents, and always welcomes more.

Sometimes the entertainment is in-house, but often Reuby and friends call upon their many connections to bring in well-known speakers and entertainers.

The Monday club meets at 1.30pm. For more details, call Rene and Reuby Hyams on 020 8883 0448 or Sylvia Lee on 020 8958 7878.

Getting about alone

By Mark Colpstein

Mark Colpstein, a resident of Fairacres, has cerebral palsy and is blind and partially deaf. Here he describes a journey to the shops.

In some ways I feel that society makes very strict rules for disabled people. Other people are always very concerned about how much I can get around on my own. Yes, I do sometimes get lost, but I have to learn by my own mistakes. By getting lost, I may find my way in the future. I have made a tape with directions how to get out of my flat and how to go to the shops.

Outside my flat, I point my long cane at the pillars, and then find a little brick wall with flowers. Then I keep straight to the gate, turn left facing a wall, and keep going straight down East End Road. I have to cross over a road to the next pavement, and when I reach the metal railing, that leads me to the traffic lights.

Coming back, I touch the metal railing with my long cane, and then keep straight till I reach the end of the pavement. Then I cross over, keeping straight. If I reach the grass outside the convent, I find the pavement again, then the wall, then keep walking straight until I go down a slope and turn right into the gate of Fairacres. I keep

straight till I find the flowerbed, then the four pillars, and then the door.

Support your local playground

By Diana Cormack
The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood are looking for funding to improve facilities in the children's play area.

To this end they have applied for a Government Living Spaces Grant. If they are awarded the grant, Barnet will match it. For this to be successful, the Friends need to be seen to have the support and input of the community, as this is part of the National Performance Measures to assess the merits of any application. So they need to have feedback from hundreds of local people.

This can be in the form of letters or emails, setting out what improvements residents would like to see, particularly in the apparatus itself rather than matters of maintenance. Pictures of proposed equipment have been displayed in the Wood, along with a comment book. Keep your eyes open for them if you are down there and make your comments known.

You can also contact the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood at info@cherrytreewood.co.uk or write to them ASAP with your comments via The Archer (Cherry Tree Wood), PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA



Men at work in the playground. Photo by Diana Cormack

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Clissold hosts writers group

Whilst The Old White Lion is undergoing refurbishment, East Finchley Writers will be meeting at The Clissold Arms in Fortis Green, at 6.30pm every Wednesday.

They plan to return to the White Lion in early December and hope writers old and new will keep in touch. For more details, contact Lilian on 020 8444 1793 or EastFinchley write@aol.com.

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Tom Durkan amid the latest damage. Picture by Ann Bronkhorst.

Fuchsias and foxes

By Ann Bronkhorst

In a corner of St. Pancras and Islington Cemetery is the Horticultural Resource Centre where all Islington's bedding plants are grown and where adults with learning difficulties train as gardeners. One afternoon in early October the Centre's autumn open day was winding down and Tom Durkan, the site supervisor, had time to talk.

During his thirty years at the Centre, Tom has seen many changes. Since becoming supervisor he has promoted sustainable growing methods avoiding the use of chemicals such as weed killers. Now toads and insects (good ones!) thrive and beekeepers have established successful hives. In spite of dense housing to the north and west Tom often sees foxes and feral cats sunbathing on top of the growing tunnels and bird life has increased.

What's the secret?

Most gardeners will approve of the Centre's replacement of peat by coir fibre. Plastic pots are used but recycled after five years; Tom still mourns the old terracotta pots. An iron-rich seaweed foliar feed partly accounts for the healthy plants but the tender loving care they receive

from Tom and his two growers must be a factor. Simply, he loves his work: "I still get a buzz at germination time."

Planting schemes

To see the results, Tom recommends visiting Finsbury and Canonbury squares and St. Mary Magdalen Church, Holloway Road. Using his plants and bold designs Islington won the Bronze medal in last year's London in Bloom competition. This summer he combined black millet, arbutus, ornamental maize and dark purple hibiscus to stunning effect.

Learning horticulture

The training unit, which has a high ratio of staff to students, produced its first 'graduates' in September 2003. It is hoped that the course will expand and enquiries about it are welcomed. The students design and plant

out beds nearby in the cemetery, learn how to build steps and paths and are taught about organic gardening.

"There's something very calming about growing plants," Tom says, but it must be hard to remain calm when precious stock is destroyed by vandals, tunnels slashed and glasshouses broken. About £5,000 worth of damage was done this year, none of it by high winds or animals. Tom hopes that if more local people and school groups visit the Centre fewer children will wish to damage plants and greenhouses in the future. Meanwhile, he and his team clear up the mess and work on with dedication – and the proverbial *green fingers*.

The Horticultural Resource Centre can be contacted on 020 8444 9185.

Wildlife diary

By Linda Mitchell

There have been some interesting observations since I last wrote about my garden wildlife back in March.

I was so pleased at the end of March to see two ladybirds on the same day as they are now very infrequent visitors to the garden, but a few more appeared in June, and took great delight in landing on me and biting!

Bees, bats and butterflies

There were many different species of bees this summer; I saw lots of sizes and colours all at one time, buzzing on the *ceanothus*, looking very bright with their great fat saddlebags of pollen.

Butterflies were again plentiful, and I was pleased to spot a few of the Red Admiral type.

I saw one lone frog all summer, but in mid-April quite a few bats were flying about at dusk.

... and birds too

The swifts arrived a little later, and it was lovely to see the blue tits using the nesting box this year for the first time. The resulting little ones kept mum and dad very busy catching their dinner. A robin hatched out three babies, one of which became quite tame, even flying in to have a look around the conservatory.

Although they didn't come into my garden, I saw four herons fly over in one week, two of which were being chased off by a large 'murder' of crows.

