



John Larimer, 1943 – 2004

By Erini Rodis
Friends, family and fellow Marines are saddened by the recent death of John Larimer, of Long Lane.

A member of the ARCHER team since 1995, John is fondly remembered for declaring, "Meeting closed, bar open!" with a sharp bang of his stick and an infectious American drawl.

John Michael Larimer was born in 1943 in a little Indiana town called Terre Haute. At 19 he joined the Marines and served all over the world, as an arms controller, naval air observer and communications officer. Six years were spent in Vietnam. In 1967 he was awarded the 'Purple Heart' for rescuing fellow servicemen despite having just taken a bullet to the head under enemy fire. A tattoo on his arm had to be sliced in half to enable a skin graft. Further awards as Gunnery Sergeant were taken in his stride:

"You rely on your training," he'd say, "and do it automatically."

He retired from service in 1973 to become a security consultant to governments, international organisations and the private sector. By his own admission he "did a lot of jobs that other people wouldn't touch", in places like South America, the Middle East and Africa.

Family responsibilities brought him to East Finchley in 1994, after winding up his business on the East Coast of Africa. Internet technology enabled him to continue remote investigative

work despite his ailing health. He taught himself genealogy then offered a UK family tree service to fellow Americans.

But as the saying goes, "Once a Marine, always a Marine," and in February 2002 he set up the "London England Detachment 1088, US Marine Corps League". He was inaugurated as Commandant for the first year, and attended Remembrance Dinners and other events with all respect due to an honoured dignitary.

His older daughter, Saba, is living in California with his 3-year-old grandson Shayne. He also leaves behind his mother Nora, sisters Sue and Jayne in the US, and his wife Josephine and 11-year-old daughter Dani-Ella in East Finchley.

Marine Corps League London Detachment 1088 are planning a memorial service for John so watch this space. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

Letters to The Editor

Short stay only

Dear Archer

Your front page article in the August edition (Institute relocation creates parking dilemma) did not make it clear that the Institute will be renting Park House for one year only, until September 2005.

It is then due to move into a purpose-built new home on the Neurological Hospital site. Barnett's plan to sell the Park House site remains unchanged, and we wait with interest to see what the chosen development will be. We understand that the public marketing of Park House to encourage bidders will begin in September.

Rick and Kathryn Scorza, Address supplied

Visits to Avenue House

Dear Sir

In the last edition of THE ARCHER you reported that the Finchley Society offers talks and tours of Avenue House. However, I would like to make it clear that the Society, of which I am President, is just one of the organisations involved in the educational visits to the House and the Estate Grounds.

Avenue House Estate Management, The Stephens Collection, Finchley Arts Centre Trust and the Hendon & District Archaeological Society, as well as the Finchley Society, work together to co-ordinate the educational programme for local school children, but each highlighting a particular aspect of the Estate and its history applicable to its own field of interest.

The first line of call for schools wishing to make a visit remains, as you reported, the Finchley Society's Educational Secretary on 020 8445 1808.

Yours sincerely

Bill Tyler
Chairman,
The Finchley Society

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

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.



Muddled thinking, wasted money and vandalism by Haringey Council

By Amalia Michaels of Lauradale Road

Next to my house in Lauradale Road was an attractive, mature shrubbery that had flanked the approach to Keynes Close, a sheltered housing complex run by Haringey, for many years. In May this year, workmen came with no warning and uprooted the shrubs, leaving a barren area that is now covered with unsightly weeds, including waist-high thistles. Upon checking with Haringey, it seemed that it was thought necessary to do such a thing for various - it seemed to me - inappropriate reasons e.g. the residents of Keynes Close said they were frightened that people could hide in the shrubbery; the Warden had complained of rubbish dumping and fouling by dogs - but IF these problems existed, then uprooting the shrubs would not solve them. Certainly, no-one in this road had ever been aware of any such problems.

Yes, the shrubs - which used to be pruned regularly by Haringey - had been allowed to get overgrown and might have been used as cover, but the weeds are now at least as high as the shrubs used to be and the area looks a mess. I and the other residents of Lauradale Road therefore decided that we would not rest until the shrubbery is replanted and I approached the department in Haringey responsible for sheltered housing to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter. This was held on August 5th and was reasonably well attended by some of the residents of Keynes Close and some from Lauradale Road, plus the Lib Dem Councillor Barbara Fabian and Megan Evans and Len Weir from Haringey who have been responsible for uprooting the shrubs.

They agreed that the area looks awful now and that anything would be better than the weed-infested patch they have created. They suggested planting grass and flowers, which I agree would look nice if it were properly maintained - but let's face it, if they couldn't manage to prune the shrubs, this would probably not happen. We managed to get them to promise that they will replant the area with suitable low-maintenance shrubs and will e-mail me a copy of their plans, but because the residents of Keynes Close say that they still feel unsafe when they walk through the area, we were told that Haringey are going to put railings with a lockable gate across the entrance from Lauradale Road. If that is what they are going to do, it is obvious that they need not have destroyed the shrubbery in the first place. There seems to have been a lot of muddled thinking on this issue and certainly Haringey will have wasted money unnecessarily. Why didn't they leave the shrubbery alone and just put up the railings in the first place?

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