I was surprised to see the sparrow hawk back in early July. He tried to take a pigeon, but failed in his gruesome deed. It was upsetting, though, to find a young dead woodpecker. It had no apparent injury. Sadder still to see mum feeding alone.

As I write, spiders are making webs everywhere and autumn is upon us. I shall continue to look out for the wildlife in my garden.

Archer footnote: The southern counties of England have been invaded by the Harlequin ladybird. It is large (6-8mm long), with black and orange or red markings in varying combinations, but always has a W or M mark between its head and wing covers. When stressed, it emits a foul-smelling yellow liquid from its legs, which can trigger allergic reactions.

Aphid expert Dr Michael Majerus warns that it could wipe out half the native species. If you can capture one, it should be sent in a sealed matchbox or film container to Dr Majerus, Dept of Genetics, Cambridge University, CB2 3EH.



Preparing for winter. Photo by John Dearing

All over East Finchley, grey squirrels are busily gathering (and eating or storing away) as much food as possible for the coming winter, and perhaps as a result, they are much tamer than usual. This one was photographed, outside the East Finchley Constitutional Club.

If you go down to the woods tomorrow...

By Ann Bronkhorst

... you may see encouraging signs of regeneration. In Coldfall Wood, this fragment of ancient forest, with its fascinating traces of Ice Age geology, will soon receive an injection of money from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

On 5 October the Friends of Coldfall Wood and Muswell Hill Playing Field were given the good news by David Bevan, Haringey Council Conservation Officer. He explained that the GLA's biodiversity plan for the whole of London includes a Capital Woodlands Project. Over one million pounds have been allocated to the six 'flagship woods' selected; our little wood's share is likely to be at least £100,000.

By the end of this financial year a detailed bid must be in, specifying a programme to meet the needs of Coldfall Wood.

Repairs to paths, renewal of bridges and solving water pollution are some proposals already made. Others concern coppice management and woodland ecology.

Ancient woodland

David Bevan says that Coldfall Wood is the most natural of the four remnants of ancient woodland in Haringey and has few 'alien' plants and trees. It is dominated by English oaks, most of which are sound, and by hornbeams. Coppicing of the hornbeams, re-started in the 1990s by David, lets in light, allowing wild flowers to germinate.

At a meeting on 19 October attended by Linda Alliston and Mark Kobayashi-Hillary from Friends of Coldfall Wood detailed proposals were discussed. Consultations with local users of the wood are planned; notices of future meetings will be announced in the press and posted in the wood, or visit the website www.coldfallwood.info, or email info@coldfallwood.info.

Coldfall Wood's Ice Age connection featured last month in Alan Titchmarsh's BBC1 programme, British Isles: a Natural History. – Ed

RSPCA news

By Mary Atkinson

The Autumn Fair at the clinic last month was very successful. £175 was raised which goes towards running expenses and subsidising health care for companion animals. The Christmas Fair will again be at the Clinic on 11 December from 11am to 2pm. This time mince pies and soup will be added to the popular jacket potatoes.

The RSPCA Animal Centre has a regular intake of retired greyhounds looking for new homes. Greyhounds are gentle, loving dogs who appreciate a quiet restful life when their racing careers have ended. Despite their performance on the track they do not need a lot of vigorous exercise! Anyone interested should visit Southridge. It

is a short drive into the country at Packhorse Lane, Ridge, Potters Bar. Open to visitors Monday to Saturday from 11am to 4.30pm and Sunday from 1 to 4.30pm. Closed on Wednesdays.

If you would like a home visitor to talk to you about what re-homing companion animals entails ring 020 8444 8366 to arrange an appointment.



Kieran & Margaret Madden receive their award from James Francis of CAMRA. Photo by Kevin Finn

Maddens snaps CAMRA award

By Kevin Finn

Maddens, the floral public house in East Finchley High Road, has received a prestigious award from the independent pub and beer pressure group, the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).

CAMRA's Barnet & Enfield branch (one of the largest of the organisation's branches) has reviewed public houses in the two London boroughs within their remit. Each year, the membership elect one pub from each borough that it believes deserves special recognition for the quality and range of its real ales.

Consistent high quality

Membership Secretary James Francis said that Maddens had been singled out for its wide range of ales, and noted that new *guest* beers were constantly being introduced. "The variety of beer on offer, and the consistent high quality of the product singled Maddens out," he said, and went on to say, "Maddens is also one of a very few independent pubs that

is making an effort to promote traditional ales, so we wanted to recognise such an unusual achievement."

Only seven pubs in the whole of Barnet were considered good enough to warrant an entry in CAMRA's 2005 edition of its *Good Beer Guide*. Significantly two of these (almost 30%) are in East Finchley: The Five Bells in East End Road, and Maddens.

Office award

As the hosts of *THE ARCHER*'s regular Saturday morning meetings, we believe that Kieran and Margaret Madden deserve not only hearty congratulations for achieving 'Best Pub in Barnet' but also for creating the only newspaper office in the world to receive a CAMRA award. Well done!

Different appeal at the Five Bells?

By Daphne Chamberlain

The Five Bells in East End Road, which closed last month for a makeover, is due to re-open in December. Some regulars, though, are upset by a change of landlord and the loss of the children's playground.

Joanna Frawley told *THE ARCHER*, "This was the only family pub for miles around. My son Michael, who is five, loved going there and meeting other children. The playground brought in more customers too. None of my friends have children, but they came to the Five Bells because I could take Michael. Also, if children see a healthy way of drinking, they will be less likely to indulge in the binge culture later."

Spirit Breweries, though, maintain that the pub will still

be child-tolerant. A spokesperson told *THE ARCHER*, "We've never seen it as family-centred anyway. It never had children's menus, and our family pubs have Wacky Warehouses to entertain the children."

Swings and improvements

They plan to run it as "a John Barras pub - a heart of the community for 18s-80s", with opportunities to watch sport and to get involved in community projects.

Speaking last month, former landlord Pat O'Shaughnessy was unsure of his future plans.

The end of an era for the Windsor Castle

By Martin Earl

To the locals it was an end of an era when, this October, David and Carole Shephard left the Windsor Castle pub that they had managed with such care and attention for the last 12 and a half years. This small, quiet, no-TV, drinking oasis in The Walks off Church Lane had its own loyal regulars and its own regular events - darts Wednesdays, pub quiz Thursdays - with the dubious prize of setting the next week's quiz! Karaoke (Caroleoke, as they called it) or live music alternating each Saturday - with dancing, if you wanted.

It was run as a true community and family establishment with drinkers returning from far and wide for its atmosphere, entertainment and good beer.

I do have to declare an interest as one of its regular 'customers' and I count it as one of the jewels in East Finchley's crown. We all hope that the new tenants will retain it as such - to be "discovered" for a long time to come.

In summer the pub was always awash with colourful displays of flowers and it was winner of a number of competitions, including the first prize in Barnet in Bloom 2000, Best Bloomin' Pub floral display and, later, the all-London prize.

David and Carole were given a resounding send-off

Goodbye to the Torrington

The Torrington in Lodge Lane, North Finchley was not just any old pub. Its back room had been a music venue since 1967, starting as a jazz venue, evolving to psychedelia, and pub rock.

Punk came and went. Latterly a variety of rock, R&B, American tours, blues, and tribute bands have performed there. Famous names such as Paul Young, Steve Marriott, The Stranglers, Dr. Feelgood, Chris Farlowe, The Blues Band, Dr. John, The Average White Band, Georgie Fame, The Hamsters, The Mavericks and Ian Parker have all featured there. For East Finchley music

fans, The Torrington was just a bus ride away.

In an age of vast stadiums and grand theatres, the atmosphere was unique: intimate and highly charged, with the audience really close to their heroes.

Sadly, its last night was Sunday 3 October. The pub will no longer be there; a planning application has been made that involves building flats on the site.



Regulars say good-bye to David and Carole Photo by Martin Earl

on their last Saturday and we all wished them a rewarding retirement in France where

Carole's Karaoke skills should go down a treat with their new locals!

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Cooking up a feast!

By Rebecca Kellaway

Top celebrity chefs, including Nigella Lawson, have cooked up a fantastic new cookbook with the pupils of Holy Trinity School. Called *Feast*, the book features 64 pages of the youngsters' favourite recipes from around the world, alongside more from Rick Stein, Phil Vickery and Fern Britton and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall.

Head teacher Duncan Mills said, "The children have excelled themselves once again and we're extremely proud of what they've created. It's a really impressive cook book and I for one can't wait to go off and try some of the delicious recipes."

Children and parents challenged

A fund raising cookbook was the idea of the school's parents association, the HTSA, who set the pupils an Easter holiday challenge to write and illustrate their favourite recipe. Meanwhile the parents set off to find a publishing deal that would keep the book affordable and raise funds for the school at the same time, no easy feat.

Just when this looked impossible help came from the invaluable services of Kingswood Steele Printers in London and typesetters, AMA Dataset of Preston, Lancashire. Both companies work regularly for one of the mums at school and having heard of the project, generously volunteered their services for free.

Celebrity chefs support

Further boosts came when celebrity chefs Nigella Lawson, Rick Stein, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and Phil Vickery and his TV presenter wife Fern Britton responded to a letter from the school asking for their support. Mr Mills said, "We're thrilled that these celebrity chefs decided to support our book by allowing us to include some of their own



As displayed in Muswell Hill Bookshop.

Photo by Erini Rodis

recipes. For the children to see their names in print next to such famous people is absolutely fantastic."

Four hundred copies have been printed, raising more than £2,000 towards school funds. *Feast* costs £5.95, order forms are available from the school office.

YOUNG ARCHER Martin Junior School journey

In September forty Year 6 children spent a week at the Pestalozzi Village near Hastings. Despite the weather they had the time of their lives while learning about history, geography and their own powers of endurance.

The ten and eleven year olds have produced some marvellous writing about their experiences. Here is an outstanding example by Daniel.

Night Walk

I wasn't sure what to expect since I had never been on a night walk in the woods before. There was one thing I was sure about and that was it would be a brilliant walk and very exhilarating. I was told by Mr Pickering that it would be cold (he was right). Therefore, I wore my thickest fleece. I was sure there was a calamity in the making.

The wood was one of the most peculiar places I've ever been. In the day it would have been like any other wood but at night it seemed to have mutated into a realm of supernatural beings. There were young four-foot trees. Whenever you bumped into one of them you expected a slimy green crooked face that would be a fairytale like goblin snarling back at you. Huge tyrannical-looking trees loomed overhead like massive

giants. Everywhere you looked you expected a fairytale creature to stare back at you.

There came a rather steep hill that we walked down with tons, sorry, that's an understatement, millions of nettles. Though at night, where it was hard to see things, they became overgrown rats stuck in holes and viciously biting anything that crossed their path.

I have never been one for stars, though now I see why people like them so much. They were like hundreds of lights, some brighter than others, on a blue roof. Words fail what the shade of blue was. A French philosopher once said, "The sky is as blue as an orange." I have been puzzled by that for many years though now I know what he meant, he meant the colour of the sky is like no other (that's what I think anyway). I now know what the Plough looks like and I can identify the North Star.

To get back we had to pass a house and be quieter than the quietest mouse. When we got back we had to take our shoes off; the cleaners didn't want forty cold children with muddy shoes parading around the centre. When we got back James gave us a brief talk on the walk and Mr Pickering sent us off to get ready for bed. Then we had hot chocolate (I had none). In bed we were safe from the horrors that lurked outside (even Mr Pickering doesn't count as one of those!).

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

By Diana Cormack

Holy Trinity

Having almost reached its fundraising target, the new extension is to be opened by The Bishop of London. Guests will be able to visit the library and pupils will receive a commemorative bookmark and release a celebratory balloon. Now money must be raised to buy more books.

The Book Fair, at which some parents bought books to donate to the new library, raised £839.27, of which nearly £444 commission will be used to buy non-fiction books for the library.

Two Year 6 pupils attended the press event launching the start of fund raising for the statue in memory of Spike Milligan. They met Spike's daughter Jane and celebrities who could tell them about his life. As well as interviewing others, the children themselves were interviewed by the media.

The Holy Trinity School Association held a coffee afternoon at which the School Cookbook was launched.

Martin Schools

Junior School staff and pupils are really buoyant following the publication of the Ofsted inspection report, which contained so much praise for the teaching and learning, attitudes and relationships prevalent there.

As usual, the Year 6 school journey was a great success, but this time there was a notable difference. The coach driver put pen to paper to sing the praises of the children and staff. To have such a letter is virtually unknown in school circles!

Year 5 visited the Thames Barrier and, amongst many other things, they learned about flooding, environmental problems, and wildlife and worked on testing the quality of water in a special classroom.

The Scholastic Bookfair raised a massive £1,030 – the best ever at Martin Junior School, helped along by great teas from the PTA.

The PTA also organised a fabulous evening of fun and food at a bingo event to raise funds for both schools.

In Martin Infant School parents have been involved in clearing out sheds as well as sorting the library and getting rid of old books. They are requesting donations of suitable new books or ones in good condition.

The school celebrated Black History month, which featured in assemblies as well as studies in the classroom.

Pupils with particular talents, good work or positive behaviour will be awarded 'pupil of the week' certificates in assembly.

Creative solutions to Christmas

Art Fairs are "definitely the coolest places to hang out this autumn" says *The Sunday Times*. Luckily for us locals we can tap into the zeitgeist, as the East Finchley Open (a group of visual artists and craftspeople) will be hosting their first ever Winter Arts Fair on Sunday 21 November, 10.30am–4pm, at Martin School, Plane Tree Walk, High Road, East Finchley.

Local artists will be selling ceramics, jewellery, photography, paintings, drawings, sculpture, hand-painted silk scarves, textiles, patchwork quilting, stained glass, stained glass mirrors, stitched creations and much more, all at affordable prices. Why not buy your family and friends original art and crafts for Christmas, Chanukah or other winter celebrations? Or just treat yourself! A local artist will be in situ for the day drawing portraits; a face-painter will be on hand to keep the children happy, and the Arts Café will keep you sustained while you browse, with tea, coffee paninis, croissant and cakes.

"The Winter Arts Fair is a new idea, and we're very excited by the prospect of having so many of our local artists and craftspeople gathered together under one roof," says Christine Watson, organiser of the event.

For further details please see www.eastfinchley.open.org.uk Local artists and craftspeople interested in a stall contact Christine Watson on 020 8883 4207, e-mail watson.latham@virgin.net.

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Tel: 8883 1544 (Minister: Simon Dyke)

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on 020 8883 9315.

All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir of both adults and children.

Experienced singers are always welcome.

Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.

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



HISTORY

Neighbours from hell

By Ann Bronkhorst

Fifty years ago the residents of Neale Close – described then as a ‘good class neighbourhood’ – had had enough. Squeals, sounds of gunshots, smells, flies ... it was unbearable. But when they complained to the council they were told that the house in question was ‘properly conducted’.

Pigging it

The ‘house’ was a slaughterhouse, part of Park Farm, off East End Road. ‘Lord’ George Sanger had lived (and been murdered) there about fifty years earlier. Now, in 1954, the farm housed a piggery, perhaps a last survivor of the hog trade on which East Finchley once thrived.

In the late 18th century Shropshire hogs were sold at East Finchley’s hogmarket to local butchers who fattened them up on the leftovers from London’s distilling industry. Wealthy pig-dealers and hog-butchers owned land locally and ran pubs such as the George, the Hog Driver and the Sow and Pigs.

Fast forward to 1954: post-war meat rationing had ended and meat and livestock were decontrolled. But, as the Medical Officer of Health for Finchley noted, private slaughterhouses didn’t disappear. If they didn’t break planning regulations, had existed for some time and were regularly inspected there were

no grounds for withdrawing their licences. And that seems to have been Finchley Council’s initial conclusion in the autumn of 1954.

Some gems emerge from the Finchley Press reports of the time, such as Cllr. Enright’s hope that ‘a more silent gun’ could be used and the ‘private sleuthing’ by members of Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents’ Association, one of whom was advised by a small boy to climb a tree in order to see the slaughterhouse.

Backyard bacon?

The MOH’s annual report, however, refers to the fining of an unnamed slaughterhouse for various offences and the cancellation of its licence, so perhaps the outraged Neale Close residents finally prevailed.

Even so, one year later, in a yard in Prospect Place, someone was keeping 25 pigs and 200 fowls. I wonder when livestock-keeping on this scale finally ended in East Finchley – do any *ARCHER* readers have memories of backyard pigs and home-grown ham?

Finchley County

Did you start at Finchley County School in 1947? Old Fincunians Joan Brown, Joan Oram (nee Buckenham) and Geoffrey Batten are hoping to organise a reunion for people who entered Finchley County School in September 1947.

The proposed date is Saturday 6 August 2005 and it would take place at East Grinstead, West Sussex. Approximately 60 girls and boys entered the school that year and contact has been made with about half of them to date.

If you are one of those who hasn’t yet been contacted and

you would like to know more about the reunion, please telephone Geoffrey Batten on 0121 475 6604 or email him on grb@batten.eu.org. If you are in touch with anyone who might have entered FCS in 1947, please pass Geoffrey’s details on to them.

Barnet Normandy Veterans

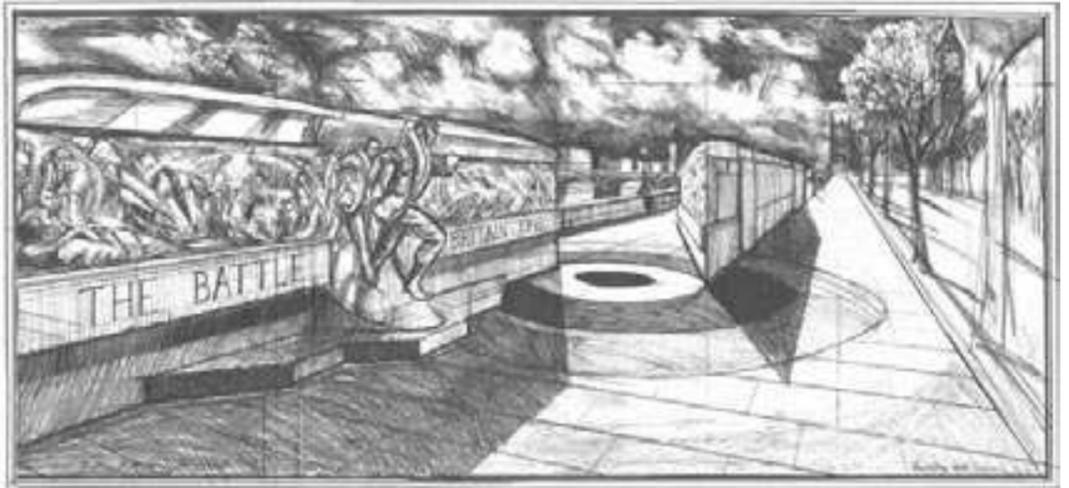
By Daphne Chamberlain

Anyone who landed on the Normandy beaches between 5 June and 20 August 1944 is entitled to become a full member of the Normandy Veterans Association. That timespan defines the official Normandy campaign. People who served elsewhere, or who were in the area but not at that time, can become associate members.

Jack Clabburn, Chair of the Barnet branch, told *THE ARCHER* that Barnet currently has 28 full members and nine associates. This summer they spent six days revisiting the campaign sites for the 60th anniversary of D-Day, commemorated for them by the BBC, who sent them 40 videos covering the entire anniversary celebrations.

At this year’s Remembrance Day ceremony, the Normandy Veterans will lead the march past the Cenotaph.

The 95 (Barnet) Branch meet on the last Friday of every month at 7.30pm at St Mary Magdalene’s Church, 6 Athenaeum Road, Whetstone. For further details, contact Mr Clabburn on 020 8245 6931.



A Paul Day drawing of the planned monument taken from the monument web site, address below

Remembering “The Few”

By Diana Cormack

“Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few.” Winston Churchill paid this tribute to the 2,936 fighter pilots who took part in the Battle of Britain, which lasted from 10 July until 31 October 1940. During those four months, 544 of them lost their lives and 795 were to die before the end of the war. Owing to their amazing courage and tenacity, the Germans abandoned plans to invade our country, though it was to be another five years before the enemy was eventually overcome.

Monument to courage

That final victory is to be celebrated in 2005, sixty years after World War Two ended and, next year too, a memorial to ‘The Few’ is to be unveiled. Westminster City Council has donated a site near the RAF memorial on the Victoria Embankment. The original idea for a monument came from Bill Bond, who founded the Battle of Britain Society, which launched the initiative three years ago. Based on an existing granite structure, it is being fashioned by sculp-

tor Paul Day and will carry the names of all the airmen involved, who came from many countries. Sculpted panels will show pilots in action, along with the men and women on the ground who made their activities possible, plus rescue services and civilians in bombed areas of Great Britain. In fact, it serves as an honour to virtually all who took part and who deserve our thoughts and our thanks.

Public honour

Having been refused Lottery assistance, the monument is to

be paid for entirely by public donations. It will cost £1.65 million. At the time of writing £1.3 million has been raised so another £350,000 is needed.

Donations

To make a donation, send a cheque payable to *Battle of Britain London Monument Ltd* at 11 Greenland Road, Barnet, Herts. EN 5 2AL

Telephone 020 8440 5422, fax 020 8440 3676 or visit donations@bbm.org.uk. For general enquiries use info@bbm.org.uk or www.bbm.org.uk.



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Regular Events Sport & Fitness

- ❖ **Counselling & psychotherapy** at the Green Man Centre. Call 8440 4174
- ❖ **Finchley & Hornsey Ramblers Group** Call Vivien 020 8883 8190
- ❖ **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
- ❖ **Keep fit for the Retired** Wednesdays Christ Church N12. Ring Bridie. 020 8883 5269
- ❖ **Pilates** in East Finchley, qualified teacher. Contact Dee Wisbey 020 8883 7029
- ❖ **Tae Kwon Do** at The Green Man Thursdays 7-9pm 07949 612 706
- ❖ **Tai Chi** at the Green Man on Mondays 1.30-3pm. An "ageing well" class for older people.
- ❖ **Tennis Club** off Southern Road. Call 020 8440 6953
- ❖ **Yoga & Meditation** classes at Holy Trinity Church, 020 8444 7217
- ❖ **Yoga, breathing & relaxation.** Weekly drop-in classes-N2, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 020 8444 7783.

Dance, Drama, Art & Music

- ❖ **Adult Line Dancing.** Call Footloose 020 8440 8530/8216 5633.
- ❖ **Art Classes.** For info call Henry on 020 8888 5133.
- ❖ **Ballroom dancing classes**, beginners and improvers. Phone 01707 642 378
- ❖ **Broadway & West End Musical Singing Workshop** call Idit Gold 020 8449 0011.
- ❖ **Club Dramatika** drama club for kids. Call Vicky 020 8883 1554
- ❖ **Columbian party dancing** classes, Call Nelsy 020 8444 2012
- ❖ **East Finchley Writing Workshops.** Creative writing, poetry and prose Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- ❖ **Finchley Jazz Club**, Monday 15 & 29 November 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.
- ❖ **Street Dance** every Tuesday at Old Barn for children of various ages Contact Lorna 07976203669.
- ❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** of North London, Contact Caroline Egan 020 8340 2706
- ❖ **Tap Dance** for children beginning at Old Barn every Monday, Contact Sharon 020-8349-4613

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 Clissold Arms. (A temporary venue -see more on page 7.) 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
- ❖ **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.

Christ's College Cadet Force celebrate centenary

Over 60 Christ's College cadets marched from their original school site in Hendon Lane to their present one in East End Road last month despite steady drizzle and the threat of storms. The march, led by the band of the Parachute Regiment and escorted by local police, completed a march of 25 years ago from Bisley to Finchley.

On that occasion the cadets carried by relay commemorative postal covers to mark their 75th Anniversary. This year, they carried a limited number of the original covers over-stamped to mark the centenary of their formation as a Rifle Club in 1904.

On arrival at school the cadets marched past their headquarters, where Commanding Officer LtCol Jon Walden and Headmaster Gary Tucker took the salute.

A large crowd of parents, friends and ex-cadets enjoyed displays, a continuity drill, and a miniature version of the Royal Tournament Field Gun Race, and a programme of music from the band of the Parachute Regiment.

Parents and friends provided

refreshments, and the Stockdale Trust organised a display of the Unit's history.

All officers and adult staff of the CCF are ex-cadets, and eleven holders of the Cadet Forces Medal, awarded for long service in the cadet forces, were present at the parade, seven of them still currently serving.

The parade and event was organised by the Second-in-Command, Captain Brian Fuller, currently celebrating his 53rd year of continuous service in the Cadet Unit since joining as a cadet in 1951.

All official photographs taken during the afternoon are displayed on the website of the Centarian Regimental Association, the association of ex-cadets of Christ's College, www.c-r-a.org.uk.

St Mary's international evening

By Paul Willcocks

The international reporter and BBC news presenter, George Alagiah, spoke eloquently at St.Mary's Church International Evening in East Finchley last month.

This evening, offering food from 14 different countries and a whole range of cultural musical events, was St Mary's first international event, and was a great success.

Aid for Dafur

Organised to raise money for the current Sudan crisis, the event was introduced by George Alagiah, who movingly described the torment of a continent continuously ravaged by war for nearly 50 years. As patron of Fair Trade, George praised the determination of Santana and Karen Luis - who organised the event - and condemned the inequality of food distribution in the world today.

He also confided to the local parishioners how glad he was to be back on home soil: George's family moved from Sri Lanka to East Finchley in 1973, and George himself lived in Summerlee Avenue for a number of years.

Food for the world

Amongst the locals raising money for Sudan were Jessica

Bacarese-Hamilton, enjoying a spicy Jamaican chicken, and James McCormack - who chose his favourite Indian curry. The range of food available included Kenyan caipati, provided by Margaret Gichonjo, Polish Bigos and Tortes (Polish cake) from Debbie and Jerzy Dissowski, and Nigerian Jallt rice and plantain from the Ogbechie family. May Brennan and Mary King were on hand with glasses of Irish coffee, whilst Piya and Tony Martin of Church Lane - serving Thailand dishes - taxed the minds of punters with their 'guess the cake weight' competition. The winner (in case the cake hasn't been claimed yet!) was Larry White.

Providing aid

Amidst all the exotic food tasting, the aim of the evening was not forgotten, and St Mary's first international evening should go a long way in providing urgently needed aid for Dafur in Sudan.

The evening raised almost £6,300.

FILMS & CINEMA

The kids stay in the picture house

By David Howes

Calling all parents! Just when you thought it wasn't safe to go back in the cinema, fear not, for the Phoenix has re-opened its Saturday morning kids' club!

Yes, the time has come to welcome the miniature masses to take their seats - legroom not a problem - and indulge in a popcorn and pop brunch whilst East Finchley's adult population nurse last night's hangover with a Bloody Mary and a 90% grease breakfast...

The Phoenix will be offering the newest kids' movies, special guests, food and drink, goody bags, raffles and much more.

So what are you waiting for?

The day - **Saturday**

The time - **11am**

The place - **The Phoenix**

Think of it this way. Giving up your Saturday morning is a bargaining chip towards a peaceful Sunday, and when was the last time you had your view of the screen obscured by the five year old seated in front of you? Exactly.

What's On...

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

Sunday 7 - Saturday 13 November:

Incognito Theatre presents *The Miser* by Moliere - Famous comedy in which an eponymous skinflint decides his children are costing too much and must be married off. Convinced they are plotting to rob him blind, he eventually discovers that the fortune he buried in his garden has been stolen. Performances start at 8pm at Incognito Theatre, Holly Park Road, N11. Tickets £6-£8 (concs available) Box Office: 020 8361 8310 Info: Gary Jones on 01992 427401

§

Fridays 12, 19, and 26 November:

Free singing club sessions with The Memory Lane singing club

Enjoy singing but need to rediscover the singing technique you once had? Open sessions for new members take place 11.30am-1.30pm at St. Mary's Hall, Hendon Lane, N3. To enrol call 020 8444 8511.

§

Sunday 14 November:

Jacquin Ensemble plays pieces by Mozart and Brahms at 8pm at East Finchley Methodist Church. A collection will be made on behalf of Digis-mart, a charity for disadvantaged children.

§

Wednesday 17 November:

Finchley & District Philatelic Society members compete for the Alan Drake one sheet competition. All visitors and prospective new members welcome. 8pm at Trinity Church Hall, Nether St, N Finchley. Enquiries to Brian Merryweather 020-8444-3251 or visit www.stampdomain.com/finchley and www.ukphilately.org.uk

§

Saturday 27 November:

All Saints Winter Fair, 11am-2pm at All Saints Church Durham Road N2. Gifts, Cakes, Toys etc, etc, Refreshments.

§

Saturday 27 November:

The North London Chorus performs Haydn's Creation at St James Church, Muswell Hill, 7.30pm.

§

Sunday 28 November:

A service of advent carols at 6.30pm, All Saints Church Durham Road N2. All denominations are invited to take part

§

Tuesday 30 November - Saturday 4 December:

Southgate College Opera presents **Gilbert and Sullivan's Mikado** at 7.30pm, Sat matinee 2.30pm, Gladys Child Theatre, High Street, Southgate, N14. Box office 020 8351 2621. Tickets also from Scott's Travel, 020 8882 0141.

§

Friday 3 December:

East Finchley Development Trust AGM and review of East Finchley Festival at 7pm at The Green Man Centre. Refreshments provided. All welcome. Call Nick on 020 8883 4916 for details.

§

Saturday 4 December:

East Finchley Arts Festival winter event at All Saints Church, Durham Road. The first in a series of **buffet supper concerts** is a **Victorian evening** - nostalgia and audience participation. Includes artists Ann Mann, Maureen Keetch and Anthony Sales. Concert starts at 7.30pm. Details and bookings: 020 8444 9214. (Jan 29: Thamyse String Quartet)

§

Wednesday 8 December:

Age Concern Christmas Bazaar & BBQ at Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2. BBQ opens 12 noon and the Bazaar 1pm. Stalls by Age Concern Barnet and Leaside Day Centre plus Barnet PCT and Ageing Well Project, Barnet Community Care Team and the Multi-cultural Centre. The aim is to raise the profile of the valuable work Age Concern Barnet carries out in Barnet and to raise funds for the centre.

§

Saturday 11 December:

Christmas cracker at 7.30pm, St Mary-at-Finchley, Hendon Lane, N3. Carols and Christmas music for all the family from the **Finchley Choral Society** and **South Hampstead High School Chorale**, who have recently performed in Switzerland and at the National Eisteddfod, Llangollen. Tickets £8 for adults, £1 for children.



Letter to The Editor

Miracle Escape

Dear Archer, Unfortunately, you were incorrect to say in your recent front page article that none of the children in the playground at Cherry Tree Wood was "in the particular spot" when a huge bough fell down last month.

My three-year-old son was directly underneath it, but by some miracle the main bulk of the branch just missed him. I dread to think what would have happened had he been standing a few inches to his left or right.

The Council must bear some responsibility. They should have spotted the rotting branches long ago and removed those hanging over the playground well before they were at risk of falling.

In fact, after the bough had come down, it took them almost a week to remove it and check for other potentially dangerous branches, during which time the playground was left open. Railings, which were bent by the force of the falling wood, have still not been repaired. It's symptomatic of the Council's apparent lack of interest in Cherry Tree Wood playground, which urgently needs new child-safe gates and improved facilities.

Yours sincerely,
Danny Shaw,
Ingram Road, N2

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net.

Career change

By Sheila Armstrong

Robin Kiashek first got a place at The British College of Osteopathic Medicine at 18. But it was not till several years later, after a successful career as a commercial photographer in advertising, that he took up his place there. As a photographer he maintained an interest in healing and this gradually led him back to his first career choice. With the support of his wife he completed the lengthy course and qualified as a naturopathic osteopath in 1996.

While osteopathy seeks to detect and treat damaged muscles and joints, naturopathic osteopathy also tries to balance the various aspects of a person to enable them to return to good health. Naturopathy essentially believes that the body has the power to heal itself and the practitioner helps create the best conditions for it to do this. Treatment can vary. It may only involve manipulation of the body but can also be concerned with nutritional and emotional factors which may underlie the problem. To maintain improvements made by manipulative treatment exercises or a change of diet may be

recommended by Robin.

Not just for bad backs

It's not just for bad backs or neck pain: headaches, frozen shoulder, glue ear, osteoarthritis, IBS, skin conditions, heart and respiratory disorders are some of the conditions that can be helped. Robin treats both children and adults.

The Twyford Practice operates from Robin's home in Twyford Avenue, N2. He has carefully converted a space that was originally his garage, creating a restful, purpose-built, self-contained clinic. In the waiting room there is a set of his black and white photographs taken in Hungary – a reminder of his first



Robin Kiashek by Sheila Armstrong

career in photography.

He can be contacted on 020 8815 0979. Or visit his website www.robinkiashek.co.uk for

information about naturopathic osteopathy, conditions that can be treated, and testimonials from many clients.

BOOK REVIEW

London Born

Local history memoirs by a local author, a review by Hannah Eiseman-Renyard

London Born is a book like no other I've read. It is the story of Sidney Day's life, from childhood to the end of his service in World War Two.

Written up from taped interviews made by his granddaughters, it is an autobiography

that the subject never thought worth recording. Sidney is illiterate, and was bemused that anyone wanted to record, let alone publish, his story. The narrative is casual and chatty, alive with Sidney's own voice and colloquialisms, sometimes spelt phonetically, and charmingly flippant. It does take a little while to get used to occasionally sounding like an extended Radio Four broadcast, though you stop noticing once you're a few chapters in. The period details, referred to in passing, could have done with a little explanation for those who don't know what, for example, a 'copper' (something to do with washing) is. But, at the same time, the narrator's familiarity with his environment saves it from becoming a dry, history textbook.

Extra-ordinary

Living in the notorious 'Tiger Bay' area in Highgate,

he recalls the post World War One poverty and talks about customs now all but forgotten – such as catching wild birds to take to the pub on a Sunday.

The book describes many parts of London; from Covent Garden, where you could drink at all hours of the day, to our own East Finchley, which he rides to on a horse, then leaves the horse in an open field.

The happy-go-lucky Sidney gambled with the law on a regular basis – losing when he went to prison, with his friend Ginger, for theft. However, even inside, he was always looking for ways to get around the system. Rewarded for good behaviour, he is released early and returns to his wife-to-be, Mary.

Even in (reluctant) active service during World War Two, Sidney was still finding ways to keep his family back home well looked after, stealing chickens and petrol, and from American

soldiers – and each time gets away with it.

The book sparkles with character. His charismatic cheeky chappy nature makes this an extraordinary account of Sidney Day's early life, no matter how ordinary it may seem to him.

London Born is published by Old Git Publications, ISBN is 0 9547690 0 7.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

A good idea at the time

So McDonalds are not only going healthy but they're changing their logo. Just as Prince became a series of squiggles, so the world of the McBurger is becoming a question mark. All right, so it's a gold question mark, but it's still a question mark and not the famous golden arches. The admen reckon this is a really cool idea, especially as you can now get salads and other healthy stuff, but I don't go to McBurgers for healthy food, I go there for Big Macs and big fries, not lettuce. Still, I guess it must seem like a good idea...

The world is littered with 'good ideas' that ended up looking kind of dumb. The problem is where to start. Ford came up with the wonderful car of today and tomorrow, the Edsel, in 1957. This has gone down as the biggest disaster in motoring because it was ugly and no one wanted it. Dodge had made the same dumb mistake with their good idea, the La Femme. This came in pink, with pink seats and pink trim. Guess what? Women didn't like being talked down to by carmakers and the thing sold like cold porridge and was out of production inside two years.

Reckon that's bad? Well if you want seriously clever stupid look no further than Coca-Cola. With a touch of sheer genius they decided that the only way to beat Pepsi was to come up with a new, revised 'New Coke'. Guess what? Everyone hated it and millions of dollars later they dumped it and went back to good old Coke. Then again, what about yoghurt shampoo? This bright idea comes from 1979 and it's biggest claim to fame is the number of people who drank it and got ill!

There are others... Back when you could advertise fags on TV someone came up with Strand and it's catchphrase 'You're never alone with a Strand'. Naturally, no one bought them because no one wanted to be seen as a saddo whose only friend was his cigarette.

And finally, the blokes from Morris Motors who decided that it would be really dumb to ship back the plant and equipment to build a daft rear-engined German designed car in 1945. After all, who'd want to buy it? I mean, it looked like a beetle and they had the Morris Minor ready to go into production...

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.



Near to my heart

By E O'Riordan of Nazareth House, N2.

I have just been reading "Pavement Disrepair" in THE ARCHER, and a problem very near to my heart, as I've tripped up a few times myself and not just in Finchley.

What I've been wondering for a long time is, why doesn't the Council get rid of paving slabs and use asphalt as on the roads? I would think it would be much more suitable.

I am enclosing a cheque to help with THE ARCHER's running costs,

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Spike Milligan statue launch

By Erini Rodis

On 12 October outside Avenue House The Finchley Society launched the Spike Milligan Statue Fund, in honour of their former president and co-founder, who had been a driving force against local 1970's developers and a keen conservationist, as well as a prolific writer and comedian.

Amongst those present were Spike's daughter Jane Milligan, who spearheaded the campaign, former colleague Lyndsay de Paul, a couple of documentary film crews, and an assortment of local reporters.

"Most impressive", says David Smith, secretary of the society, "were the six junior reporters, sent by Our Lady of Lourdes, Holy Trinity and Manorside Schools. What an asset...they brought out things that adult reporters might not have dared to ask!"

Also present was Barnet sculptor John Somerville, who, thanks to serendipity, has been asked to create the piece, which will be set in the mid seventies, around the same time that both



John Somerville with a model of the statue. Photo by Erini Rodis

he and the Milligans lived in the Finchley area.

It was at a meeting just before Christmas when The Finchley Society were exploring ways to honour their former president, that Chairman and ex-scoutmaster Barbara Warren remembered one of her former cubs had become a sculptor. Somerville doesn't expect to pass any nail inspections nowadays! Especially as with the maquette (small model) now complete, work on a life size clay bust is about

to start.

The statue is going to be finally cast in bronze, at a cost of £30,000. The plan is to unveil it by Spike's birthday on 16 April 2006. Over £3,000 has been raised so far, and watch this space for fund-raising events to make you chuckle. Donations can also be made by sending a cheque made payable to 'The Spike Milligan Fund' to The Secretary, The Finchley Society, 17 Abbott's Gardens, East Finchley, London N2 0JG.

Contact

East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact reports a rise in volunteers, including six senior students from Fortismere School, who have been doing "a wonderful job".

So, if anyone needs help with transport, befriending or odd jobs, Contact are now in a better position to help, and would welcome a ring on 8444 1162.

Need funding?

The following details have been provided by East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact:

The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme, 0800 072 0150 - will tell you if you are eligible for a grant towards home insulation.

The Warm Front Team, 0800 952 0600 - can provide grants to install central heating or storage heating, if you receive a qualifying benefit such as Attendance Allowance.

House Proud - 0800 783 7569 - can provide cheap loans for homeowners for downstairs toilets, wheel chair ramps and other adaptations.

The Disabled and Elderly Facilities Grant - 020 8359 7420 - can provide financial help to install a stair lift.

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